

# MY VICTORIOUS JOURNEY



*The Believers' Personal Study  
in*

*Learning to live victoriously over the enemy in every season of life.*



## Table of Contents

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Who Is Jesus Christ?</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Day 1	Jesus My Creator	1
	Jesus Christ The Sustainer of My Life	3
Day 2	Jesus Christ My Redeemer	3
	Why Did I Need A Redeemer?	3
Day 3	The Cross of Christ: The Cost and Benefit of Redemption	4
	The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: The Word Defeats Death	5
	Why Did Jesus Go To The Cross?	7
	I Am Saved By Grace Through The Word	8
Day 4	The Narrow Path Of Redemption: Is Jesus The Only Way To Be Saved?	9
	How Do I Receive God's Gift of Salvation?	10
Day 5	Joy In Heaven	10
Day 6	Learning To Walk With God: Abiding In The Word	11
Day 7	Abiding Truths	11
<b>Lesson 2</b>	<b>My New Life In Jesus Christ</b>	
Day 1	The Garden Of Eden	13
	The Curse	14
	Fellowship With God Restored	15
Day 2	The Blessings Of Knowing God	15
	Believers Are Born Again	15
	Believers Are Justified	16
Day 3	Believers Are Adopted Into God's Family	16
Day 4	Believers Are Given The Gift of Eternal Life	19
Day 5	My Enemy	21
Day 6	Combating My Enemy	21
	Fellowship With God	23
Day 7	Abiding Truths	25
<b>Lesson 3</b>	<b>The Fatherhood of God</b>	
Day 1	My Heavenly Father	27
Day 2	A Father Who Knows	28
Day 3	God's Training Methods	28
Day 4	God's Tools For My Transformation	30
	The Bible – The Word Of God	30
	My Trials And The Difficulties Of Life	32
	Other People	32
Day 5	The Promises Of God's Tender Care	33
	The Promise Of God's Presence	33
	The Promise Of God's Provision	34
	The Promise Of God's Protection	35
Day 6	A Father Who Cares	36
Day 7	Abiding Truths	36

	<u>Page #</u>
<b>Lesson 4     The Holy Spirit</b>	
Day 1 Who Is The Holy Spirit?	38
Day 2 The Holy Spirit Gives New Birth	39
The Holy Spirit Transforms My Life	40
Day 3 The Holy Spirit Is My Helper	41
Day 4 The Fullness Of The Spirit	42
The Fruit Of The Spirit	43
The Gifts Of The Spirit	44
Day 5 Empowered By The Holy Spirit	45
Day 6 The Ministry Of The Spirit	47
Convicter	47
Comforter	48
Companion	49
Counselor	49
Day 7 Abiding Truths	50
<b>Lesson 5     Spiritual Growth And Maturity</b>	
Day 1 Getting Started	52
Day 2 Sanctification	54
My Initial Sanctification	55
My Progressive Sanctification	55
My Ultimate Sanctification	56
Day 3 Paul's Initial Sanctification – Salvation	57
Paul's Progressive Sanctification	58
Paul's Service	59
Paul's Ultimate Sanctification	60
Day 4 Hindrances To My Spiritual Growth	61
The Danger Of Looking Back	61
The Danger Of Focusing On Others	62
The Danger Of Focusing On Myself Improperly	63
Day 5 The Weight Of Sin	64
The Steps To Reconciliation With God	65
Day 6 My Christian Goal	66
Knowing Christ	66
Being Found In Christ	66
Knowing Christ's Power	67
My Own Resurrection From The Dead	67
Inventory Of My Personal Goals	67
Day 7 Abiding Truths	68
<b>Lesson 6     Forgiveness And Reconciliation</b>	70
Day 1 Biblical Forgiveness	70
The Fruit Of Bitterness	73
Day 2 Why Practice Biblical Forgiveness?	74
Day 3 God's Sovereignty And Man's Suffering	76
Day 4 Trials And Tribulation	78

<b>Lesson 6</b>	<b>Forgiveness And Reconciliation cont.</b>	<b><u>Page #</u></b>
	Day 4 cont.	
	Reconciliation	79
	Day 5 If I Need To Seek Forgiveness	80
	If A Non-Christian Has Sinned Against Me	81
	If A Christian Has Sinned Against Me	82
	In All Cases	84
	Day 6 Maintaining My Commitment To Practice Biblical Forgiveness	85
	My Spiritual Battle	86
	Day 7 Conclusion	88
	Abiding Truths	89
<b>Lesson 7</b>	<b>Spiritual Warfare</b>	91
	Day 1 Setting The Stage	91
	The World After The Fall	92
	Satan's Condition After The Fall	92
	Man's Condition After The Fall	92
	Day 2 My Enemies – The Devil, The World And The Flesh	93
	The Devil	93
	Day 3 My Enemy - The World	96
	Day 4 My Enemy – My Flesh	98
	Day 5 Victory In The Battle	100
	My Armor From God	101
	Satan's Flaming Arrows	102
	Guarding My Heart And Mind	103
	Day 6 Do Christians Continue To Sin?	104
	Abiding In Christ And Walking In The Spirit	105
	Day 7 Abiding Truths	106
<b>Dear Disciple</b>		108

Note: Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. We suggest that you use this same Bible translation for your study to answer many of the questions contained herein.

Note: This workbook is prepared in such a way as to speak directly to the believer who is going through this study. Therefore, most of the writings, questions and comments are directed to you to be answered in the first person (i.e. *"I believe... or If I surrender my life..."*) and the abiding truths are meant to be read and re-written in the first person.

Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

## Who is Jesus Christ?

If you could roll back the heavens like a scroll, what do you think you would see? The Bible teaches that there are actually three heavens. The first heavenly dimension is the immediate atmosphere surrounding us. The second heavenly dimension is the universe filled with planets, stars, galaxies and the black unknown. The third heavenly dimension God calls Paradise. According to the Scriptures, this is the dwelling place, or the throne room, of God. Several incidents are recorded in the Scriptures where the heavens opened and mortal men were given the privilege of encountering the living God (see Isaiah 6:1; Acts 7:55; 2 Corinthians 12:2; Revelation 4:1-5). What they saw and heard altered their perspective and transformed their lives.

Challenged in our daily circumstances and with our relationships with others, we are often weighed down with the activities, challenges, difficulties and sorrows that accompany this life. Is it possible that our perspectives and our lives could be transformed if we also looked into the heavens and encountered the God who is enthroned above so that we can overcome the circumstances of our lives and navigate our interpersonal relationships with great success? Yes! But, how can we do just that? To whom should we go for wisdom and understanding?

The Word of God, the Bible, unveils the truth about God, and His creation, dwelling place and design for life. We learn in the Bible that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is seated on a throne in heaven at the right hand of His Father. Man maintains a variety of views on the identity of Jesus Christ. Some believe Him to be a great prophet, teacher or humanitarian who lived and died long ago, while others see Him as a mystical character from the pages of the Bible. In Matthew 16:15 Jesus Himself addressed His followers with the question, "Who do you say that I am?"

### Day 1 -----

#### JESUS CHRIST MY CREATOR

Turn in your Bible to the following Scriptures and briefly write out what you learn about Jesus, the creator of all that is.

Psalm 19:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 102:25 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 1:20 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 1:16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 1:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Since Jesus Christ is the creator of everything, then is He your creator? Turn in your Bible to the following Scriptures and briefly write out what you learn about Jesus Christ as your creator.

Ecclesiastes 11:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 139:13-16 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (See also Job 10:8-12; 31:15)

According to Genesis 1:1-2:4, how did Jesus create everything? \_\_\_\_\_

According to John 1:1, 14 &29, who is the Word of God? \_\_\_\_\_

*“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” Psalm 33:6*

**Abiding Truth:** *Jesus Christ, the Word of God, has created all things, including you and me by His Word.*

Jesus created you to have an eternal, close and personal relationship with Him so that you would bear fruit unto Him. Read John 15:4 and write what Jesus tells us what you must do in order to bear fruit that pleases Him (bear fruit = to learn, grow, develop and live victoriously according to the plan of your creator). \_\_\_\_\_ .

**To abide in** - *to remain in or continue in continually; to dwell in; to remain as one, not to become as another or different.*

According to Matthew 7:24-27 and Luke 6:46-49, what are the three elements to abiding in Jesus Christ?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Abiding Truth:** *Abiding in Jesus Christ means abiding in His Word – since He is His Word.*

According to John 15:4, what will Jesus do if I choose to abide in Him? \_\_\_\_\_

*“As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” Psalm 18:30*

*“...If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31-32*

Jesus says that if you and I abide in His Word then He will abide in us giving us the benefits of His power, protection and provision for life. This is the essence of our relationship with Him.

**JESUS CHRIST THE SUSTAINER OF MY LIFE**

Jesus Christ is not only the wise and powerful creator of all life; He also faithfully sustains His creation.

**Sustain** – *To hold together, carry, to give support or relief to.*

Turn to Colossians 1:17 and write the verse below:

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Read Psalm 139:1-6 and write what you learn about how your life has been sustained since you were conceived.

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According to Hebrews 1:3, how does Jesus hold all things together? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (See also Neh. 9:6; Job 12:10; Psalm 36:6)

**Abiding Truth:** *All life, including yours and mine, is sustained by the Word of God - Jesus Christ.*

**Day 2** -----

**JESUS CHRIST MY REDEEMER**

Two thousand years ago Jesus left His heavenly throne and visited the earth. He who created and sustains life would redeem and become the Savior of the world.

**Redeem** – *To buy back, to liberate, to recover by payment, to ransom, to rescue, to pay the penalty of, or to purchase or save.*

**WHY DID I NEED A REDEEMER?**

The following verses reveal what Jesus saw from His heavenly throne as He looked down upon the earth. Look up the following Scriptures and briefly describe what God saw and how He described mankind.

Genesis 6:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 32:22 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Psalm 14:2-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 53:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Man was hopelessly lost in sin. From the beginning mankind turned away and continues to turn away from the Creator. All of the pain, suffering and sorrows of this life are attributed to man's disobedience to and independence from God.

**Sin is...  
any offense against God...  
exalting myself against the Creator...  
any disobedience of the commandments of God...  
putting myself in His place as the ultimate authority in my life.**

- As you look at your life personally and the world around you, do you agree with God's assessment?     Yes     No
- Do you agree that man's only hope for healing is to turn back to God?     Yes     No

***Abiding Truth:*** *Jesus Christ, the Word of God, is the creator and sustainer of my life. He came to earth to redeem me, and all those He created; to turn us to God.*

**Day 3** -----

**THE CROSS OF CHRIST: THE COST AND BENEFIT OF REDEMPTION**

How did Jesus Christ offer you redemption from your state of sin? Turn in your Bible to the Scriptures below for the answer.

Ephesians 1:7 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:13-23 \_\_\_\_\_

Death by crucifixion was favored by the Romans and reserved for the lowest criminals. It was a shameful and painfully slow execution. The Bible teaches that Jesus was rejected by His people, forsaken by His friends, and condemned by the religious and government leaders. He was mocked, scourged (beaten on His bare back with a leather whip, containing exposed fragments of metal), His beard was plucked out and His face was spat upon. He was then stripped naked, as the Roman guards gambled for His clothing.

Jesus Christ was then nailed alive to the cross, where He hung, dying for six agonizing hours. For the first three hours, as He hung on the cross, many passersby mocked, while others wept at the horror. During the final three hours the sky turned black as the Holy Father, who cannot look upon sin, turned away from His Son. (See Mat. 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44-45)

Jesus was forsaken by His Father, as He laid upon Him the sins of mankind. On that day, over 2,000 years ago, Jesus gave Himself for all those who would surrender their lives to Him.

Jesus Christ came to fulfill the testimony of God, to be the promised sacrifice of God for us, to fulfill the righteous requirement of the justice of God, thereby providing the mercy of God, to facilitate the grace of God, for all those who would by faith surrender to Jesus Christ and abide in Him – His Word, to live eternally with God, completed by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Read John 19:30. What were the final words that Jesus uttered from the cross?

\_\_\_\_\_ .

On the cross Jesus Christ finished His work of redemption. According to 2 Corinthians 5:21, what do sinners become *when they surrender to Christ*? \_\_\_\_\_

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**At the cross the debt of our sins were put on Christ.  
When we surrender our lives to Him, His righteousness is put on us.  
The innocent paid the penalty.  
The guilty are set free to abide in Him!**

**Abiding Truth:** *Because of my sin, I owed God a debt that I could not pay. Jesus paid my debt by shedding His blood on the cross to provide my way of redemption.*

## **THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST: THE WORD DEFEATS DEATH**

After Jesus died on the cross, He was taken down; His body was prepared for burial using the local custom of the time.

*“Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he brought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.” Mark 15:42-46*

\*Note: Pilate was the governor that had sentenced Jesus to be crucified.

*“On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate. Saying, ‘Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.” Matthew 27:62-66*

Even though Jesus body was dead, the rebellious religious leaders were determined to make certain His disciples could not make a false claim of the resurrection of Jesus further threatening their positions and political power. A Roman guard was granted to these leaders to secure the area for the time Jesus had stated in His prophecy. The penalty of failure for a guard on this assignment would have been their own death.

Read Matthew 28:1-8 and summarize what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus has risen from the dead! The guards went to the chief priests and told them what had happened. This, for the chief priests, was unacceptable. Read Matthew 28:11-15 and summarize what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The religious leaders, together with the Roman guards, invented a story to protect the positional control they had enjoyed over the people of their religious system. They convinced the Roman guard to lie while promising them protection from the penalty of their failure to secure the tomb as assigned. They sealed this lie with a bribe.

A dilemma now faced Jesus disciples. After the death of Jesus, the disciples became distraught and some began to scatter. Jesus went about proving the reality of His resurrection from the dead as He had promised. Read the following Scriptures and write in your own words what you learn about the confidence of the disciples regarding the resurrection of Jesus.

Mark 16:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 24:1-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 20:1-31 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Belief in the resurrection of Jesus was not immediate by His disciples even though a few of the women had testified to them that they had seen Him alive. So Jesus went about revealing Himself to many of His followers before He ascended into heaven. Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn about the people Jesus revealed Himself to and the evidence of His resurrection from the dead.

Luke 24:13-53 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mark 16:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 20:24-29 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 21:1-14 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The religious leaders did all they could to dispel the spread of the good news that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead just as He had promised. Anyone found professing the risen Lord would have been persecuted, imprisoned, beaten and even killed for their faith. Instead of producing any evidence that the disciples were lying, like the dead body of Christ, they set about to intimidate and extinguish all that would threaten their religious system.

The result, however, was the unwavering faith of those who believe in Jesus life, death and resurrection unto their own perilous death. These believers adopted the Word of God as their code of life. They told anyone who would listen. Ultimately, many would be put to horrendous deaths simply because they would not renounce their faith in Jesus Christ.

<p><i><b>Abiding Truth:</b> Jesus Christ died on the cross in the flesh, but He has risen from the dead; now reigning over His creation, He assures my eternal life as I abide in Him.</i></p>
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### **WHY DID JESUS GO TO THE CROSS?**

The author of Psalm 8 was amazed that the Almighty Creator cared for man. Why would Jesus leave the splendor of heaven, become a man, and die a brutal and humiliating death for sinners?

The answer is amazing, yet very simple! Look up the following verses to write the reason why Jesus so willingly went to the cross to redeem you.

Romans 5:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

John 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus Christ did not die on the cross in order to establish the Christian religion. From His heart of love Jesus paid the highest price providing you the opportunity for a relationship with God.

*“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:10*

### **I AM SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH THE WORD**

God extended mercy and grace through Jesus Christ. Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and summarize what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mercy** – *The forgiveness granted entirely out of the goodness; the outward manifestation of pity. It assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it. It is used of God, who is rich in mercy, kindness and good will toward the miserable and the afflicted, and joined with a desire to help them.*

Only by God’s mercy will you not receive the penalty you deserve. You deserve punishment for your sins, but God instead has extended His compassion and loving-kindness by placing this deserved punishment upon His Son Jesus if you surrender your life to Him.

**Grace** – *God’s unearned favor and love; the goodness of God to the undeserving; completely apart from any merit on the part of the person forgiven.*

Because of His grace, God has offered a gift you did not earn or deserve. He has extended the gift of life to you in Christ Jesus. God loves you because He is love. Because of His love, He provides through His Son Jesus the opportunity for you to have an intimate and personal relationship with Him, in Christ.

**Salvation is...  
deliverance from the power and effects of sin...  
liberation from darkness and delusion...  
rescue from divine judgment...  
preservation from death.**

To gain a clearer understanding of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ and of living victoriously in Him over your enemy, refer to the following Scriptures and fill in the blanks:

Romans 6:22-23 “But now having been \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_, and having become \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, \_\_\_\_\_ life. For the wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_, but the gift of God is eternal life \_\_\_\_\_ Christ Jesus our \_\_\_\_\_.”

John 10:27-28 “My sheep \_\_\_\_\_ My voice, I know them, and they \_\_\_\_\_ Me. I give them \_\_\_\_\_, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

According to John 3:16, how do you receive eternal life? \_\_\_\_\_

Read 1 John 2:2. For whose sins did Jesus die? \_\_\_\_\_

**Propitiate** – To gain or regain the favor or good will of, to appease or conciliate.

According to God in 1 Timothy 2:3-6, who does God desire to save? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus Christ died for the sins of the entire human race, if we will but surrender to Him and come to the knowledge of the truth. He desires for you to call on, believe in and follow Him to be saved from the penalty of His righteous judgment which is death.

**Day 4** -----

**THE NARROW PATH OF REDEMPTION: IS JESUS THE ONLY WAY FOR ME TO BE SAVED?**

If I lead a good life, love others or attend church regularly, won't God accept me? Read the following Scriptures and write out what you learn about God's provision for our salvation.

