

Lesson One What Is Repentance?

Goal: To define repentance and inform us on some Bible characters who preached it.

Key Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:9,10

Repentance means to turn away from all sin; to change one's mind. It brings about a change of attitude, action and lifestyle. In Eddie Jones' tract, "The Truth About Repentance", he wrote that "The nature of repentance is not only a turning from, but also a turning to. It will cause a person to stop a wrong action and begin a right one."

⇒ 2 Peter 3:9

⇒ Genuine repentance is brought about by a "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Before one can repent, he needs to feel sorrow for his sins. He must be sorry not because his sins have been discovered but because he has broken God's commandments and grieved God through his acts of disobedience.

Who Preached It?

A large portion of the following material was taken from the book "Repentance - An About-Face!" A Search For Truth Publication.

In the New Testament, the first person we hear calling men to repentance is John the Baptist (Mark 1:3-4). Then later on in this same chapter we see that the first message Jesus preached after John the Baptist had prepared the way was "Repentance" (Mark 1:14-15).

"The first commandment to come from the lips of Christ was to repent."

The first thing one will do when he or she really believes is repent! This is the first step towards salvation. True repentance produces results. It is telling God (and others) we are sorry and showing our sorrow by turning from sin. The proof of true repentance is the fruit it bears (Acts 26:20).

The third group (person) in the Bible who preached repentance were the disciples. Matter of fact, they were commanded to preach this message (Mark 6:12).

When Christ appeared to His disciples in Luke 24 after His resurrection, He commissioned them to take this glorious Gospel to all the nations of the world. Notice that the first word in Christ's message was "repentance" (Luke 24:47).

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter's first response to the question: "What shall we do?" was to REPENT! (Acts 2:38)

All throughout the New Testament we see that the first response of man to the Gospel is repentance. Nothing else can take its place.

Repentance is a command from God. A command means "to order or demand with authority." Our supreme

authority, Jesus Christ, demands that we first repent in order to be saved. It is not an option. He commands "all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30)

Additional Notes

Lesson Two Is Repentance Necessary?

Goal: To show us that without repentance, there can be no salvation.

Key Scripture: Acts 17:30

Repentance is a commandment from God. And any command that we receive from God must be obeyed.

- ⇒ Jesus said in Luke 13:5 “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Repentance is vital to the plan of salvation!
- ⇒ Ezekiel announced “Thus sayeth the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations” (Ezekiel 14:6).
- ⇒ John the Baptist preached “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2).

We know that repentance is a commandment from the Lord. It is the building block upon which our whole Christian experience is built on. For without true repentance there can be no forgiveness or remission of sins.

Repentance causes a chain reaction:

Repentance => Baptism in Jesus' name => Holy Spirit => Victorious Living => Heaven.

However, without repentance, the rest is not possible.

How Does One Repent?

A large portion of this material was taken and revised from a tract entitled, “The Truth About Repentance” by Eddie Jones.

#1 Conviction of Sin

Before one can truly repent, he must have an understanding and acknowledgment that he is guilty of sin (Romans 3:23; 5:12).

1 John 3:4 - The law is God's Word. Whoso committeth sin transgresseth the law; therefore, they sin against God and deserve the punishment of death (Psalm 51:4; Ezekiel 18:20).

⇒ Romans 6:23

Unless a sinner repents he will stand condemned before God on the judgement day and will be lost forever (Luke 13:3; Jude 15; Revelation 21:8).

God's Word will reveal our sins to us as we study it. This knowledge will bring conviction. Remember Acts 2:37, when the people heard God's Word they were pricked (convicted) in their heart. Another experience that adds to conviction is God's chastisements. He said in Revelation 3:19 “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” Conviction of sin may bring an uncomfortable feeling of shame and

guilt, but if this is followed by true repentance, it will lead to great rejoicing!

#2 Godly Sorrow

There must be feelings of deep sorrow, regret and remorse over sin when a person truly repents. One should not sorrow for personal hardship brought on by sin, but rather remorse over the hurt he has caused a loving, forgiving God.

⇒ 2 Corinthians 7:9,10.

⇒ Joel 2:12; Psalm 34:18

#3 Will to Repent

Read what the Prodigal son had to say in Luke 15:18. If a sinner is willing to repent, God is willing to forgive him of his sins (Acts 3:19).

#4 Plead for Mercy

Psalm 51:1- The first thing David prayed for was mercy. Divine forgiveness is not based upon how good