Acts 4:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 14:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 John 5:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God made provision for you to enter into an intimate relationship with Him. A personal relationship with God is extended to you, but only on His terms. We all must enter in by the blood that Jesus shed on the cross and abide in Him to live.

**Abiding Truth:** *There is no other way for me to be saved from the penalty of sin except by the grace of God through the sacrifice of Jesus. Refusal to repent unto God and believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ committing to abide in Him is to reject my only means of eternal life, thus to remain hopelessly lost and guilty before God; awaiting His righteous judgment.*

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**HOW DO I RECEIVE GOD’S GIFT OF SALVATION?**

To understand how to receive God’s wonderful gift of salvation, read the verses below and write out what you learn about how to receive God’s gift of salvation in the space provided.

Mark 1:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16:30-31 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 10:9-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *God’s gift of salvation is mine if I will yield to Him in faith, repent of my sins and surrender my life to Jesus Christ; committing to abide in Him.*

**Day 5** -----

**JOY IN HEAVEN**

Let’s look up into heaven once more. Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn takes place in heaven when you surrender your life to Jesus Christ.

Luke 15:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Zephaniah 3:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 10:20 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Malachi 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*“This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD. For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven the LORD viewed the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those appointed to death.”*  
*Psalms 102: 18-20*

“Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.” *Philippians 4:1*

“For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth.” *3 John 3*

**Day 6** -----

**LEARNING TO WALK WITH GOD: ABIDING IN THE WORD**

When you surrender your life to Jesus Christ, you enter into an exciting journey with God. Growing in your relationship with our Creator and Savior is *life-changing*. *As you walk with God*, He transforms and blesses your life. Turn in your Bible to the following Scriptures and fill in the blanks below.

Hebrews 2:1 – God is asking me to pay close attention to what I have learned so that I do not \_\_\_\_\_ from Him.

Hebrews 4:2 – God is urging me to unite what I have learned with \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:16 – God is inviting me to draw near to His throne to receive \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 13:5, 6 – God encourages me to be content in Him because His promise to me is that He will never \_\_\_\_\_ me or \_\_\_\_\_ me as I abide in Him.

3 John 4 – God fills with joy when I learn to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

***Abiding Truth:*** *As I walk with God according to His Word, He transforms and blesses me leading me on my victorious journey.*

**Day 7** -----

Go back through Lesson One and review the nine **Abiding Truths** that you learned. Rewrite these truths below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 8) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 9) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

## *My New Life in Jesus Christ*

God tells me that believers in Jesus Christ have been given *a new and abundant life* in Him.

*“...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10*

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

As you will see in this lesson, Jesus has dealt with the mistakes and failures of your past, made provisions for your present life and promises a glorious future to you through abiding in Him. In order to enter into His abundant life you must place your life completely in God’s hands, walk in fellowship with Him and abide daily in His Word. Before you are saved in Christ, you were independent and self-willed. You must choose daily to deny yourself, depend on Him and seek His will. He will be faithful to complete the new work he has begun in you and bless you with all spiritual blessings, if you will faithfully continue to trust and abide in Him.

### **Day 1** -----

#### **THE GARDEN OF EDEN**

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and placed the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden, a perfect environment (Genesis 1 & 2). The word Eden means *delight* or *pleasure*. God provided everything that Adam and Eve would need with all things working in perfect harmony. It was His good pleasure and desire to bless them with a happy, abundant, fruitful and satisfying life eternally with and in Him.

*“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” Genesis 1:31*

God especially wanted to have continued fellowship with them, but something went terribly wrong! What one prohibition did God place upon Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:15-17)? \_\_\_\_\_

What would happen if they disobeyed? \_\_\_\_\_

God tells us in Genesis, chapter 3, that Satan entered the scene, embodied as a cunning serpent to steal, kill and destroy the relationship God, Adam and Eve had mutually enjoyed. Satan’s tactic was to deceive Eve tempting her to doubt God, His protection and His provision for an abundant amazing life with and in Him.

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;...” John 10:10a*

Read Genesis 3:1-6 and answer the following questions:

What did Satan ask Eve in Genesis 3:1? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Eve acknowledge she knew about God's one prohibition? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What did Eve acknowledge she knew about the consequences God had told Adam of acting contrary to His Word? \_\_\_\_\_

Satan then deceived the woman. What lie did he tell her in Genesis 3:4-5? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Having been deceived by Satan to disobey God, what did the woman do? \_\_\_\_\_

Adam was then faced with a choice. What did he do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adam defied his creator and sinned against God. God would not permit man to live eternally in this new state of corruption. The consequences of Adam's sin are:

- Man's joy was turned to shame; his nature was changed - *Genesis 3:8-10*
- Death was the judgment for disobedience - *Genesis 3:17-19, 5:5*
- Man's fellowship with God was broken; they were expelled from Eden - *Genesis 3:22-24*
- Sin (corruption) entered the human race through Adam - *Romans 5:17-19*
- Man was lost, with no hope or means to recover himself - *Ephesians 2:12*

*"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned..." Romans 5:12*

## **THE CURSE**

Man was originally made of three parts: a body, a soul and the spirit of life. In creating man's soul, God gave man a mind capable of logic and rational thinking, a heart to experience emotion and feel love, and a free will.

*"In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God." Genesis 5:1*

All of creation had originally been put under the dominion of Adam by God:

*"...Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Genesis 1:26*

When Adam sinned, all of creation was put under the bondage of corruption. Man's spirit of life and righteousness died; his body began to decay having been corrupted by sin. Man's image changed dramatically. Because man exercised his gift of free will to defy his Creator, according to Genesis 5:3, after sin entered man, what image did his progeny bear? (see also 1Corinthians 15:48-49) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD RESTORED

Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, God provided mankind's only hope of being saved from the penalty of sin and death. Your fellowship with God can only be restored through the cross.

Read Romans 5:12-21 and summarize what you learned. \_\_\_\_\_

**Transgression** - *To pass beyond a boundary; to violate or break a law or command.*

**Condemnation** - *To be pronounced guilty or deserving punishment.*

**Righteous** - *Innocent, conformity to law, to be absolved or acquitted from guilt.*

*"But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to the many." Romans 5:15*

In Jesus Christ, you can be free from corruption, decay, sin, evil, wickedness and eternal death. You can rightly bear the image you were originally created to possess for eternity in Him.

*"And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man." 1 Corinthians 15:49*

## Day 2 -----

### THE BLESSINGS OF KNOWING GOD

In Lesson One you learned that salvation is received by faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation means that you are saved or delivered from the power and effects of sin. In addition, you are born again, justified, adopted into God's family and granted eternal life.

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3*

- **BELIEVERS ARE BORN AGAIN**

**Born Again (begotten again)** - *Renewal or spiritual rebirth.*

Read John 3:1-8. What did Jesus tell Nicodemus must occur in order to enter the kingdom of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Nicodemus was confused by the words of Jesus thinking that Jesus was referring to a physical rebirth. Jesus explained, however, that the birth to which He was referring was a spiritual birth that is not passed on by the man of dust, but by the man of the Spirit; Himself.

As the progeny of Adam, we are not filled with the Spirit of life. But, by genuine faith in Jesus Christ, you can be born again - born of the Spirit.

Read Ephesians 2:1-6. What does Christ do for you when He saves you by His grace (verse 5)?

When you surrender your life to Jesus Christ you are born of the Spirit, or *born again*. God’s Holy Spirit comes to dwell within your heart and gives you new life: His life. His Spirit guides you on your journey and imparts to you the very nature of God as you walk with Him.

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

Because God has given you new life, it is His will that you reject anything from your past that does not edify you or honor Him.

*“...and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” 2 Corinthians 5:15*

Your victorious journey begins with your choice to surrender to Him and commit to follow Him. Removing the old and imparting the new is a gradual and on-going process that God brings you through as you abide in Him.

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

**Abiding Truth:** *When I surrender my life to Jesus Christ I am born of the Spirit and given new life in Him.*

• **JUSTIFIED BY GOD THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**

**Justify** - *To declare righteous, to pardon and absolve from guilt and punishment.*

You are not justified because of anything you have done. You are justified by God because, by faith in Jesus Christ, you acknowledge that Jesus took upon Himself the judgment and penalty for your sin fulfilling the righteous requirement for the justice of God.

In Romans 3:23-26 we read that God is *“just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”* From verse 25, what did Jesus do with the sins you previously committed? \_\_\_\_\_

Rewrite in your own words the blessing you received by believing on Jesus from Romans 4:7-8.

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Read Colossians 2:13-14. What did God do with your debt of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

**Abiding Truth:** *When I surrender my life to Jesus Christ my sins are forgiven and I am declared righteous in Christ.*

**Day 3** -----

• **I AM ADOPTED INTO GOD’S FAMILY**

**Adopt** - *To choose, to take up, to embrace; to take as one’s own what is another’s.*

God not only gives you new life and forgives all of your sins, but He also adopts you into His family, making you His own child.

*“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,…” Romans 8:16*

*“... having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” Ephesians 1:5*

Read John 1:12 and 1 John 3:1 and write what you learn about your adoption into God’s family.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read Psalm 103:13. How does God look upon you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

You have a good Heavenly Father, who is full of patience, love and kindness for you. Because He created you, He knew you before you knew Him. In fact, He knows you better than you know yourself. The depth of His love toward you is beyond your understanding. The Scriptures provide a clear portrait of the Father-heart of God in the story of the prodigal son. Turn in your Bible to Luke 15:11-24 and answer the following questions:

When the son came to his senses, what did he remember about his father? (verse 17)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

According to verse 17, the son had to come to the end of himself before he would realize the error of his prior life choices. This was, and still is, God’s perfect plan to help you to realize your need for Him.

How did the son plan to approach his father? (verses 18 and 19) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledging your sin and humbly petitioning God for His mercy and grace is the right state in which to approach your heavenly Father.

How did the father receive him? (verses 20-24) \_\_\_\_\_

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Jesus tells you that your Father is excited by your change of heart and perspective on life to rightly learn to love and serve Him. This is called a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift is a change in belief, perspective or assumption which causes a change in understanding resulting in a change of doing things. A paradigm shift will result in a change in actions. One of the many places God describes the paradigm shift all His children will take on is in Ephesians 2:1-10. The old paradigm absent the Spirit of God is underlined. **The new paradigm all of God's adopted children will possess as a result of the presence of the Holy Spirit within them is in bold.**

*“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. **But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**” Ephesians 2:1-10*

Before you were born of the Spirit, your paradigm (beliefs, perspectives and assumptions) motivated you to walk according to the lusts of your flesh, fulfilling the desires of your flesh; but as a child of God, you possess the Holy Spirit within you who has shifted, and is shifting, your paradigm motivating you to walk in the Spirit and fulfilling the desires of your Savior.

*“I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish [the desires of your flesh].** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. **And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**” Galatians 5:16-25*

The condition of a baby that is born of the water (physical birth) and a baby born of the Spirit both possess many similarities. Both have developmental needs to mature and prosper. A baby Christian needs to develop their new paradigm and the character of God in the Spirit.

Read Hebrews 12:5-11. In order to learn to love and serve God, what will your heavenly Father do in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

**Discipline** - *Training, which includes teaching, instruction, chastening and correction.*

If you are His child, God has begun a new work in you to train, teach and instill the family likeness in you. You will study His training process in Lesson Three.

One of the blessings of being a child of God is that you now become an heir of all that He possesses. Read the following Scriptures to discover the riches of your inheritance.

Psalms 50:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_

Haggai 2:8 & Job 41:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Read 1 Peter 1:4. Where is your inheritance? \_\_\_\_\_

*"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:32*

*"...knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ." Colossians 3:24*

How should the fact that you are an adopted child of God influence the way you see yourself?

***Abiding Truth:*** *When I surrender my life to Christ, my Heavenly Father adopts me into His family, making me His own child, and begins the journey of re-training me to walk in His marvelous light.*

**Day 4** -----

- **I AM GIVEN THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE**

**Eternal** - *Everlasting, unending.*



As you have already discovered, the punishment for Adam and Eve's rebellion was death. Jesus reversed the death sentence by taking upon Himself the punishment for man's sin, and granting eternal life to all who would believe in Him. Read the wonderful promises from John 3:16 and John 11:25-26 and briefly write out what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_

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

Read 1 John 5:11-13, then rewrite verse 12 in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_

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It is difficult for some of us to understand the gift of eternal life because of the reality that all men die a physical death. As Christians, though our physical bodies die from illness, old age or accident, our souls and spirits are immortal in Him and will never die. In fact, we will be resurrected and given a new heavenly body that will not be subject to illness, old age or death! What truths about eternal life do you learn from God recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:35-58?

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*"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."  
Philippians 3:20-21*

Because God's plan for your life extends throughout eternity, you must resist striving for complete fulfillment in the things of this life. God desires to bless your life in this world, yet complete happiness and fulfillment will not be fully attained until you arrive at your eternal destination in the presence of your Heavenly Father and your Savior, Jesus Christ.

*"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John 16:33*

<p><b><i>Abiding Truth:</i></b> <i>When I surrender my life to Christ, I am granted the precious gift of eternal life.</i></p>
--

Jesus came to earth to restore mankind to the blessed condition that God originally intended. Because of the sin of Adam, man was subsequently born absent the Spirit of God in him. In Christ you are born again, of the Spirit, to new life, filled by the Spirit of God, granted forgiveness for your sins, adopted into God's family and given the gift of eternal life (see 1 Corinthians 15:48-49).

**Day 5** -----

**MY ENEMY**

*“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.” John 10:10a*

Satan continues to come against God’s people, just as he did in the Garden of Eden, trying to tempt you to depart from God and His blessings.

His tactics have not changed. Satan’s weapons are temptations, deceptions (calling evil good and good evil), condemnation and lies. Read the following verses and fill in the blanks.

Matthew 4:3 - Satan is \_\_\_\_\_

- He wants to ensnare you in sin as he did before the Spirit of God faithfully took up residence in your heart by tempting you to walk in the flesh and reject your Savior.

2 Corinthians 11:3 - Satan is \_\_\_\_\_

- He wants to seduce and deceive you, leading you astray from devotion to the Father who has mercifully adopted you, leading to the corruption of your mind.

Revelation 12:9-10 - Satan is \_\_\_\_\_

- He wants to fill your minds with guilt and regret over past failures and mistakes, as well as hopelessness about your future. Satan wants you to search for the answers to life anywhere except with God.

John 8:44 - Satan is \_\_\_\_\_

- He wants to enslave you through lies and deception to trick you into following him instead of following Jesus.

Has Satan been using any of these tactics on you?  Yes  No

Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Day 6** -----

**COMBATING MY ENEMY**

What does God instruct you to do when you are attacked by your enemy?

1 Peter 5:6-9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

James 4:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:43-45 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 6:10-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 1:5-7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Satan does not flee because he fears you, but because he knows the power of our God. Turn in your Bible to James 2:19. What do demons do in God's presence? \_\_\_\_\_

Satan is not equal in power to God. He is powerless over God. He is a created being who will ultimately and finally be destroyed by God; and he knows this.

*"The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet." Romans 16:20*

*"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:" Matthew 25:41*

What two titles are ascribed to God in Psalm 91:1? \_\_\_\_\_

In the Old Testament we learn of Satan's attack upon Job, a righteous man. Though Job experienced great loss and severe personal trials, who was supremely overseeing Job, and controlling his circumstances and Satan? Read Job 1:7-12 and 2:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

According to Luke 22:31-34 who did Satan have to go through before he could assault Peter?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus said His followers are like sheep, and He is their shepherd. Like sheep we are defenseless against thieves and predators if we wander from our shepherd's side. God calls you to *draw near* to Him, not only for protection from your enemies, but also because He longs to have fellowship with you.

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." John 10:11*

**Abiding Truth:** *Though I have a powerful enemy I have an all-powerful God who exercises absolute authority over Satan and guarantees my safety as I put my trust in Him.*

## MY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

*“God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:9*

**Fellowship** - *Companionship and company; friendly relationship; a union of peers or friends; the habitual sharing, the constant giving to, and receiving from each other.*

*“Therefore, my brother who wants to learn to abide in Jesus, take time each day, before you read, while you read and after you read, to put yourself into living contact with the living Jesus, to yield yourself distinctly and consciously to His blessed influence, so you will give Him the opportunity of taking hold of you, of drawing you up and keeping you safe in His almighty life.  
-Andrew Murray*

God desires an intimate relationship with you. He saved you, if you place your faith, hope and trust in Him, from your fallen condition and delivered you from your enemy so that you would have a relationship and fellowship with Him for now through the following:

- **PRAYER** – Prayer is more than simply expressing something to God, asking Him to do something for you or to give you something. The following acronym (ACTS) is an easy way to remember the different aspects of prayer.

*Adoration* – worshiping and praising God for who He is; remembering His goodness, loving kindness, mercy, patience, etc. (Deuteronomy 6:13).

*Confession* – admitting your faults and failures to Him and receiving His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

*Thanksgiving* – recalling His goodness and the blessings He has bestowed upon you (Hebrews 13:15).

*Supplication* – placing all of your needs before Him, fully trusting Him to respond and meet your needs according to His will (Philippians 4:6-7).

*“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16*

- **READING GOD’S WORD** – When you consume His Word you are fed and nourished in order to grow, you come to know God more intimately, understand His ways, and align yourself with His plans through reading, meditating upon and obeying His Word. (Psalm 119:105). When you abide in His Word, He abides in you (Jn. 14:22-23, 15:1-8).

- **CHURCH ATTENDANCE** – Consistently receiving the spoken word from the pastor and worshipping with the congregation helps you grow and provides opportunities to serve God as you serve others. (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- **DISCIPLESHIP** - Meeting on a regular basis with a more mature believer for the purpose of accountability and encouragement in your spiritual growth and personal relationship with the Savior (Matthew 28:19, Titus 2:1-5), then, in time, discipling a younger believer.
- **FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS** – Spending time with others who love Jesus is very important to your growth as a Christian. (Psalm 119:63)
- As you reflect on your own life, is there anything that God has revealed to you that is hindering you from fully committing your life to Him?     Yes  No

Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The goal of this journey is to assist you to come to know Jesus Christ through the truth He revealed of Himself, to develop a daily abiding relationship with Him, and to teach you to live victoriously in Him. If you will faithfully abide in the journey with Him, you will discover how to navigate the seemingly rough seas of life and the most important relationships in your life will no longer be a mystery to you.

- Did you know that God wants to have a personal relationship with you through Jesus?  
 Yes                       No
- Do you believe that abiding in Jesus Christ, the Word of God, can change your life?  
 Yes                       No
- Are you ready to enter into a life changing relationship with Him?  
 Yes                       No

**To receive the salvation of God and become His child, you simply need to:**

- Confess (acknowledge, agree with God) that you are a sinner.
- Repent (feel regret, be sorry) *and turn from your sins.*
- Believe that Jesus died for your sins and was resurrected from the dead.
- Surrender to Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior committing to abide in Him.

**Pray the following prayer or something similar to it:**

*“Lord Jesus, thank you for drawing me to you. Thank You for dying on the cross for me, paying the penalty for my sins. I believe you are the risen Lord of all. I surrender to You and receive You as my Savior and Lord. I commit myself to come to You, hear You and learn to do the things You want me to do according to Your will and to become the person You designed me to be.”*

**Day 7** -----

Go back through Lesson Two and review the five *Abiding Truths* that you learned. Rewrite these truths below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

At this point you may have many questions. This is very normal. As you think of your questions, write them down. Continue your journey, preferably with a discipler, through God's Word using this study guide and you will discover the truth for living an abundant life in Christ. You will develop the confidence to succeed over the challenges of life knowing the will of God and having victory over Satan, sin, death, and the evil found all too often in this world. At the end of week seven, you will begin to focus more specifically on the particulars of the season of life you are in and the seasons of life yet ahead of you.

Welcome to the family of God!

God instructs all who come to saving faith in Jesus Christ to be publicly water baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19), and commit to learn to do the things Jesus commands us to do (Matthew 28:20). This baptism is a public proclamation that you are now choosing to put to death your fleshly desires, ungodly thoughts and worldly paradigm in favor of your new life in Christ, born of the Spirit and committed to learn to walk in the Spirit according to the Word of God for His glory. Go to your parents, if you live with them, pastor, discipler or another Christian friend and inquire about being baptized for God's glory as soon as possible. If you are mature enough to understand the gravity of the commitment you have made to Christ, you are mature enough to be baptized. As a suggestion, you might consider inviting those people who you know would delight in your decision to commit your life to Jesus Christ to witness your baptism.

It is important for each new member of God's family to know that He does not expect instant maturity of character and understanding of His Word and His will for you. Your new birth in Christ is the launching pad for developing Godly character and understanding. The discovery process is one of the great exciting aspects of the journey with God.

If you had sometime previously committed your life to Jesus Christ, but did not realize the importance of learning to walk with God to develop godly character and understanding of His Word and will, then now is the time God is meeting you to help you begin this part of your journey with Him. For most people the ideal path is to submit yourself to another mature discipler who can walk with you on this journey until such a time that you have developed mature Godly character as demonstrated by a consistency of the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus instructs those He has spent the last three plus years training to go out and train others in like manner to become doers of the Word of God. This process of making disciples is God's will, not a man made concept. Western culture's popular system of independence and autonomy is not God's will. God's plan is for the mature Christians to help the less mature to grow and develop according to His will; and that the less mature Christians will seek out the help God wants to provide for them through His disciples teaching His Word.

Begin by praying to God for a mature Christian person, usually of the same gender, to be willing to come along side you, under whom you will submit yourself to the authority and leadership of God's Word, that you will be vulnerable and transparent with in order to make real progress, and that will help you along the road of maturity in Christ with all of its bumps, challenges and joys of success. Then look to those whom God has providentially connected you with to fulfill this calling in your life: Parents, Pastors, church leaders, other mature Christians.

## *The Fatherhood of God*

Among many people the term *father* does not evoke fond feelings. Instead, they have known only harsh fathers, who have been unable or unwilling to parent them as God intended. Other fathers, rather than being harsh, are weak or passive and have disregarded the love and training plan that God's Word says a father should give his children. Many simply neglect the responsibility altogether and abandon their families. Whether out of ignorance, rebellion or apathy, when any of these conditions exist, Satan's lies unfortunately infect and corrupt the heart and mind of the children involved distorting their understanding about the character and nature of the one true and living God.

God assures you in His Word, the Bible, that through Christ and His redeeming work, your Creator adopts you and becomes our Father. As you will see in this lesson, your Heavenly Father is a perfect parent, faithful in His love and care, skillful to train, wise to guide, always available and committed to raise you up to maturity. It is imperative that you diligently seek to replace the lies of Satan with the truth of God found in His Word.

### *Day 1*-----

#### MY HEAVENLY FATHER

It has often been said that "*we are all God's children.*" However, the Word of God clearly teaches that though we are all God's *creation*, the Fatherhood of God is not universal. Read the following Scriptures and note what you learn about who has the *right* to call God '*Father.*'

John 1:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 3:26-27 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There is a well known prayer found in the Bible in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. In this prayer, how does Jesus instruct His disciples to address God? \_\_\_\_\_

\*Notice this instruction was not given to the multitudes, but only to His disciples.

*"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom you cry out 'Abba, Father'." Romans 8:14-15*

***Abiding Truth:*** *Only when I have surrendered my life to Christ can I rightly address God as my Father. God sent His Son to redeem me, and His Spirit to fill me and lead me signifying His adopting me as His own child.*



**Day 2**-----

**A FATHER WHO KNOWS**

Because your Heavenly Father is your creator, He absolutely knows and understands you uniquely and individually. In the following Bible verses, you will learn how intimately acquainted God is with you personally. Write what you learn below.

Psalm 22:9-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 71:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 103:13-14 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 139:1-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God not only knew you before you were born; He chose your parents and uniquely formed you in your mother's womb. He has ordained or permitted circumstances in your life, whether joyous or difficult, to bring you to a place where you would seek Him. Though you did not know or acknowledge Him, He has watched over you and patiently waited for you to seek Him.

***Abiding Truth:*** *As my Creator, my Heavenly Father knows me better than I know myself. He has been with me from the start, sustaining my life, and ordaining and permitting circumstances to provoke me to seek Him.*

**Day 3**-----

**GOD'S TRAINING METHODS**

*"But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." 1 Corinthians 9:27*

As a loving Father, God desires you to grow into strong, healthy, mature adulthood. He wants His character, perspectives, motivations and wisdom to develop in you in order to bear the *family image*, to be like Christ. To accomplish this, the Bible teaches that God disciplines you.

**Discipline** - *Training intended to develop a specified pattern of behavior; to educate and instill character.*

Many of us need a paradigm shift as to the real meaning of discipline. Many of us associate discipline with what happens when someone is bad. On the contrary, God says discipline is necessary for all, useful for your development and is a demonstration of His love. Read Hebrews 12:5-11 and then answer the following questions:

Who does the Lord discipline? (v. 6) \_\_\_\_\_

What does this discipline prove? (v. 8) \_\_\_\_\_

Why does He discipline you? (v. 10) \_\_\_\_\_

What result does His discipline yield? (v. 11) \_\_\_\_\_  
to those who have been \_\_\_\_\_

Before surrendering your life to Christ you were a *spiritual orphan*; self-centered and in the habit of indulging in sinful behavior. But speaking to His disciples, Jesus said,

*“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” John 14:18*

After you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior, God patiently and persistently leads you on your journey correcting your paradigm of life to be consistent with His thus purifying your thoughts, attitudes and actions. This is what He calls the *“peaceable fruit of righteousness.”*

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and list the *fruit* that God wants to produce in your life.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God tells you in Galatians 5:24-25, what you must do to participate in this production of fruit?

Crucify \_\_\_\_\_ with its \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .

If you live in the Spirit, you must also \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

*“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1*

As a wise Father, God has effective methods for training you. He knows you intimately and understands your uniqueness. You should take great comfort in the knowledge that, though others may not understand you, your loving Heavenly Father does.

God understands your present temperament, weaknesses, strengths and limitations. He also knows the temptations that challenge you. God knows what gives you great joy and what brings you deep sorrow. He wisely takes all this into consideration as He executes His strategy and tactics necessary for your transformation into the likeness of Christ.

*“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:28-29*

It is true that God loves you just as you are, but it is equally true that, because He loves you, He does not want you to remain the way you are. He longs for you to share His holiness being transformed into the likeness of His Son enjoying His company for all eternity!

*“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”  
2 Corinthians 3:18*

**Transform** - *To change a thing into another or from one form to another, metamorphose.*

- Are you willing to yield fully to your Heavenly Father in this process of transformation?  
 Yes  No

**Abiding Truth:** *My Heavenly Father will transform me with consistent loving discipline as I abide in Him.*

**Day 4-----**

**GOD’S TOOLS FOR MY TRANSFORMATION**

As a potter has special tools to shape and mold a piece of clay into a beautiful vessel, God, like a master potter, has tools to shape and mold your life. If you will yield to His gentle and firm touch in your life, He will reshape you into an individual of inner strength and beauty.

*“But now, O LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand.” Isaiah 64:8*

*“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40*

Let’s look at the three primary tools God uses in your transformation process; the Bible (His Word), your trials and difficulties, and other people.

• **THE BIBLE – THE WORD OF GOD**

You learn the foundational truths of your faith and grow in that faith from daily reading of (eating/consuming) the Word of God. Read the verses below and fill in the blanks.

Psalm 119:105 - God’s Word is a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 4:12 - The Word of God is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jeremiah 23:29 - God’s Word is like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Job 23:12 - God's Word is to be treasured more than \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:26 - God's Word sanctifies and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 2:2 - God's Word \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Even though God used men of many different generations to pen the Bible, God tells us He inspired them as to what to write and not to write.

*"Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak." Jeremiah 1:7*

*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction (training) in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" 2 Timothy 3:16*

*"Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, 'seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.'" Revelation 10:4*

The Holy Scriptures are not simply philosophical instructions for honorable living, but are uniquely divine in essence as God Himself; His being, power and wisdom preserved in the medium of ink on paper for you to consume. You have already learned God created all things by His Word (Genesis 1-2); He sustains all life by His Word (Hebrews 1:3); He is His Word (John 1:1); and He corrects and trains you by His Word (2 Timothy 3:16). When you read His Word in anticipation of His working in you to transform you into His image as you yield to Him, you receive His unique divine person, power and wisdom. This is abiding in Christ (John 6:48-58).

What truths have you learned from God's Word that have influenced the way you feel, think, or desire to live your life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As you read the Word your goal should not be to simply acquire Bible knowledge. Rather, your pursuit should and must be to know Jesus more intimately and become a doer of His Word. Turn in your Bible to John 5:38-40. Why did Jesus reprove the religious Jews? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *The Word of God is a powerful tool that God will use to transform my life as I abide in Him.*

• **MY TRIALS AND THE DIFFICULTIES OF MY LIFE**

Your Heavenly Father uses your difficulties to teach you, to mature your faith in Him and to bring you to a place of spiritual abundance. In the midst of your trials, you must rest in His grace, love and tender care. You need to have or develop God’s perspective or you will become broken or hardened by your trials. What does God’s Word say about your trials and difficult circumstances in the following Scriptures?

James 1:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 66:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe a situation in your life, presently or in the past when the Lord used difficult or painful circumstances to bring you closer to Him. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *If I am willing, God will use my trials to transform me into the image of His Son as I abide in Him.*

• **OTHER PEOPLE**

God places other people in your life to counsel and encourage you; or, through disappointing experiences, to teach you to put your confidence in Him alone. What do you learn about others in the following verses?

Proverbs 27:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 1:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What people has God put in your life to encourage you in your faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 41:9-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 4:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 7:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What people has God put in your life to challenge you to be patient and loving? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *If I am willing, God will use other people to help transform me into the image of His Son as I abide in Him.*

**Day 5-----**

**THE PROMISES OF GOD’S TENDER CARE**

Your Heavenly Father is ready to assume full responsibility *for the life wholly yielded and devoted to Him*. You are surrounded by His watchful care. Read the following verses and fill in the blanks.

Psalms 91:4 - Above you are His \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 33:27 - Under you are His \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 34:7 - You are surrounded by \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:6-7 - Your heart and mind are guarded by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In the following section, you will be immersed in the truths of your Heavenly Father’s promises to care for you.

• **THE PROMISE OF GOD’S PRESENCE**

Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn about God’s constant nearness to you as you are wholly yielded and devoted to Him.

Psalms 23:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 121:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 139:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 13:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *In His tender care, my Heavenly Father is always with me as I abide in Him.*

• **THE PROMISE OF GOD’S PROVISION**

What do the following verses teach you about trusting God as your provider?

Matthew 6:25-26 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:32 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:19 \_\_\_\_\_

From Matthew 7:7-11, what will your Father give to His children who ask? \_\_\_\_\_

According to James 1:5-8, what must a child of God have when he petitions his Heavenly Father? \_\_\_\_\_

God knows what is best for you and gives only good gifts to you. Out of His love and wisdom He often withholds from you what you ask, and instead He gives what He knows is best for you. These are opportunities for you to trust in His wisdom and goodness, though you don’t always understand His ways!

According to James 4:1-3, why are many of your requests not granted by God? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Matthew 6:24-34. If God cares for the birds, whose Father He is not, you must believe that He will certainly take care of you, His beloved child. (Note in verse 32, the *gentiles* refer to those that do not know God.)

Do you currently have worries regarding the things of which you have need?      Yes    No

Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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According to Matthew 6:33, what is your remedy for worrying? \_\_\_\_\_

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You must make seeking God and your personal relationship with Him your first priority. As you develop the habit of committing everything to Him, and trusting Him in all things, He will enable you to overcome the sinful habit of worrying!

***Abiding Truth:*** *In His tender care, my Heavenly Father will meet all of my needs as I abide in Him.*

• **THE PROMISE OF GOD’S PROTECTION**

The Bible contains 365 commands to *fear not*. As a child of the Almighty God, you can rest secure in Him. Read the following Scriptures and write out what you learn about God’s protection of you.

1 Peter 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

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Psalm 91:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_

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Psalm 121:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_

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The Bible also contains many commands to fear God. One verse in particular clarifies whom or what you need not fear, but whom you must never cease to fear. Read Matthew 10:28-33 and write in your own words what you learn about whom or what you need not fear and whom you need to fear:

I shall not fear \_\_\_\_\_  
I shall always fear \_\_\_\_\_

---

*“But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; let those also who love Your name be joyful in You. For you, O LORD, will bless the righteous; with favor you will surround him as with a shield.” Psalm 5:11-12*

*“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” Hebrews 12:28*

*“Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” Revelation 19:5*

***Abiding Truth:*** *In His tender care, my Heavenly Father guards and keeps me as I abide in Him always serving Him with godly fear.*



**Day 6**-----

**A FATHER WHO CARES**

Your Heavenly Father goes to great lengths in His Word to assure you of His perfect discipline, protection and provision. You must respond in faith and entrust your life and all of your concerns into His keeping. While God’s glory, power and sovereignty are demonstrated in His creation, the depth of His divine character is demonstrated in His Fatherhood. God’s love, patience, kindness, mercy, and goodness are revealed in His relationship with you, His child! Look up the following verses in your Bible and write out what you learn about the character of your Heavenly Father.

1 John 3:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 3:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Day 7**-----

Go back through Lesson Three and review the nine *Abiding Truths* that you learned. Rewrite these truths below.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 6) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 7) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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- 8) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

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## The Holy Spirit

In the Bible, God describes Himself as the Father, the Son (the Word) and the Holy Spirit. This study is intended to clarify who the Holy Spirit is and give understanding of the wonderful work He desires to do in the lives of every child of God.

### Day 1-----

#### WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

If you are a new Christian, you may have never heard of the Holy Spirit. For others, unfortunately, there is much confusion on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Many believe that the Holy Spirit is an *influence* emanating from God or a *power* that God imparts to the Christian. However, the Bible clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the one God; in union with the Father and the Son form the Trinity of God. The Holy Spirit is equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son. The Father and the Son operate through the Holy Spirit.

*“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” Luke 11:13*

This can be a hard concept to grasp because we find no other example of such a concept in all of our discoveries. Each of us is only one person and cannot be divided into more. Likewise, we cannot take on or find other persons to help us form a replica of three persons being actually one. This is one of the many aspects that make Christianity unique from all religions. Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship with our Creator initiated by Him, defined by Him and empowered by Him. Your part is to learn from Him how this relationship is designed to work.

The following Scriptures are some of the many in which God reveals His three persons:

*“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” John 14:16-18*

*“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” John 14:23*

*“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” John 15:26*

*“For there are three that bear witness in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” 1 John 5:7*

The Holy Spirit is an integral part of the workings of God. He is actively involved with all facets of His creation. Like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is eternal, omnipresent (in all places at all times), omnipotent (all-powerful) and omniscient (all-knowing).

Read in the following Scriptures how God describes Himself as the Holy Spirit and fill in the blanks.

Hebrews 9:14 - The Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 139:7-10 - The Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:35 - The Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 2:10-11 - The Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit possesses defined personality traits. People often refer to the Holy Spirit as 'It,' but as you will see from the following Scriptures, the Holy Spirit is a divine person and should be referred to as 'He'.

- He has a will - 1 Corinthians 12:11
- He loves - Romans 15:30
- He grieves - Ephesians 4:30
- He can be lied to - Acts 5:3
- He jealously desires us - James 4:5
- He can be quenched or suppressed - 1 Thessalonians 5:19
- He is insulted by man's rejection of the Savior - Hebrews 10:29
- He speaks - 1 Timothy 4:1
- He is the truth - 1 John 5:6

*"...that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,..." Ephesians 1:12-13*

***Abiding Truth:*** *The Holy Spirit is not a power or a mere influence, but a divine Person; He is God.*

**Day 2-----**

**THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES NEW BIRTH**

*"... unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* John 3:5-6

Jesus Christ wanted His followers to understand the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Turn in your Bible to John 3 and read His words in verses 1-8.

What did Jesus tell Nicodemus must occur in order to enter the Kingdom of God? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus taught that every man and woman must experience two births in order to see or enter into His kingdom; a *physical* birth (of water) – bearing the image of fallen Adam, and a *spiritual* birth (of the Spirit) – being transformed into the image of God’s original design.

To help Nicodemus understand the Holy Spirit, Jesus likened Him and His work to the wind in verse 8.

- The wind blows where it wills, likewise the Spirit is sovereign and free, and no man controls Him. He works as *He* wills.
- The wind is invisible, yet powerful. You cannot see the wind, but its effects are visible. In like manner, the Holy Spirit is invisible, but evidence of His power is visible in individual’s lives and situations.
- Finally, as air is life giving, so also the Holy Spirit gives life.

Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn about the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

John 6:63 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Titus 3:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**THE HOLY SPIRIT TRANSFORMS MY LIFE**

The Holy Spirit, invisible, yet powerful, comes to dwell in the hearts of all believers, imparting to us new life. We cannot see Him, yet the effects of His presence are visible in our lives. It is His work to transform each believer to the image of Christ. Read the following Scriptures about the Spirit and write out what you learn.

2 Peter 1:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ezekiel 36:26-28 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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1 Corinthians 2:12-16

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*“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*  
2 Corinthians 3:18

One aspect of the good news of God is that He is not asking you to reform or improve by *yourself*. By cooperating with the indwelling Holy Spirit, God will conform and change you *from the inside out!* You participate in this process of transformation as you abide daily in Him. As you draw near to God in daily devotion and quiet time consuming His Word, surrendering yourself to His authority, yielding to His influence and committing to be a doer of His Word, He gives you His heart, mind and His very nature. This is the Lordship of Jesus Christ in your life.

**Surrender** - *to undergo capture, to submit to the power of another.*

**Cooperate** - *to work together toward a common end.*

**Yield** - *give in, relinquish.*

**Obey** - *doing the will of God.*

*“...you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit ...”* 1 Peter 1:22

*“... as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”* 1 Peter 2:2-3

*“...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man...”* Ephesians 3:16

<p><b><i>Abiding Truth:</i></b> <i>As a believer in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within me, to impart new life and to transform me into the image of Christ as I abide in Him.</i></p>
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### Day 3-----

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MY HELPER

Hours before Jesus was arrested and crucified, He took His disciples into an upper room to partake of the last supper with Him, and to teach them. This teaching is contained in chapters 13-17 of the Gospel of John. Among many other topics of importance to Jesus, He taught His followers about the Holy Spirit, whom He would send to them after He ascended to heaven. Read the following references in John and list what you learn about the Holy Spirit, your Helper.

John 14:16-27

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John 15:26 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 16:7-15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit would be *another* Helper, who would be *with* you and *in* you.

*“So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”*  
*Hebrews 13:6*

Read the Scriptures below and write out what the Holy Spirit does to help you.

Romans 8:26-27, Jude 20 - The Holy Spirit helps me \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:14, John 16:13 - The Holy Spirit is my \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:27, John 14:26 - The Holy Spirit is my \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 12:11-12 - The Holy Spirit teaches me \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *The ability of the Holy Spirit to help and transform me is not based upon my abilities, but His power and my willingness to abide in Him.*

**Day 4**-----

**THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT**

As you yield to the Holy Spirit He fills you. In Ephesians 5:18 this filling is compared to being intoxicated. As an individual consumes wine, they become influenced, affected and even controlled by the alcohol. In a similar manner, as you surrender to the Holy Spirit He is able to influence, affect and control you; He purifies your thoughts, motives and desires, thereby producing a transformation of your actions and behavior.

*“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.”*  
*Ephesians 5:18*

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Turn in your Bible to John 7:37-39. In verse 37, what two things does Jesus ask the spiritually thirsty to do? \_\_\_\_\_

From verse 38, what will then flow from you life? \_\_\_\_\_

Realizing your thirst (need), you are to come to Jesus and drink (hear) from Him; believing in Him (doing His will) He thereby fills you to overflowing. Jesus, the living water, fills you then overflows from you as the Holy Spirit, rivers of living water, to touch others! The comparison of physical drinking to spiritual drinking is amazingly perfect. When you drink the fluids permeate your entire being to keep your physical bodies alive. Yesterday's drink does not solve your thirst for today. When you, from a sense of need and desire, drink from Jesus daily by drinking and abiding in His word, you are permeated throughout by Him keeping you alive in Him. You must drink daily to remain filled before you will overflow.

According to Jeremiah 2:13, what two evils did Israel commit? \_\_\_\_\_

*“For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.” Jeremiah 2:13*

Rather than trusting God to fill them and meet their needs, the children of Israel abandoned Him, and sought out other sources of satisfaction and fulfillment. God told them that these methods would not *hold water* to Him!

• **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit jealously desires your devotion. He is a gentleman and will not trespass your will or force your obedience. Jesus voluntarily offered Himself as a sacrifice for your sins. In turn, repentant, forgiven sinners respond by voluntarily surrendering to Him. As you yield daily to the Spirit, He will fill you up to overflowing. His living water will flow from within and produce fruit in your life.

This fruit is described in Galatians 5:22-23. List the fruit below. \_\_\_\_\_

What specific fruit of the Spirit has been lacking in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

*“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” -John 15:4*

The measure of the Spirit's fruit in your life is directly related to your degree of dependence upon Him. Just as a fruit tree requires sunshine, water and healthy soil to produce fruit, you must be absolutely dependent upon the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to bear the fruit of the Spirit.



- Are you willing to surrender all to God and trust Him to reproduce His life in you?  
 Yes  No

- **THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

*“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:” 1 Corinthians 12:1*

The Holy Spirit not only produces the fruit of the Spirit in your life, He also imparts spiritual gifts to you. The gifts of the Spirit cannot be earned. They are not merits for faithful service but graces from God. They are not related to your natural abilities, personalities or character traits.

Read 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14. According to 1 Corinthians 12:7 & 11 to which members of the body of Christ will the Holy Spirit impart spiritual gifts? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to 1 Corinthians 14: 12 & 26, what is the Holy Spirit’s objective for giving spiritual gifts to His children? \_\_\_\_\_

**Edification** - *Instructing, improving or building up spiritually.*

What results when the gifts of the Spirit are exercised with pride, selfishness or without love for the brethren? \_\_\_\_\_

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Some of the gifts of the Spirit are:

1. Love – 1 Corinthians 13:13; 2 Timothy 1:7
2. Faith – Acts 3:1-16; 1 Corinthians 13:13
3. Hope – 1 Corinthians 13:13
4. Word of Wisdom - Acts 6:10
5. Word of knowledge - 1 Corinthians 1:5, 12:8; Romans 15:14
6. Special faith - Acts 3:1-16
7. Gifts of healings - Mark 6:13, James 5:14-16
8. Operations of miracles - Acts 5:12-15, Hebrews 2:4
9. Prophecy - Exodus 7:1,2, Jeremiah 1:9, Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 14:1-5,24-25, 39
10. Discerning of spirits - Acts 13:9-11, Hebrews 5:14
11. Tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, Acts 2:3-11, Romans 8:26-27
12. Interpretation of tongues - 1 Corinthians 14:13, 27-28
13. Helps - Acts 20:35
14. Governments - 1 Timothy 5:17
15. Sound mindedness – 2 Timothy 1:7
16. Grace – Ephesians 2:8, 3:7
17. Generosity – Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 9:1-15
18. Eternal life – Romans 6:23
19. Righteousness – Romans 5:17

- 20. Apostles – 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11
- 21. Prophets - 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11
- 22. Teachers (evangelists, pastors) – Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11
- 23. Ministry (serving others) – Romans 12:7
- 24. Exhortation – Romans 12:7
- 25. Leadership – Romans 12:8
- 26. Mercy – Romans 12:8

Some of His gifts are given to you to bless you. Some of His gifts are given to you so you can be a blessing to others. In any case, all gifts of the Spirit are given according to the will of God to all who ask Him. You must learn to appreciate the gifts of God and learn to receive them and exercise them in a manner that glorifies God, not you, and builds His church, not yours.

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13*

**Abiding Truth:** *As I yield to the Holy Spirit, He produces spiritual fruit in me and imparts spiritual gifts to me.*

**Day 5-----**

**EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit is with all people drawing them to live a life of belief in God. The Holy Spirit has always and will always dwell in each believer to lead, guide, direct, convict, train and transform us into the image of Jesus. The term *Christian* actually means *Christ like* or *of Christ*. Your Christian goal should be to become like Jesus. Read each of these Scriptures and briefly write what you learn about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God’s children.

Genesis 41:38-39 \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 31:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Numbers 27:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

Nehemiah 9:30 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 63:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Ezekiel 3:24-27 \_\_\_\_\_

Dan 5:11, 14 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 3:16, 5:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

James 4:5 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 3:24, 4:13 \_\_\_\_\_

*"...the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." -John 14:17*

**Abiding Truth:** *Because I live in a largely unbelieving and often antagonistic world, the Holy Spirit dwells within me to transform me into His image, strengthens me to stand with Him, to live the Christian life, and to be a faithful witness to Him in the face of adversity and persecution.*

*"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." Romans 8:12-17*

God has also promised that His Spirit would come upon you, and, at times, to give His power to you to accomplish a particular work according to His plan that requires something more than your natural abilities. Read the following Scriptures and briefly write what you learn regarding the Holy Spirit coming upon the children of God.

Numbers 11:17-29 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 3:10, 6:34 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 11:29, 13:25 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 14:6, 19, 15:14 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 10:6, 10, 11:6, 16:3 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Chronicles 12:18 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Chronicles 15:1, 24:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 11:2, 42:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 59:21, 61:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Ezekiel 11:5, 36:25-28 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 24:49 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:4-8 \_\_\_\_\_

In the account recorded in the book of Acts 2, we learn of the Holy Spirit filling the disciples of Jesus. As promised, the Holy Spirit empowered and encouraged them, and gave them the gift of speaking in languages and dialects naturally unfamiliar to themselves; He brought conviction upon the hearers of the gospel, and finally He brought about a transformation in many lives. When the Holy Spirit moves, people are moved.

*“But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,” 2 Thessalonians 2:13*

***Abiding Truth:*** *The Holy Spirit will providentially come upon me to help me accomplish His will providing me with divine power and possibly supernatural abilities.*

**Day 6-----**

**THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT**

Just as Jesus Christ met the needs of His disciples during His earthly ministry, the Holy Spirit will minister to you in very practical ways. In this section, you will learn that the ministry of Holy Spirit throughout the world is to bring conviction; and, when you abide in Jesus Christ, He is your Comforter, Companion, and Counselor.

• **CONVICTER:** *“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and you see Me no more; of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged.”*  
John 16:8-11

Because the Spirit is *righteous* He desires to reproduce His righteousness in you. He convicts you of your sin to provoke you to surrender to Him so He can make you righteous. Righteous is both a state of being and a manner of living. When you are born again you take on the imputed righteousness of God as your new state of being. When you believe God, it is accounted (imputed, credited) to you as righteousness. This is what God refers to as washing you clean.

*“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ...”* Titus 3:4-6

After you have been washed, the journey begins to transform your character from walking in the lust of your flesh, to walking in the Spirit. Any thought or action in your life that is not holy grieves the indwelling Holy Spirit. He does not immediately depart from you when this occurs; instead He convicts you or speaks to you through your conscience.

*“...their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them”* -Romans 2:15

Your conscience is the conduit the Holy Spirit uses to warn you and lead you to godly sorrow when you are contemplating or participating in sin.

*“Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”* 2 Corinthians 7:9-10

God urges you to keep a clear conscience. If you learn to quickly respond with obedience and repentance to the Spirit's *nudging* He will keep you from sin and lead you on the path of victory.

*“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*  
Romans 6:16-23

***Abiding Truth:*** *The Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin upon me, to produce godly sorrow in me, to bring me to repentance; away from sin and unto God.*

● **COMFORTER:** “...He will give you another Helper [Comforter], that He may abide with you forever-...” -John 14:16

The comfort that the Holy Spirit offers is dual. When you are hurting or needy He offers you the tenderness of a gentle nurturing mother.

*“As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you;” Isaiah 66:13*

But He also empowers you with courage to withstand the trials, temptations toward sin and frustrations of life. The word *comfort* comes from the Latin word *fortis* from which we get the word *fortify*.

*“...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man...” Ephesians 3:16*

Write about a personal experience when you have known either the tender or the strengthening comfort of the Holy Spirit. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

● **COMPANION:** “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you;” John 14:26-27

*“...I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” -Matthew 28:20*

As you abide in Christ, you are never alone; however, the circumstances of your life often press upon you and can cause you to feel very much alone. In these times, you can become vulnerable to the attack of the enemy of your soul. You must draw near to God, believing the promise of His loving, caring presence with you and in you. In times like this, you should go to God’s Word, with a friend or alone if necessary, and let His companionship meet your emotional needs.

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

Read the promise and instruction in James 4:8. How will you respond to loneliness, depression or the attacks of the enemy in the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

• **COUNSELOR:** “...And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor,...” -Isaiah 9:6

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” John 14:26

God counsels you with His Word, through godly people and by the inward guidance of His Holy Spirit. As you spend time in God’s presence, you will learn to hear His voice and to discern His will. If you neglect to develop intimacy with God through abiding in His Word, you will continue to stumble through life, missing the guidance and counsel of the Holy Spirit.

• Do you need God’s wisdom today for a particular situation?  Yes  No

Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What promise of wisdom does God give in James 1:5, 6? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

“...He will guide you into all truth...” John 16:13

“Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.” Isaiah 30:21

**Abiding Truth:** *The Holy Spirit is my Comforter in all of my difficulties, my ever-present Companion, and my Counselor when I need guidance and wisdom.*

**Day 7-----**

Go back through Lesson Four and review the eight **Abiding Truths** that you learned. Write these truths below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 8) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.



## My Spiritual Growth and Maturity

The Bible describes the new believer as a *babe* in Christ. Just as a healthy baby experiences the various stages of growth before reaching mature adulthood, the baby Christian must steadily progress on the path to *spiritual* maturity. Your Heavenly Father desires that all of His children would develop into mature men and women of faith. Let's look at the stages and elements of your spiritual growth and maturation spoken of by God.

### Day 1-----

Jesus' conversation with the naturally mature adult man, Nicodemus, is recorded in John 3:1-21. Read these verses and answer the following questions:

Having clearly been born of water already, what did Jesus tell Nicodemus must occur in order for him or any other person to enter the kingdom of God (verse 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Jesus in verse 6, are the birth of water and the birth of the Spirit the same or different? \_\_\_\_\_

Nicodemus was being drawn by the Holy Spirit to have this conversation with Jesus. Jesus response was a new concept for Nicodemus, as it will be for anyone not yet born of the Spirit. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-14 to discover why this is true, and answer the following questions:

As a natural man, what can you know and understand? \_\_\_\_\_

Who reveals to you the wisdom and understanding of God? \_\_\_\_\_

All people must be born of the Spirit to be saved and enter the kingdom of God. No one automatically begins life or automatically experiences being born of the Spirit. When you determine to commit your life to your Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit fills you and begins to teach you God's wisdom, and His way of life and love. Having your understanding of life challenged by God in such a way is no small event for anyone. It is seriously life changing.

According to John 16:8-14, the Holy Spirit is with whom to convict them of sin, righteousness and of judgment? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Matthew 18:3, what two things must happen within you in order to enter the kingdom of God?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Once you are converted (born again), having been drawn by the Spirit of God, you must humbly seek to learn as a child the things of God. People come to Christ in various stages of natural maturity, but you must humble yourself as a child in order to learn rightly from Him the truth about life in Him and commit to doing His will in your life to develop spiritual maturity.

“Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” Luke 18:17

***Abiding Truth:*** I enter into the family of God by being born of the Spirit.

Having been born of the Spirit, you are now a spiritual baby with your heart and mind set on growing in the Spirit. It is tragic when a baby fails to grow and become a healthy, mature adult. It is devastating when a Christian stops short of spiritual fruit bearing wholeness and maturity.

“...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” 1 Peter 2:2-3

According to Luke 9:23, what three things must you now do as a child of God?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Herein the practice of growing in Christ is revealed. Growing in Christ is the process of developing godly character. God knows that you came to Him without mature character, but He does not want you to remain immature.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 and summarize what you learn about God’s understanding of your character when He adopts you as His child. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God knowing what condition you are in when He adopts you has a plan. After you are born of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit begins to dwell within you to transform you into the image of Christ. Read the following Scriptures and summarize what God declares is your part of the transformation process.

Romans 12:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 2:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are you to desire in order to grow according to 1 Peter 2:2? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Having cast off the ungodly things of this world, God wants you to grow by consuming His Word to learn from Him and to develop godly character.

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection [maturity], not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God ...” -Hebrews 6:1

**Abiding Truth:** *Having been born of the Spirit, I must continuously present myself as a living sacrifice to God and consume His Word in order to go on to maturity in Christ.*

**Day 2-----**

**MY SANCTIFICATION**

The biblical term for the Christian’s maturing process is *sanctification*.

“...we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth...” -2 Thessalonians 2:13

**Sanctification** - *Separated or set apart unto and devoted to God. Separation from the practice of sin and all that displeases and is opposed to God.*

The word can also be translated *holy*. Holiness is neither a feeling nor an experience but a state of being in a lifestyle in which the character of the Son of God is developed within you and lived out in your daily lives.

Read 1 Peter 1:15, 16 and write out the verses below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Although you have inherited the holiness of God the moment you are born of the Spirit (imputed holiness), God now sets out to bring you up in His training according to His Word to produce lives demonstrating holiness (godly character). Read Ephesians 6:4 and summarize what you learn.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How does God describe the maturation process of the child Jesus in the following Scriptures?

Luke 2:40 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:51-52 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Whether or not this happened in your life while growing through natural childhood, developing spiritual maturity is God's desire for all His children no matter how old you are when we came to Him. Your heavenly Father will make sure spiritual maturity will develop through the process of sanctification in the life of all of His faithful children.

The process of sanctification has three major aspects; initial, progressive and ultimate sanctification.

- **INITIAL SANCTIFICATION**

Initial sanctification is what God does for every believer. This position bears no relationship to our behavior. At the moment of conversion He sanctifies or sets us apart unto Himself. All believers have been redeemed, cleansed, forgiven, justified and made righteous through the blood of Christ. If you are truly born again you are sanctified by God. The Bible calls you a *saint*, not because you are faultless or sinless, but because the moment you renounced your fleshly desires turning away from the corruption of sin unto loving and serving God Jesus took your guilt upon Himself on the cross and you became blameless before God.

*"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." -Hebrews 10:10*

- **PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION**

Progressing in sanctification is entirely dependent upon your daily decision to abide in Christ and receive His power. God desires that you continue willingly surrendering your life to Him, and in a sense sanctify *yourself*. As you yield to Him and desire His will in your life you will progress in sanctification.

*"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;" 1 Peter 3:15*

*"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." Philippians 2:12-13*

As you continuously and consciously offer or present yourself to God, set your mind on things above and walk by the power of the Holy Spirit, you are separating yourself unto God and therefore progressing in sanctification. Your character development shall be ever improving as you daily abide in Christ, walk in the Spirit and experience God's power in your life.

*"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you." Psalm 32:8-9*

*"I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness, for holiness." -Romans 6:19*

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- **ULTIMATE SANCTIFICATION**

This absolute and final sanctification will occur when you are fully conformed to the image of Jesus Christ at His coming. As long as you are in your earthly body, you retain a fallen nature that is prone to, but not subject to, sin requiring continuous battling between the flesh and the Spirit. However, someday you will be fully conformed to the image of Christ when you depart from this realm and awaken in His presence.

The following illustration helps us understand the process of sanctification:

*An expert of fine brass was searching through a pile of junk on the outskirts of the city, when he suddenly spied an old, battered brass pot. It was dirty, stained and beaten up, but his practiced eye recognized a thing of value. He made his way through the junk and picked up the old pot and **set it apart** by itself. In so doing, he **sanctified** that vessel. This is **sanctification** in its initial application. Of course he must spend many hours **cleansing, straightening out the dents and polishing** the old pot, until it becomes a thing of beauty to grace his table. This process is **sanctification** in its second application.*

Jesus Christ searched you out of the junk pile of this world. When you responded to Him with saving faith He set you apart for Himself. He is now committed to cleanse you, straighten out your *dents*, polish you and make you a thing of beauty for His glory. Jesus is faithful to complete the work He began in your life. Your part is to yield to Him daily. As you abide in Him, faithfully surrendering to His will, you experience His sanctifying hand in your life receiving all that He has for you, including victory over sin in this life.

In his letter to the Philippian church, Paul wrote of his confidence in the Lord's faithfulness in the sanctification process of the saints in Christ Jesus. Write Philippians 1:6 below.

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*"...we shall be like Him..." -1 John 3:2*

*"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"*  
*1 Thessalonians 5:23*

*"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:6-9*

<p><b><i>Abiding Truth:</i></b> <i>God sanctified me when I received Christ as Savior and Lord. He continues to sanctify me as I walk with Him in love and obedience. One day He will welcome me into His presence and, in that moment, my sanctification will be complete.</i></p>
---

**Day 3**-----

Let’s examine now the process of sanctification in the life of Saul of Tarsus, who later became the apostle Paul as an example to you to press on to spiritual maturity.

*“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.” 1 Timothy 1:12-16*

**PAUL’S INITIAL SANCTIFICATION - SALVATION**

In order to read Paul’s entire story recorded in the Bible, you would have to read much of the New Testament (Acts 9-28 – written by Luke; written by Paul – Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon; and 2 Peter 3:14-18 written by the apostle Peter).

Paul was a religious man from his youth, though he did not come to faith in Christ until much later in his life. Read the following Scriptures and write out what you learn about Paul’s life.

Acts 22:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 23:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 26:4-5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 1:14 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul’s zeal for his Jewish religion and its laws were displayed most vividly in his persecution of the Christian church. He believed that persecuting Christ’s followers was a service unto God so he did it with a clear conscience. Read the Scriptures below and summarize Paul’s actions toward believers.

Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 22:4-5, 19; 26:9-11

Galatians 1:13

Philippians 3:4-6

Many agree that Paul's conversion to Christianity was one of the greatest and most important events in church history. Read the exciting account in Acts 9:1-22 and briefly rewrite the story in your own words.

God used blindness to get Paul's attention. In the mind of a Jew, especially a Pharisee, blindness meant the presence of sin (see John 9:1-2). Now that God had Paul's attention, He could rightly redirect the zeal with which Paul had been ignorantly persecuting Jesus and His church in ignorance. Paul discovered that his zeal had been to serve the misguided traditions of his fathers rather than to serve God. Though Paul had lived a deceived life, His encounter with Jesus Christ completely transformed him. Read the account of Paul's initial sanctification recorded in Acts 9:1-19 and write out some of the key points.

***Abiding Truth:*** *God did not choose me to be His child, or adopt me into His family, because of any virtue of my own, but by His grace alone.*

### PAUL'S PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION

Paul, already well educated in what the Holy Scriptures contained, simply needed the Holy Spirit to dispel his misunderstandings of Scripture and reveal the truth to him so he could correctly serve God.

Note: The Scriptures Paul refers to in his writings are exclusively the Old Testament Scriptures as the Holy Spirit was using Paul as one of His pens to write the New Testament.

Paul's new desire was to have fellowship with Christ, to make spiritual progress and to become more and more like Christ. Having been filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul sanctified in his heart the Lord Jesus entirely depending upon and abiding in Christ to receive His power. Paul willingly surrendered all of himself to serve Jesus Christ.

Turn in your Bible to Philippians 3 and read the entire chapter.

Why did Paul willingly suffer the loss of all things (verses 7 and 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was his heart's desire (verses 10 and 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Moses asked God to give him a deeper knowledge of Himself and His ways. Read Moses' prayer in Exodus 33:13.

*"Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find favor in Your sight." Exodus 33:13*

- Do you think this is the kind of prayer that God answers?  Yes  No

*"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." John 14:21*

How do you think you can come to know God more intimately? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Is this the desire of your heart?  Yes  No

**Abiding Truth:** *Spiritual growth and maturity requires my commitment, endurance and personal effort coupled to the power of God.*

## PAUL'S SERVICE

*"...he is a chosen instrument of Mine..." Acts 9:15*

*"...when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away...being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went..." Acts 13:3-4*

**Apostle** - A messenger; one sent out on a mission, who derives his authority from the sender.



Now as an instrument in God’s hand, Paul was empowered by the Holy Spirit to do His will as:

- **Missionary and church planter** – The Lord sent Paul on three missionary journeys to areas where the gospel had not been previously preached. God used Paul to establish many churches in these cities. Paul’s missionary travels are recorded in Acts, Chapters 13-21.

*“...to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.” -Acts 9:15b*

- **Preacher and teacher** – As was foretold, Paul preached Christ to gentiles, kings and the sons of Israel. Many believed in Christ, while others mocked and persecuted him. Examples of Paul’s sermons are recorded in Acts 13:16-41 and Acts 17:22-34.

*“To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,” Ephesians 3:8*

- **Writer** – Of the 27 books forming the New Testament, God directed Paul to write His words in at least thirteen of them. Most of these books were actually epistles (letters) written to churches God had established through Paul’s former missionary journeys.

From prideful religious leader and persecutor of God’s people to humble servant of the Almighty God, Paul’s life is an example to all believers. Though not all lives are intended to choose the same vocation and service as Paul, we all have gone from darkness to light, from defying God’s truth to humbly receiving His gift of salvation by grace. God’s will for you is that you would serve Him with the fervency shown in Paul no matter what vocation you have chosen or what stage of life you are in, according to the providence of God.

Read Ephesians 2:10 and write down in your own words: A) the commitment God makes to you and B) the commitment He wants you to make to Him in response to His gift of grace to you.

- A) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- B) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe that God has a plan and purpose for your life?  Yes  No

***Abiding Truth:*** *Regardless of my past mistakes or failures, God’s calling and purpose for me is to have a relationship with Him and to serve Him by serving others.*

### PAUL’S ULTIMATE SANCTIFICATION

In Philippians 3:12-16, Paul acknowledged that he had not attained ultimate sanctification, although he had matured in Christ (vs. 15). He used three descriptive phrases to explain what he was doing, and exhorts you to do, on your way toward ultimate sanctification. As a true believer, it is your part to:

**Lay hold** - *To obtain the prize with the idea of eager and strenuous exertion.*

**Press on** - *To pursue with earnestness and diligence in order to obtain.*

**Reach forward** - *Stretching for the finish line as in a race.*

The Holy Spirit’s comparison of the Christian to an athlete laying hold, pressing on and reaching forward emphasizes the truth that ultimate sanctification is the result of commitment and discipline. Initial sanctification (salvation) is God’s gift to all who will repent and receive Christ as Lord; however, maturity is a daily choice requiring effort and sacrifice.

*“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

**Abiding Truth:** *Ultimate sanctification is the result of God working in me as I faithfully finish the race committed and disciplined.*

**Day 4-----**

**HINDRANCES TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

**Hinder** - *To interfere with the progress of, encumber, hold back, impede, obstruct.*

A runner in a race will be hindered from running strong and finishing well if he **focuses behind from where he has come, on other runners, or on himself** rather than on the goal. God addresses these three dangers in Philippians, Chapter 3.

**• THE DANGER OF LOOKING BACK**

Read Philippians 3:13-14 and answer the following questions:

What one thing did Paul do (vs. 14)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What two practices did Paul embrace in order to press toward his goal (vs. 13)?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Based on what you have learned about Paul in this lesson, what events in his past do you think he needed to forget? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To forget in this sense does not mean to cease to remember, but to choose to put it behind you. You must not allow past sins or hurtful memories to dominate the present and rob your future, but put them behind you and move forward in God's grace, forgiveness and power.

Turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 15:9-10. How does Paul describe himself and what Christ did for him? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think Paul could have served the Lord as effectively if he had focused on his past failures and sin, rather than on the grace of God?  Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Though Paul was ashamed of his past, he knew that his freedom from it was found in repentance before God, believing in the gospel and walking in His grace. He could then forget the past and go forward.

• Is there anything in your life that you believe is hindering you from running the race?  
 Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

*"For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." -1 Corinthians 15:9*

• Perhaps God has used this lesson to expose present circumstances or past memories that you need to commit to Him, and receive His guidance and healing in order to leave it behind you. If so, are you willing to open up and share with your discipler, accountability person or prayer partner?  Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

*"The LORD will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands." Psalm 138:8*

**• THE DANGER OF FOCUSING ON OTHERS**

How did Paul describe some of the people in his life in Philippians 3:2, 18, and 19?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul suffered much at the hands of others who came against him. For further insight into these offenses read 2 Corinthians 11:23-33. Describe the sufferings he endured. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Read 2 Timothy 4:14-17 and describe Paul's experiences with others and how he responded to them. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-12 and describe the focus Paul maintained despite the persecutions and suffering he endured at the hands of others. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Is it possible that your spiritual growth has been hindered because you have been focusing on others instead of the prize?  Yes  No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Note: In week six you will explore the principles for practicing *Biblical Forgiveness and Reconciliation*.

• **THE DANGER OF FOCUSING ON MYSELF IMPROPERLY**

Though Paul was a man who did many things which he would later regret, he also had the potential for confidence in his own accomplishments. Read Philippians 3:3-11, and write below what you believe Paul is expressing. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As a Jew, Paul believed that he was a good, even a righteous man. In Philippians 3:6 he states that he was blameless according to the standard of his old life and religion. When he met Christ, he understood the reality of his fallen condition and ceased putting confidence in himself or in his own goodness.

**Self-confidence** - *Putting faith or trust in oneself and one's own abilities.*

The biblical term for self-confidence is pride.

**Pride** - *To congratulate oneself because of something one is, has, or has achieved; conceit, haughtiness or arrogance.*

According to Proverbs 16:18, what does pride produce? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*“A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.” -Proverbs 29:23*

The dangers of focusing on self-exaltation are many; self-centeredness, self-service, self-conceit, self-deceit, self-indulgence, self-seeking, self-reliance, selfishness and ultimately self-worship.

Read James 3:13-16. What do you learn about selfish ambition from these verses?

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*“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.” -I John 2:16*

According to Luke 9:23-24 what does Jesus say every believer must do? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think it means to deny yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Abiding Truth:** *To make spiritual progress, I must keep my focus on the goal of eternal intimacy with Christ and spiritual maturity.*

## Day 5-----

### THE WEIGHT OF SIN

*“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2*

*“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.” Galatians 5:19-26*

Just as a runner in a race knows he will run faster and endure longer if he doesn't carry excess weight, you must constantly be aware of the *hindrance* of the excess weight of sin in your life. Sin hinders you from making spiritual progress because it distracts you from our goal of spiritual maturity, separates you from fellowship and intimacy with your Heavenly Father and quenches the power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

*"...your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear."* -Isaiah 59:2

According to God, in 1 John 5:16, does all sin lead to death?  Yes  No

How does God define sin in 1 John 5:17? \_\_\_\_\_

Who defines righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_ Where can you find His definition? \_\_\_\_\_

How can you learn the difference between the sin that leads to death and sin that does not lead to death? \_\_\_\_\_

God has made provision for you to *strip off* and *throw aside* the entanglements of sin, and be restored to a right relationship with Him, through *biblical reconciliation*.

### • THE STEPS TO RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

**Step 1 - Confess** - *To admit, own or acknowledge, to say the same.*

To confess your sins is to agree with God that your actions have truly been in opposition to His will and ways. What God calls sin is sin.

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

**Step 2 - Repent** - *To be sorry, to change one's mind, to turn from sin toward God.*

To request God's forgiveness is your response to being broken, sorry, and repentant that your actions have been against Him and have separated you from fellowship with Him.

*"Look upon my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins."* Psalm 25:18

**Step 3 - Believe and Receive**

When you have obeyed Step 1 and 2, you must follow with the final step of believing and receiving. Based upon God's faithfulness and His Word, you accept His forgiveness, confident that your fellowship with Him will be restored.

*"And all things you ask in prayer, believing you will receive."* Matthew 21:22

People who attempt to live by God’s standards of holiness in the flesh (without surrendering to Jesus as Lord and belief in the gospel and, therefore, without the indwelling Holy Spirit) will regularly and ultimately fail. They will fall short of love, kindness, patience, and forgiveness toward others. We all have a natural *bend* towards selfishness; the potential to offend and be easily offended, and to think more of ourselves and less of others. Therefore, we all must practice the steps to reconciliation with God every time we become aware of our sin!

When you have offended or sinned against another person, what does the Bible tell you that you must do? Read Matthew 5:23-24 for the answer. \_\_\_\_\_

*“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?”  
Romans 6:16*

***Abiding Truth:*** *God’s plan for casting off the unnecessary weight of sin in my life is my only way to escape the snare of the devil.*

**Day 6-----**

**MY CHRISTIAN GOAL**

*“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 3:14*

Throughout chapter 3 of Philippians, Paul weaves the theme of his life goal and the purpose for his existence. In verse 14 he characterized this goal and purpose as the *“upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* This *upward call* can be summed up in two words, *in Christ*.

As you read the following Scriptures that describe Paul’s goal, allow the Lord to speak to you about your own life. Consider your own personal goals and the purpose for your life and existence and write your thoughts below each verse.

**• KNOWING CHRIST**

*“... for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...” v.8*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**• BEING FOUND IN CHRIST**

*“... and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;” v. 9*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**• KNOWING CHRIST’S POWER**

“... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...” v. 10

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**• OUR OWN RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD**

“...if, by any means, I may attain to (arrive at) the resurrection from the dead.” v.11

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Something happens when we are resurrected from the dead. Read Philippians 3:20-21. Write out the main points below.

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**• INVENTORY OF YOUR PERSONAL GOALS**

- Do you have a desire to grow in your intimate relationship with Christ?  Yes  No
- Do you want to become more like Christ in your daily life and actions?  Yes  No
- Is spiritual growth and maturity your personal goal?  Yes  No
- Are you willing to...

...forget those things which are behind and reach forward to those things which are ahead?  Yes  No

...focus on the goal of the prize rather than on those who have failed, offended or hurt you?  Yes  No

...deny yourself and daily submit to Christ as Lord of your life?  Yes  No

...address the sin issue in your life by confessing and repenting of any known sin and believing and receiving God’s forgiveness and restored fellowship?  Yes  No

What has God shown you that you need to do to “...press on toward the goal...” at this time?

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God inspired Paul to expose his very heart to his readers. He confessed and gave an account of his faults and weaknesses, and boldly proclaimed his love for Christ and his passion for holiness and spiritual maturity. His life story is recorded for our encouragement and as an example for us to follow.

Are you, like Paul, willing to be open, accountable and even vulnerable to others in order to make spiritual progress?     Yes  No

- **Accountability** - *Subject to giving an account, answerable, a statement explaining one’s conduct.*

Note: If you don’t already have an accountability person or prayer partner in your life, contact your pastor or other church leader and express your desire for this type of encouragement and accountability.

*“Confess your trespasses one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” -James 5:16*

***Abiding Truth:*** *My ultimate goal is, if by any means, that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead in Christ.*

**Day 7-----**

Go back through Lesson Five and review the ten **Abiding Truths** that you learned. Rewrite these truths below.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 6) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 7) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 8) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 9) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

## Biblical Forgiveness and Reconciliation

To *forgive* is to grant pardon to a person for an indebtedness; thereby absolving them of the rightful responsibility for the indebtedness by taking the responsibility for the indebtedness upon oneself or accepting fulfillment of the indebtedness from another. When a debt is forgiven us by someone else, the forgiving person grants us pardon (remission) for our indebtedness and the rights to payment are remitted or given away. If someone injures us and we forgive them, we give away the right to require a penalty and/or restitution from them and absorb (remit) the loss to ourselves thereby setting them free of the penalty for their offense and their obligation to us.

### Day 1-----

#### BIBLICAL FORGIVENESS

*“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32*

According to God in Ephesians 4:32, in what manner and according to what standard are you to forgive others? Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

This is the model of God. You were dead in your sins and owed a great debt to God, which was too great for you to fully pay. As promised of old, God gave Himself (Jesus) to pay your debt of sin providing the way for you to be free from the penalty you owed Him. When you practice forgiveness toward others, you absorb the loss yourself just as God has done on your behalf.

*“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:10*

To forgive does not mean the injustice is ignored, but rather an alternate source of payment has been secured. God did not ignore your sin or the responsibility for it. Instead He fulfilled the requirements of the law by paying the penalty of your debt for you by the broken body and poured out blood of Jesus Christ so you could be forgiven.

According to God, what must you do to receive His forgiveness for your sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
(see 1 Kings 8:46-50; 2 Chronicles 6:36-39; Acts 3:19, 8:22)

When you forgive another, you take upon yourself the responsibility for the fulfillment of the law unto yourself by paying the debt owed to you on behalf of someone else to yourself. Depending upon the sin and who is involved in it, however, some restitution may still be required in some forms (i.e. if a terrestrial law is broken, the government may require the penalty and restitution to be paid; if someone is capable of making reasonable restitution, then they must offer to do so). Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn about God’s manner and standard for practicing biblical forgiveness:

Jeremiah 36:1-3 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:12-15 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 17:3-4 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:21-35 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

John 20:21-23 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 1:9 Manner \_\_\_\_\_  
Standard \_\_\_\_\_

According to Matthew 18:15-17, what does God instruct you to do if a brother sins against you?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God tells you that if someone named a brother, or sister, is unwilling to repent of known sin that leads to death when confronted with the truth, you, as a servant of God, are to disassociate yourself with the offender until such time when the offender repents. Then, once repentance is found in the offender, you are to kindly and tenderheartedly re-embrace them with complete forgiveness. This is part of God's plan to bring someone to godly sorrow leading to repentance.

*"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death." 2 Corinthians 7:10*

Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:1-11. In these Scriptures we see all of the parts of God's plan working together. The Corinthian Christians having knowledge of sin leading to death, sexual immorality, were called by God through Paul to exercise God's instructions found in Matthew 18:15-17 with the man engaged in the sin. It appears the man's initial response was to resist the call of God through the church to bring him to repentance. After the church members rightly disassociated themselves from the sinning man, he, at some later time, came to the end of himself and repented of his sin (2 Corinthians 2:6). God then called the Corinthian Christians to kindly and tenderheartedly forgive the man and reaffirm their godly love for him.

God does not want you to dwell on the offenses others have committed against you. He prescribes your responsibility as one of action, not inaction. First, you lovingly confront the offender in their sin. If they will not hear you, then return with two or three witnesses who can provide evidence of the offense. If the offender refuses to hear, then bring the offender before the church and let the church render judgment on the matter according to the Word of God. If the offender does not yield to the will of God, then he is to be cast out from among the church until he demonstrates penitence for the sin he committed (1 Cor. 5:5). At this point you are to surrender the debt to God trusting Him to handle the person according to His sovereign plan.

What does God instruct His servants to do to help such a person come to the end of himself who is remaining in unrepentant sin according to Proverbs 24:21-22 (see also Rom 16:17; 1Cor. 5:11; 2Ths. 3:6 & 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

What should you do if you happen to see the offender again prior to his repentance? What did Jesus call the people to do in Matthew 4:17 and Mark 1:15? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Mark 6:12, what did Jesus' disciples call the people to do when Jesus sent them out to the towns and villages? \_\_\_\_\_

The challenge is when someone sins against you who does not know the truth. There are two places in Scripture that help bring understanding regarding God's forgiveness in this situation.

The first is while Jesus is hanging on the cross. Recorded in Luke 23:34, Jesus says, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*" *And they divided His garments and cast lots.*" In this scene the Romans, a culture not knowing the Scriptures of God, were the ones crucifying Jesus and dividing His garments. The Jews not recognizing their Savior, called for His death in ignorance (see Acts 3:17). Note: Despite all of the works Jesus did throughout His ministry, it was His death and resurrection that wiped the veil from the eyes of the people unto belief. But even though the people committed their sin in ignorance, what was God's message to them found in Acts 3:19? \_\_\_\_\_

The second is found in Acts 6-7. Recorded in Acts 7:60, Stephen, in the midst of being stoned to death under persecution for the Word of God, says, "*Lord, do not charge them with this sin.*" Wow! This is an amazing scene, but one not to misunderstand. This act, according to the Scriptures, was also being executed in ignorance of the truth. These men believed they were doing what God wanted them to do under the law as noted by Paul's confession found in 1 Timothy 1:12-14. According to Acts 9:1-9, what did Jesus require of Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Acts 26:12-20, what was the message Jesus gave to Paul that he should instruct people everywhere to do? \_\_\_\_\_

When someone truly ignorant of the truth sins against you, you are to be willing to forgive them of their sin, without compromising the Word of God. Your willingness to forgive them is the basis for you to share the truth with them calling them to repent and believe the gospel.

When you refuse to grant biblical forgiveness, choosing rather to maintain our *right* to demand payment for wrongs done to you, you will also absorb the cost incurred by that choice. Forgiveness is not always without cost or sacrifice, but unwillingness to forgive is far more costly. Unwillingness to trust God and extend, according to His manner and standard, the forgiveness to others you have received from Him results in devastating consequences to you. Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn is the consequence for your unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness:

Matthew 6:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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Matthew 18:21-35

God does not want you to hold on to anything that may cause bitterness in you. You are to forgive, when possible, or you are to trust God giving away to Him all authority and responsibility for recompense of the sin committed against you.

*“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.” Ephesians 4:31*

In Hebrews 12:15 you learn that bitterness, like a deep root, can take a firm hold in your heart, then grows, and produces *fruit*. However, rather than nourish others, this fruit is bitter, causes trouble and defiles others.

*“... looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.” Hebrews 12:15*

Most of us do not readily admit that we have been harboring bitterness. However, Ephesians 4:31 teaches that there is undeniable evidence in an your life when the root of bitterness is growing within your heart.

**Wrath** – *An outburst of a strong, vengeful anger or indignation, seeking retribution.*

**Anger** – *Indignation; a temperament of displeasure.*

**Evil speaking** – *Unkind words, verbal abuse against someone, slander, wounding someone’s good reputation, backbiting, insult and defamation.*

**Malice** – *A desire to injure that we nurture in our hearts.*

## • THE FRUIT OF BITTERNESS

Ask yourself if any of the following are evident in your life. The root may be that of bitterness against someone in your past or present.

- Pride
- Self-righteousness
- Self-pity
- Emotional instability
- Anxiety, tension & stress
- Health problems
- Eating disorders
- Lack of trust in relationships
- Lack of intimacy in marriage
- Sexual dysfunction
- Judgmental & critical of others
- Ultra-sensitive & easily offended
- Absence of peace & joy
- Broken fellowship with Jesus

***Abiding Truth:*** *Unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness and trust God with the offenses others have committed against me brings God’s consequences upon me, fills my heart with bitterness, and defiles my other relationships.*

**Day 2**-----**WHY SHOULD I PRACTICE BIBLICAL FORGIVENESS?**

- **God commands it.**

*“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.”*

*Colossians 3:12-13*

Obedience to your Heavenly Father is not optional. If you pick and choose when you will and will not obey God’s commands, you will live unfruitful, ineffective and a spiritually barren life.

According to John 14:15-24, and 1 John 2:4 & 5:3, how do you demonstrate that you love God?

***Abiding Truth:*** *God commands that I forgive others just as He has forgiven me.*

- **When I practice biblical forgiveness, I resemble Jesus and bear His likeness.**

*“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” 1 John 2:6*

As a Christian, you have the privilege and calling to carry the name of Christ to a lost world. In fact, the term *Christian* means *Christ-like* or *of Christ*. You must be willing to walk as He walked. Christ demonstrated biblical forgiveness. One of the reasons He came to this earth was to provide forgiveness to the guilty. He gave the commission to His church to continue proclaiming repentance unto forgiveness. You must forgive those who have offended you according to His standard and manner, if you are to rightly bear His name!

*“If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?” 1 John 4:20*

Your heavenly Father desires you to bare the image of Jesus. Is this your desire?  Yes  No

***Abiding Truth:*** *When I practice biblical forgiveness I bear the likeness of His Son.*

- **Practicing biblical forgiveness frees my heart from any root of bitterness.**

*“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” Matthew 18:35*

Biblical forgiveness offers the way out and an end to strife! The offender's relationship with God and His children is restored upon confession and repentance. This is the only God ordained platform for a strained relationship to start over and begin anew.

This truth is demonstrated beautifully in the life of Joseph, recorded in Genesis chapters 37-45. Though he was misunderstood, mistreated, betrayed, abandoned by his brothers, and sold into slavery, he refused to allow the root of bitterness to take hold of his life. Shortly before being reunited with his brothers, he testified of the healing work that God had done in his life during the years of separation, as demonstrated in the naming of his sons. In Genesis 41:51-52 we read:

*"Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." Genesis 41:51-52*

To *forget* in this sense does not mean to cease to remember, but *to let go*, to cease to let the memory of hurtful things control your present life. Joseph's *fruitfulness* was directly related to his *forgetfulness*. Joseph chose to trust God with his feelings, emotions and events of his past.

Are you experiencing any root of bitterness in your own heart?  Yes  No

If yes, explain. \_\_\_\_\_

**Abiding Truth:** *Practicing biblical forgiveness frees me from any root of bitterness.*

• **Unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness imprisons me to the past and hinders my potential for a spiritually fruitful life.**

During Joseph's years alone in Egypt he allowed God to heal his heart, which had been broken by his own brothers and circumstances. Later, when given the opportunity, Joseph, trusting the sovereignty of God, extended love, forgiveness and grace to his brothers who had confessed and repented of their sin against him (see Genesis 42:21-23). In Genesis 44, we find Judah doing the works of repentance by coming to the rescue of his younger brother Benjamin. Moved with compassion, Joseph then speaks to them in Genesis 45:1-15

*"Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life...and to keep you alive by a great deliverance...He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him."*

Joseph demonstrated kindness and tenderheartedness through the voice of mercy and forgiveness. Joseph and his brothers could now begin their new relationship in harmony.

If you have been experiencing any root of bitterness, are you willing to trust God and, if necessary, work with your discipler to help you be free?  Yes  No



• **Biblical forgiveness can relieve the burden of guilt in the offender.**

After the death of Jacob, Joseph’s father, Joseph’s brothers became burdened with the guilt of their sin once again. This part of the story is told in Genesis 50:15-21.

*“When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him!”...Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?...And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.” Genesis 50:15-21*

Perhaps Joseph’s brothers would have carried their grief and guilt to their graves if he had not re-affirmed his forgiveness to them. Reaffirming and practicing forgiveness helped remove the guilt. If Jesus had not extended kindness to sinners, we would remain in the stranglehold of guilt. He made the first move toward us that made it possible for us to be reconciled to Him.

*“...in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:7*

Are you willing to be the initiator of biblical forgiveness with others?  Yes  No

***Abiding Truth:*** *As a child of God, I should be the initiator of biblical forgiveness with others.*

**Day 3-----**

**GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN’S SUFFERING**

**Sovereign** - *Possessing supreme power, unlimited wisdom, and absolute authority.*

*“All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’” Daniel 4:35*

Psalm 139:1-18 teaches that God knows you intimately. All of your days were fashioned and ordained by Him. Before you knew God, or accepted Him as Lord and Savior, He foreknew you and foreordained all the days of your life.

*“O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.” Psalm 139:1-4*

God gave you the gift of freewill that you might follow Him, but He also gave you the freedom to reject Him, and His perfect plan for your life. Many ask the question, *“If God were sovereign and in control why do His children suffer?”*

The answer is simple, but must be accepted with a heart of trust and faith toward God. As you saw in Lesson One, you live in a fallen world. God has given all mankind freedom to follow Him and do good, and freedom to reject Him and choose evil. Therefore, both believers and non-believers are affected by the evil choices of others.

God has an eternal plan; good *will* prevail and all evil, suffering and sorrow will eventually cease. Until that time, if God shielded His children from evil, allowing only good, the unsaved would only be motivated to turn to Him for the guarantee of an easy life. This is the very argument that began the historic showdown in heaven between God and Satan in the life of Job.

Satan said to God,

*“Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” Job 1:9-11*

Great adversity came upon Job through the loss of his possessions, his children, and finally his health. God is a loving Father and does not bring evil into our lives, however for His purpose and for our ultimate good, He allows us to be touched by adversity. The outcome of Job’s suffering and encounter with God was greater trust, faith and intimacy with God.

*“...God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone...” James 1:13*

*“Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself?” Job 7:20*

*“Why do you hide Your face and regard me Your enemy?” Job 13:24*

Job did not understand *why* he was suffering believing his righteousness alone should have insulated him from such suffering and that for him to suffer so was not fair (God had declared that Job was a righteous man). Therefore Job asked God, “*Why?*” God directs Job’s attention to His sovereign wisdom, power, and glory, which are displayed in His creation. He teaches Job that trusting in our sovereign God is the key to eternal life, not his own righteousness alone.

*“Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You...I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You...’” Job 42:1-5*

When we suffer, like Job, we often want an explanation. “*Why, why, why?*” One of the many lessons we learn from Job is that “*Why?*” is the wrong question. We should instead ask God, “*What?*” “*What are You trying to teach me? What is Your will for me in this season of suffering?*”

- Knowing that God is sovereign, is there a part of your life that is beyond His power, wisdom, or authority?  Yes  No

- Is there a day or a circumstance that has touched you that God did not know beforehand?  
 Yes  No
  - How should you respond to life's disappointments, difficulties, suffering, and trials?
- 

You can choose to harbor bitterness toward others; parents who failed you, a spouse who deserted you, friends who disappointed you, a drunk driver who killed a loved-one, and so forth, or you can practice biblical forgiveness and place your faith and trust in your sovereign God and His plan.

When you accept Christ as Savior and Lord, you put our trust in Him for your eternal destiny. You must also trust Him with your past experiences and your present circumstances. He alone can comfort you in and through your trials and strengthen you to do the right thing. He alone can bring good out of bad and restore relationships that have been broken. Your obedience to God's Word will give you peace and bring praise, honor, and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

***Abiding Truth:*** *God has the perfect plan for my life with all the details of His plan laid out before me. My responsibility is to ask, "What is Your plan?" And be ready to abide in Him.*

## Day 4-----

### TRIALS AND TRIBULATION

Jesus taught His followers that trials and tribulations are part of the life of a disciple.

*"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John 16:33*

**Tribulation** - *Pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution and trouble.*

*"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:6-7*

Just as the refiner places the crude gold into the crucible and turns up the heat in order to bring the dross to the surface, God places His beloved children in the crucible of suffering in order to both refine you and transform you into the image of Christ.

*"He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:3*

If you trust Him in this process, your life will permeate with the love, hope and confidence of Jesus Christ. As others look at you, they will see Christ in you.

*“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...” Romans 8:28-29*

This verse does not say *some things*, but *all things*. The key is faith. If you choose to believe God’s promises and trust Him in the midst of your trials and tribulations, you will be victorious and God will be glorified in your life. Are you willing to:

Allow God to transform your life through your trials?  Yes  No

Trust God with the pain that others may have caused in your life?  Yes  No

Obey God and practice biblical forgiveness with others in order to be set free from the bondage and pain that has resulted from ignorance or previous unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness in your life?  Yes  No

***Abiding Truth:*** *God’s Word tells me that God will use my trials and tribulations to transform me into His image.*

## RECONCILIATION

To *reconcile* means to restore to friendship or harmony, or to settle or resolve differences. Reconciliation implies that the parties being reconciled were formerly hostile to one another. Because God loves the world and desires that all should come to repentance and be reconciled to Him, He sent His Son to die in our behalf. The blood of Christ is the means of doing away with disharmony between man and God. Through Christ, those who repent and believe in Him are reconciled to God. It is in God’s character to reconstruct what was broken, bring harmony where there was disharmony, settle what was unsettled, rejoin what was separated and restore us in friendship to Him and one to another.

Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn you must demonstrate in order to be reconciled to God after having committed sin against God and/or another person:

Luke 17:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 3:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 3:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 26:20 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 7:10 \_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to practice biblical forgiveness and reconcile with all those who answer God’s invitation that He has extended to all people?  Yes  No

***Abiding Truth:*** *When I practice biblical forgiveness I allow reconciliation to occur.*

*“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Romans 5:10*

**Day 5-----**

Let’s now investigate how to practice biblical forgiveness and reconciliation. You will learn how you are to seek forgiveness from God and be reconciled with others you have offended; how to practice biblical forgiveness and reconciliation with others who have sinned against God and you; how to put away bitterness and change your own feelings about wrongs done to you.

**IF YOU NEED TO SEEK FORGIVENESS**

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

If you have wronged, offended or hurt another as an act of sin, you must:

**Step 1 - If possible, go to those you have offended, confess your wrong actions or attitude, and ask for their forgiveness.**

Six of the most powerful words in the English language,  
*“I was wrong. Please forgive me.”*

*“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24*

Read Matthew 5:23-24 and write out your commitment to obey. \_\_\_\_\_

If possible, do this face to face. However, due to distance and/or other pertinent factors, you may have to communicate with the person by telephone or in writing. Don’t let distractions or other obstacles delay this act of love and obedience.

*“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel: ‘When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit in unfaithfulness against the Lord, and that person is guilty, then he shall confess the sin which he has committed. He shall make restitution for his trespass in full, plus one-fifth of it, and give it to the one he has wronged.’” Numbers 5:5-7*

God tells us in Numbers 5:5-7 that, in addition to confessing our sin, we must be prepared to do what, if necessary and possible? \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2 - Confess your sin to God, and ask Him to forgive your sin and fill your heart with His love.**

*“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.” Psalm 32:1-5*

Take a moment right now to humble yourself before God, asking Him to forgive you and to lead you by His Holy Spirit to strengthen you to obey Him. God alone forgives sins. He forgives and He forgets. By faith, accept God’s absolute forgiveness and cleansing.

Go to your discipler, accountability person, prayer partner or Christian friend and share with them what the Lord is doing in your life in this important area of worshipping God. Ask them to pray with you and to hold you accountable to follow through on your commitment.

<p><b><i>Abiding Truth:</i></b> <i>God’s Word commands me to go to anyone I have sinned against and humbly practice biblical forgiveness.</i></p>
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**IF A NON-CHRISTIAN HAS SINNED AGAINST YOU**

**Step 1 - Pray and ask God for the strength to obey His plan.**

Remember, God is sovereign. He has providentially ordained the circumstances to use you to bring the truth to this person. Help the person understand their need for repentance and belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your responsibility is to sow the seed of truth. You cannot make them receive and believe.

**Step 2 - Pray and ask God for the strength to be prepared to forgive the person or persons.**

Remember Jesus on the cross and Stephen? While they were in the midst of their suffering at the hands of people acting in ignorance they each asked God not to account their persecutors’ sin unto them, if they would come to repentance and a belief in the gospel. You are to emulate Jesus and forgive them, but make sure to call them to repentance and belief in the gospel.

**Step 3 - Make certain you do not harbor any root of bitterness toward the offender.**

If at any time you sense a root of bitterness within you, give to God in prayer any authority for the payment of the debt owed to you. Then put your focus on the upward calling of Christ.

*“Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works.” 2 Timothy 4:14*

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*“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.” Philippians 4:8*

**IF A CHRISTIAN HAS SINNED AGAINST YOU**

**Step 1 - Pray and ask God for the strength to obey His plan according to His Word.**

*“If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.” 1 John 5:16*

If it is a sin not leading to death, pray for the brother or sister. If it is sin leading to death, then:

*“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17*

*“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” 1 John 5:14*

**Step 2 – If he repents, forgive him.**

*“If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.” Luke 17:3*

God promised to give you the strength to move mountains. This may be your Mt. Everest! Practicing biblical forgiveness is God’s will, so you can be confident that if you ask for His strength, it will be granted.

**Step 3 - Communicate your forgiveness to the person or persons.**

The word *forgive* is a *verb*, or an *action word*. To truly forgive requires you to *take action*. God is using His Word to speak to you right now, revealing truth for you to obey and *act upon*.

Read Jesus’ parable on forgiveness in Matthew 18:21-35. Describe the two very different responses of the lord of the slave and the slave from verses 27 and 28?

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According to verses 34 and 35, what did the lord of the slave do in response to the first slave’s unwillingness to forgive his fellow slave?

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What is the message God is communicating to you through this parable? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Satan does not want you to practice biblical forgiveness; therefore you must not try to stand alone. Commit yourself to God and, if necessary, seek the support and accountability of a mature Christian friend, spouse, or prayer partner.

*“Forgiveness is not an emotion...Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart.” -Corrie ten Boom*

Write out your commitment to practice biblical forgiveness with any person or persons the Holy Spirit reveals you should, and give yourself a date to contact them by, so you won't let yourself put it off! \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

• **Do I have to go to them in person?**

• **Can I call or write them instead?**

In some cases, due to distance, cost of travel, safety to you, or the ability of the other person to be quiet long enough to let you say what you need to say, a letter, email or telephone call may be the best way for you to accomplish this.

**Keep these points in mind when speaking or communicating in writing:**

• **You are doing this out of obedience to your Heavenly Father who loves and cares for you.**

He wants you to be free from the bondage and oppression you have been experiencing as a result of either your own sin or unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness.

• **You do not have to rehearse every detail or act of the offense against you.**

Many times, especially when practicing biblical forgiveness with parents, they are completely unaware of what they may have done that hurt you. In other cases, it may have been blatant sin against you, for example, sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, rape, abandonment by a parent, friend, or spouse, slander spoken against you, etc. In these cases, you can be more specific as to your communication with them.



- **Remain self-controlled.**

God has called you to obey, not to be a prosecuting attorney, jury or judge! Keep it short. In most cases, due to the high level of emotions, we can find ourselves saying things we did not plan on saying that may undermine the purpose of the meeting, letter, or conversation. Your responsibility is to bring the truth, not make them eat it.

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:22-25*

- **Ask them to forgive you for harboring bitterness toward them.**

Remember that what they may have done was wrong and offensive, but bitterness and unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness is equally wrong.

### **What if the brother does not repent after following the steps outlined in Matthew 18:15-17?**

Then follow God’s instructions found in Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 5:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15, 2 Timothy 3:1-5 and Titus 3:9-11, by refusing to associate with them until such time as they come to the end of themselves and repent, and, if necessary, provide proper restitution; then reaffirm your love for them by forgiving them and reconciling with them, if possible.

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

*“Be angry, and do not sin”; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:26-27*

<p><b><u>Abiding Truth:</u></b> God’s Word commands me to humbly practice biblical forgiveness with others who have sinned against me trusting in His perfect plan of redemption.</p>
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### **IN ALL CASES**

- 1) **Make sure to repent of your own sin before requiring repentance of someone else.**

*“And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” Matthew 7:3-5*

**2) Spend time daily with the Lord in His Word and in prayer.**

You develop an intimate relationship with the Savior and receive His wisdom and power through spending time with Him daily, allowing Him to speak to you in His Word and respond back to Him in prayer and obedience. Write out your decision to the Lord to spend time with Him daily in prayer, reading of His Word and abiding in Him.

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*“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33*

**3) Remember the cross and the sacrifice Jesus made for your sins.**

Take a moment right now and thank Jesus for all that He has done for you, for forgiving you for all of your past sins, for His perfect plan of transforming you into His image through this trial, and for the gift of His Holy Spirit.

*“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.” Mathew 16:24-27*

**Day 6-----**

**MAINTAINING YOUR COMMITMENT TO PRACTICE BIBLICAL FORGIVENESS**

The experience of practicing biblical forgiveness will change you, but it will not necessarily change *them*. Only when both parties to any conflict surrender to Him and walk in obedience to His Word do both parties experience the transforming power of God in their lives. However, the other person may resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit and choose to walk according to their feelings and emotions. They may express bitterness toward you. If this is the case, you need to seek God *daily* for His strength to extend mercy and compassion to them, without compromising His plan for your and their spiritual wellness. When this is the case you may encounter a spiritual battle after you have practiced biblical forgiveness.

The closer in relationship to you the person is you must practice biblical forgiveness with, the more challenging following through to completion can be. The enemy, Satan, will attempt to confuse you, distract you, weaken you, and ultimately tempt you to walk according to your own thoughts rather than by faith and trust in God.

*“... above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” Ephesians 6:16*

The other person may simply be immature in their character and you find they repeat certain sins, not leading to death, as they are navigating their own stages of growth and development. For example, if you forgave a parent for being harsh and unloving, and asked them to forgive you for harboring bitterness, yet the next time you see them, they continue to be harsh and unloving, your flesh may want to react in the way you formerly reacted.

God will be faithful and thereby produce His fruit in your life as you surrender to Him moment by moment. You must keep in mind that the primary reason to practice biblical forgiveness was to glorify God by abiding in Him. Unless they too surrender their lives and experiences to the Lord, they *cannot* change. Only God can change our hearts and renew our minds, and only if we surrender to Him.

Depending on the severity of your situation and the seriousness of the circumstances you may consider seeking godly counsel on appropriate and wise boundaries with the other person.

### **MY SPIRITUAL BATTLE**

As you will learn in Lesson Seven, we are involved in a spiritual battle every day. Satan, does not want you to obey God or have victory over sin, therefore, he will attack your mind with past memories, evil thoughts, lies, temptations, and condemnation. You must exercise self-control and remember *what* and *whom* you are battling!

This is the reality in which we live! Satan hates to lose ground in your life. He does not like the idea that he has lost the ability to continue to rob you of God's presence, peace and joy.

#### **How do I stop giving the devil *opportunities* to work his destruction in my life?**

- **Take each thought that enters your mind and measure it by God's Word to see if it is from God, from your flesh, or from the enemy.**

According to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 what should you do with each thought that enters your mind?

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From Philippians 4:8, what kinds of thoughts should occupy your mind? \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Pray in each instant of decision for God's power to do His will.**

*"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21*

You may have developed the habit of responding to an individual with anger, self-defense or other negative behavior. In order to break this habit and develop godly responses, you must be in fellowship with Christ, sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and submitting to His will and ways.

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• **Resist and rebuke the devil in the name of Jesus.**

*“Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil...dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” Jude 1:9*

*“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober [self-controlled], be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 5:6-11*

God wants you to be aware of the devil’s devices so that you can have victory over him. Bitterness is one of Satan’s most powerful tactics to keep God’s people in bondage!

**What if the person does not want to reconcile the relationship?**

You must keep in mind that you are only responsible for your part. Regardless of the position the other person takes, you must obey God by practicing biblical forgiveness. If the other person refuses to grant you forgiveness or if they do not acknowledge their wrong toward you, God will still bless you for your obedience and pour out His peace, grace, and mercy upon your life. You will still experience His freedom from your bondage regardless of the other person’s response.

God has given you spiritual laws to govern and protect you. His Word gives you direction and His Holy Spirit provides you with understanding and instructs you how to follow His Word. Your flesh, pride and fear will attempt to keep you from trusting and obeying God in these situations, but through the power of the Holy Spirit you can overcome and be victorious.

**Pray this prayer,**

*“Lord Jesus, I pray for the strength to trust You in these circumstances. Help me to remember that I am doing this for You. I do not look to... for anything, but place my life in Your hands. I pray for reconciliation with ..., but I know that I can only do my part. I pray for...to surrender to You that You might be glorified. I trust you entirely with the results. In Jesus Name I pray. Amen”*

*“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13*

**What if the person I have bitterness for is deceased?**

Bitterness in the human heart lives on long after the object of that bitterness has died. The death of the offender does not nullify God’s Word. True, biblical forgiveness requires you to take action. You must do more than agree in your mind or heart that you should practice biblical forgiveness. You must exercise your will and follow through with your actions!

You must begin by confessing your bitterness for the deceased person to the Lord. To *confess* means to *acknowledge or disclose one's misdeed, fault or sin*. Then tell the Lord that you are no longer holding their faults or offenses against them, but giving them over to Him completely trusting in His sovereignty, providence and ultimately for His righteous judgment. It is helpful to speak your confession out loud and verbalize your forgiveness in the presence of a trusted friend, spouse, pastor, counselor, etc.

**Use the following prayer to help guide you:**

*“Lord Jesus, You are my Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer. I agree with Your Word that I must put away all bitterness I have for ..... for the sin they committed against me. I commit... into Your care for...(you may need to be specific). I ask you to take away my bitterness and forgive me for holding onto this bitterness for so long. In Jesus Name I pray. Amen”*

**Abiding Truth:** *God's Word tells me to continue in obedience to Him regardless of the responses or actions of others.*

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6*

**Day 7-----**

**CONCLUSION**

It can be awfully hard to practice biblical forgiveness. It is more costly, however, if you do not. If you do not practice biblical forgiveness, you deny what Jesus has done for you on the cross (see Matt.6:14-15). Your ability to practice biblical forgiveness is directly related to your own experience of God's forgiveness toward you. A readiness to practice biblical forgiveness with others is a major indication that you have truly repented and received God's forgiveness. A broken heart toward God cannot be a hard heart toward others.

*“If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.” 1 John 4:20-21*

Pride and fear can keep you from practicing biblical forgiveness. Refusing to give in, or be broken, insisting on your rights, and defending yourself are all indications that your selfish pride is ruling your life, rather than the Lord. If fears of ‘what-ifs’ are consuming and controlling you, you need to pray for the faith to trust and obey God. Enemies are very expensive to keep. Matthew 18:21-35 warns that an unwillingness to practice biblical forgiveness can be devastating!

*“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:14-15*

Go back through Lesson Six and review the eleven *Abiding Truths* that you learned. Rewrite these truths in the first person below.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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4) \_\_\_\_\_  
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10) \_\_\_\_\_  
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11) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.

## Spiritual Warfare

*“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Ephesians 6:10-13*

*“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ...” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5*

It is very important that you understand that as a believer you are engaged in a battle, a *spiritual* battle. Every day this battle rages on around you and within your very soul. You must choose to stand and fight in the victory that Christ has secured for you, or be defeated!

*“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” Jude 3*

In this lesson you will learn why you are in a spiritual battle, how to identify your enemies and have victory in the battle. In addition, you will also learn how to be strong in your Christian walk and to overcome in your personal war against sin thereby having victory in your journey.

### Day 1-----

#### SETTING THE STAGE

In Lesson Two we studied Genesis 2 and 3 and learned about the Garden of Eden and the perfect environment that God provided for man. Satan, embodied in the snake entered the scene and shrewdly deceived the woman from trusting and obeying the Lord. The man gave in to the temptation Satan laid before him thereby committing sin against God.

*“Then to Adam He (God) said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3:17-19*

Man had been given authority over the earth (Genesis 1:28-31), and a garden to cultivate and keep (Genesis 2:15). When Adam sinned, the entire human race, Satan, and the world were impacted. What resulted was the spiritual warfare that we continue to experience today. In the following section you will study the condition of the world, Satan and mankind as a result of sin entering the world.



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**THE WORLD AFTER THE FALL**

As a result of the fall of man, this world now lies under the powerful influence of the devil. Evidence of this truth is all around you. Read the following verses about the condition of this world and write in your own words what you learn about the world after the fall.

John 12:31 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 11:32 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 2:20 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 John 5:19 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SATAN’S CONDITION AFTER THE FALL**

When man fell into sin, he surrendered dominion of the earth to Satan. What do you learn about Satan from the following Scriptures?

John 14:30, John 16:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MAN’S CONDITION AFTER THE FALL**

Man was originally created in God’s likeness. Bearing God’s image, Adam was undefiled and eternal. After Adam’s fall, whose likeness did the subsequent generations bear according to Genesis 5:1-3? \_\_\_\_\_

How do the following Scriptures describe the human race?

Psalms 14:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 53:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 3:10-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus affirms that all who do not demonstrate faith in Him continue to be lead by the devil's influence. Who, according to Jesus, is the father of all non-believers? Read John 8:38, 41 & 44 for the answer. \_\_\_\_\_

Read 2 Timothy 2:25-26. By whom are all non-believers held captive? \_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** God's entire creation was defiled when Adam gave himself over to follow the devil and sinned in the Garden of Eden. Satan continues to pursue me, tempting me to defy my Creator in this way.

**Day 2-----**

**MY ENEMIES - The Devil, the World and the Flesh**

Most of us imagine that our enemy is someone who has offended or hurt us, therefore, we tend to focus on defending ourselves or contending with others based upon our childhood programming, our cultural norms or our own emotional state. Man has for many generations misunderstood his enemies, but the Bible makes clear who your enemies are and that your struggles are actually *spiritual*. Your enemies are the devil (Satan), the world and your own flesh.

**MY ENEMY - The Devil**

Who is Satan? How does he work? Where did he come from? What is his final destination?

Many humorously imagine that the devil is a figure in a red spandex suit, holding a pitchfork, enticing us to do wrong. In reality the devil is the epitome of evil. All of the hurt and suffering of mankind has its origin in Satan. He is the enemy of God and all that is God's.

*"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."*  
John 8:44

He is *not* the counterpart to God. He is powerful, but does not possess *all* power. He is cunning, but does not have *all* wisdom. He is able to wreak mass destruction, yet he himself *will* be destroyed.

Turn in your Bible and read Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:12-19. These Scriptures give you background into who Satan is, how he works, where he came from and his ultimate fate.

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*"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" Isaiah 14:12*

*"You were the anointed cherub who covers..." Ezekiel 28:14*

Satan was originally a beautiful cherub or angel. His heart became lifted up with pride because of his beauty and he rebelled against God. In Isaiah 14, we read that five times he proclaimed, 'I will.' He wanted to rule heaven, the angels, and God's entire kingdom. He said, "I will make myself like the Most High." He wanted to be God.

What was the result of Satan's rebellion? (See Ezekiel 28:16-17 and Luke 10:18)

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When Satan was cast from heaven, the Bible suggests that he took one-third of the angels with him in his rebellion (2 Peter 2:4 and Revelations 12:4). These fallen angels or demons and all who follow Satan form his army. In the Old Testament book of Daniel we learn that the demonic angels struggle against God's angels for control of nations, kingdoms and individuals (Daniel 10:13-21). According to Matthew 25:41 and Revelations 20:10, what is Satan's ultimate destiny? \_\_\_\_\_

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Satan and his followers were cast from the hosts of heaven and have been dwelling among man.

*"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Ephesians 2:1-3*

In the Bible, Satan is referred to as the ruler of the demons (Mat. 9:34, 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15) known as Beelzebub, and as the ruler of this world (John 12:31, 14:30 & 16:11). But according to Jesus, Satan has been judged by God. It was the work of God through Jesus Christ that marks the eternal destiny of Satan and his followers. But it is God's children that God will use to defeat the works of Satan here and now.

*"He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:15-19*

*"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons;" Mark 16:17*

*“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Luke 10:19*

*“And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” Romans 16:20*

Knowing that he will one day be destroyed, Satan relentlessly pursues his goal of developing and ruling a kingdom of those who will be his followers by using various tactics to gain their affections. You were created by God to be His faithful follower. What God meant for good, Satan wants to corrupt and turn to evil.

*“Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ” Matthew 4:10*

God does not want you to be ignorant of the reality of the devil, his tactics or some of his unfortunate success he will have over those who turn away from God. Look up the following Scriptures and briefly comment on what you learn about some of the tactics of the devil.

Luke 4:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 13:19 and Luke 8:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 16:23 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 2:8-11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Timothy 3:6-7 and 2 Timothy 2:26 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn will be some of the unfortunate success Satan will have as he continues his quest for followers until God puts him in his ultimate destination.

Matthew 24:1-13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Timothy 4:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 3:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 4:3-4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Satan is very powerful, wise, organized and relentless in his attacks upon believers and non-believers. Alone, man is no match for Satan. The devil is more crafty and powerful than you are in your *own* wisdom and strength. However, God has provided for you to have absolute victory over Satan’s attacks. You need not be defeated, deceived, or destroyed by your enemy.

*“...because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4*

What do you learn about your victory over Satan’s attacks from the following verses?

Matthew 24:1-2 & 2 Thessalonians 2:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 24:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 5:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

James 4:6-10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *Satan is the prince or ruler of the world only because people are ignorant of his existence and his tactics, or they submit themselves to him and serve him. He can be defeated!*

**Day 3**-----

**MY ENEMY - The World**

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

As you learned in the previous section, Satan has way too much dominion in this world. The systems of this world, such as politics, economics, education, fashion, entertainment, and the philosophies of man are under his evil influence. But Satan's dominion is only temporary. This is God's world. He has staked His claim through Jesus Christ and He will return to reclaim it for Himself.

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16-17*

When Jesus became a man, He brought the truth of God's kingdom to the earth. Turn in your Bible to Luke 17:20-21. What did Jesus say to the Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders)?

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*"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness ..." 1Corinthians 3:19*

When you were born again you became a member of God's kingdom. Read Philippians 3:20 and Colossians 1:13 and write what you learn from these verses. \_\_\_\_\_

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Though you are a citizen of God's kingdom, you continue to live physically in this world, which is temporarily Satan's kingdom. You live in the midst of two opposing kingdoms.

Shortly before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, He told His followers that the unbelieving world would hate them. Turn in your Bible to John 15:18-21 and 1 John 3:13 and comment on what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_

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Turn in your Bible to Colossians 2:6-10. What warning does God give in verse 8? How do you believe these Scriptures apply to you personally? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4:1-20. What are the three things that Satan uses to choke the Word of God from our hearts according to verse 19?

- 1) The cares of \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 2) The deceitfulness of \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 3) The desires for \_\_\_\_\_ .

*"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith." 1John 5:4*

Satan is a poor loser! He will be relentless to possess your affections, hold your attention and distract you from the kingdom of God with the trivial things of this world. His goal is to enslave you (see Romans 6:16).

---

From the following Scriptures write the warnings and wisdom given to you by God for living in this world?

Romans 12:1-2

Warning \_\_\_\_\_

Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_

James 4:4-10

Warning \_\_\_\_\_

Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:15

Warning \_\_\_\_\_

Wisdom \_\_\_\_\_

Because the systems of this world have been so corrupted by our enemy for so long, most of us don't understand the design or intention of our Creator for these systems. Your heart and mind must be transformed by daily abiding in God's Word to fill your heart and mind with the right understanding from above of the design and intention for these systems.

***Abiding Truth:*** God teaches me to refuse to identify with this world, and to live according to the principles of His kingdom.

**Day 4-----**

**MY ENEMY - My Flesh**

*“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Romans 6:6*

Your flesh is your old sin nature; the habits, desires, thoughts and reactions from your life prior to surrendering to Christ. The flesh is your old *self*, or as Scripture says, your *old man*. The flesh wants to get its own way, cares only about itself, and does not want to live according to God's standards or will. In one sense, You have two opposing natures dwelling within – the Spirit of God and the flesh!

What do you learn about the battle of your flesh and His Spirit in Galatians 5:16-25? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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According to verse 24, what are those who are Christ's supposed to have done with their flesh?

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Who is responsible for crucifying your flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

Although Jesus provides the power over sin, you must take your responsibility to crucify your flesh and its desires that are contrary to the will of God and walk in His power.

Read Romans 6 and answer the following questions.

What died with Christ? (vs. 2-11) \_\_\_\_\_

What did your old self die to and from what are you now freed? (vs. 2, 6, 7, 10, and 11)

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What does God instruct you to do in your struggle against sin and your sin nature? (vs. 13, 16, and 19) \_\_\_\_\_

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God teaches you that before coming to Christ, you were a slave to sin. What must you be enslaved to now in order to have victory over sin? (vs. 16-19) \_\_\_\_\_

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As a child of God, Jesus provided the power of victory over the power of sin in your flesh. Your sin nature *was* crucified and buried with Christ. Now you are alive in Christ with His power in us. Read the following Scriptures and write your responsibilities now that you have been freed from the power of sin in your flesh.

Romans 6:4 I should walk in \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ .

Romans 6:8 I should \_\_\_\_\_ that I shall also live with Him.

Romans 6:11 I should \_\_\_\_\_ to be dead indeed to sin, but \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus my \_\_\_\_\_ .

Romans 6:12 Do not let sin \_\_\_\_\_ in my mortal body, that I should \_\_\_\_\_ its lusts.

Romans 6:13 Do not present my members (of my body) as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, but present myself to \_\_\_\_\_ as being alive from the dead, and my members as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ .

Romans 6:14 Do not permit \_\_\_\_\_ to have \_\_\_\_\_ over me.

According to Romans 6:15-16, what happens to those under grace that present themselves once again as slaves to sin? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to God in Romans 8:13, what did He tell the beloved of God in Rome who were called to be saints would be the result of living according to their flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

What would be the result of putting to death the deeds of the body? \_\_\_\_\_

As you claim the truth of God and, in obedience, continually present yourself to God and abide in Him daily, you are freed from the power of sin! Praise the Lord!

Read Galatians 2:20 and rewrite the verse in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_

Putting to death the deeds of the flesh is critical, but so is learning to walk in (live in) the Spirit. Jesus tells a parable recorded in Luke 11:24-26 about the resulting condition of a man who after being released from an unclean spirit does not fill his heart and mind with the things of God. What does Jesus say is the last state of the man? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Jesus in Luke 11:28, what is the prescription for insuring this does not happen to you? \_\_\_\_\_

*“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish [fleshly desires].” Galatians 5:17*

***Abiding Truth:*** *I must always be on guard against my fallen nature of ungodly desires by abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit which is doing the will of God according to His Word.*

**Day 5-----**

**VICTORY IN THE BATTLE**

In this section, you will focus on Ephesians 6:10-18. Read these verses through several times before answering the following questions.

Where does spiritual strength come from? (v. 10) \_\_\_\_\_

How are you able to stand firm against the devil’s schemes? (v. 11) \_\_\_\_\_

**MY ARMOR FROM GOD**

This spiritual armor has seven components. Just as a soldier does not go to battle unless he is fully covered and armed, we must take up the full armor to stand firm in the strength of the Lord. It is important to note that most of the armor relates to the Word of God.

Fill in the blanks below describing this full armor.

Loins girded with \_\_\_\_\_ Breastplate of \_\_\_\_\_

Shod feet with \_\_\_\_\_ Shield of \_\_\_\_\_

Helmet of \_\_\_\_\_ At all times \_\_\_\_\_

Sword of \_\_\_\_\_

Once the armor is in place, the believer is exhorted to **all** prayer at **all** times in the Spirit, being watchful at **all** times with **all** perseverance and supplication for **all** the saints. On every occasion and in **all** seasons you must have intimacy with your Heavenly Father by abiding in Him and through prayer.

*“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”  
1 Corinthians 15:57*

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.” Jude 1:20-25*

As a believer, living for Christ in a fallen world, you will continue to experience spiritual warfare. However, God has promised that you can stand firm in His victory and not be defeated by Satan. The Scriptures declare that God is able to keep you from falling and to deliver you safely to His presence in your heavenly home.

Read Psalm 13:4. What will happen if you neglect to take up God’s provision? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Abiding Truth:** *God has guaranteed me absolute victory in my spiritual battles, as I walk in the complete armor He has provided.*

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**SATAN’S FLAMING ARROWS**

Ephesians 6:16 teaches that the evil one attacks Christians with flaming arrows. Before you study the nature of these arrows, first seek understanding through the Scriptures about the tactics Satan uses in these attacks.

What word is used in Genesis 3:1 to describe Satan? \_\_\_\_\_

**Cunning** - *Wily, insidious, crafty, subtle, sly, with exceptional shrewdness.*

Ephesians 6:11 tells you to put on the full armor of God in order to stand firm against what?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Wiles** - *Trickery, deceit, crafty, schemes, or cunning arts.*

What will Satan attempt to do, using his crafty scheming? See 2 Corinthians 11:3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

According to 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, why do we not always recognize that we are under satanic attack? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" Genesis 3:1*

Satan’s arrows are aimed at your mind (thought life and will) and your heart (the center of your emotions). Your enemy knows that if he can control your thoughts and feelings, he can then influence your behavior. What do the following verses state about your mind and heart?

Proverbs 23:7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 4:23 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did Satan attack in the following verses?

Matthew 16:21-23 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

John 13:2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 5:3 \_\_\_\_\_

"...the devil...does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him...he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44

"Now when the tempter came ..." Matthew 4:3

"... the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." Revelation 12:10

Satan is liar and deceiver (John 8:44), a tempter (Matthew 4:3), and an accuser (Revelation 12:10). His spiritual arsenal, therefore, consist of:

- **LIES**
- **TEMPTATIONS TO SIN**
- **CONDEMNATION**

Because your enemy is cunning and knows your weaknesses you must be careful to guard your heart and mind from his attacks. God's Word tells you exactly how you must do this.

### **GUARDING MY HEART AND MIND**

What do you learn from the following Scriptures about guarding your heart and mind from satanic attacks?

Psalm 37:39-40 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 26:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 4:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus was tempted by the devil, as recorded in Matthew 4:1-11. Read these verses through several times. With each flaming missile from the devil, Jesus responded with the words, *it is written*. What does this teach you about victory in spiritual warfare? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus confronts the plan of Satan at its core recorded in verse 10. Though Satan was tempting Jesus to worship him instead of His heavenly Father, what did Jesus do? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the devil do in verse 11 as a result of Jesus confronting him with the truth of the Word of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the instruction and promise in James 4:7 and rewrite the verse. \_\_\_\_\_

Read Ephesians 4:25-32. How do you believe we give the devil an opportunity? \_\_\_\_\_

***Abiding Truth:*** *If I take on the provision of God to guard my heart and mind against the devil's temptations to sin, God will protect me from evil and give me victory in battle.*

## Day 6-----

### DO CHRISTIANS CONTINUE TO SIN?

As Christians, spiritual warfare is a part of our life on this earth, but as you have seen, you can have victory in Christ. So then, why do believers continue to sin? The key to understanding this struggle and overcoming the pull of sin in your life is found in the Bible.

*"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,..." Hebrews 12:1-2*

Originally your natural desires were given to you by God and, of themselves, are not sinful. You feel hunger and thirst, so you satisfy that desire with food and drink. You feel tired, so you sleep. Sex is a normal desire; and blessed by God when fulfilled within the biblical guidelines of marriage. The fulfillment of these and other desires only become sinful when you seek to satisfy yourself outside of the will of God. Before you rightly understand the will of God, you live in ignorance of His ways having developed habits of reacting in the flesh instead of responding in love. This is not, however, a license or excuse to continue to walk in these ways and especially not to continue to practice known sin.

The epistle of James provides straightforward teaching on how your desires can lead to sinful behavior. Read James 1:12-16. Satan is the one who tempts you to sin, but according to verse 14, what does Satan use to entice you to sin? \_\_\_\_\_

Instead, God calls you to hunger and thirst for Him, not lust after the things of the flesh.

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”*  
Matthew 5:6

Satan knows your weaknesses and is ready to entice you with temptations to fulfill the desires of your flesh outside of the will of God.

Read James 1:15 and answer the following questions. What happens when you give into the desires of your flesh? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What does sin bring forth? \_\_\_\_\_

Though sin does not always cause physical death, the very nature of sin is to injure, harm, corrupt and destroy. Sin does destroy honor, respect, trust, morals, innocence, dreams and goals. Marriages are broken, innocent children are devastated and lives are shattered when individuals, refusing God’s way, choose instead to fulfill themselves apart from Him. God tells us that sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. This is an eternal consequence.

According to Matthew 18:8-9, what is the consequence for refusing to take necessary steps to eradicate sin from your life? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the benefit of eliminating sin in my life? \_\_\_\_\_

*“The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.”* Proverbs 11:6

In your battle against the lusts of your flesh, what are you instructed to do in 2 Timothy 2:22?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Those who do not abide in Christ are enslaved to sin, but the child of God has been set free from the grip of sin. Turn in your Bible to Galatians 5:16. What must you do in order to have victory over the lusts of your flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

### **ABIDING IN CHRIST AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT**

Victory over your flesh and slavery to sin is only possible when you determine moment by moment to abide in an intimate relationship with Christ and walk in the Spirit. This relationship with God does not just happen, but is a continual act of your will, choosing to offer your body, mind, will and emotions to God. You must admit and acknowledge your own powerlessness without Him, and depend upon Him with the assurance that He will be faithful to receive and strengthen you.

In Romans 8 you learn that abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit means,

- Surrendering your mind (thoughts) to God’s Spirit (verses 4-8)
- Putting to death the deeds of your flesh and fleshly desires (verse 13)
- Being led by God’s Spirit (verse 14)
- Living in the freedom and blessings of being God’s child (verses 15-17)
- Being helped in your weaknesses (verse 26)
- Living for God’s purposes, rather than your own (verse 28)
- Being conformed to the image of Jesus (verses 29-30)
- Being freely given all things from God (verse 32)
- Being free from condemnation (verses 33-34)
- Experiencing a love relationship with Jesus Christ (verses 35-39)
- Having victory in your trials (verses 35-39)

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

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13*

*“And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” Romans 16:20*

***Abiding Truth:*** *As I abide in an intimate relationship with Christ and walk in the Spirit, I will have victory over my flesh and sin.*

- Have you been experiencing victory over the devil, the world, and your flesh?  Yes  No

How has God spoken to you in this chapter about your battle with sin? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What promises will you claim or instructions will you obey as a result of this lesson?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Day 7**-----

Go back through Lesson Seven and review the seven **Abiding Truths** that you learned. Rewrite these truths below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 7) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Note: After you have finished each lesson, send us an email at [gvcftruth@yahoo.com](mailto:gvcftruth@yahoo.com) and we will email the answers to you. You can also email us with any questions or comments you may have as you progress through your study on your way to your victorious journey over Satan, sin and death in Christ Jesus.



Dear Disciple,

This study has been the beginning of a new chapter in your life. Hopefully you are now enjoying a relationship of true intimacy with God as you engage through faith in daily reading of His Word, prayer, trust and commitment to obedience. It is important that you make sure that you approach God in humility, hunger and thirst to receive from Him all He desires to bestow upon you. In this way you present yourself as a living sacrifice unto Him so He can transform you into the image of Jesus Christ.

You have learned some of what the Bible calls the elementary principles of Christ. Invariably you are in one season of your life, navigating the challenges associated therein, but you should also be preparing for the next season as well. In this season, invest yourself in knowing the truth about walking in the Spirit at this time. Success in the next season of life is dependent upon your maturity in Christ developed according to His plan.

As you mature, God calls you to invest yourself wholly in learning from Him. As you mature in your understanding and walk in Christ, God calls you to invest in making disciples that will also learn to do the things He commands while trusting in Him for life. God commands those who are mature to disciple the less mature, for husbands to disciple their wives and for parents to disciple their children. Pray and seek the Lord and He will guide you as to who He would like for you to disciple. It may be a friend, acquaintance, family member, co-worker or a neighbor. The question is not if He has called you to disciple, but whom He has called you to disciple. Be faithful and demonstrate your gratitude to Him by your obedience to His call.

May God bless you as you walk with Him, and to Him be all the glory and honor both now and forever.

Your brother in Christ.

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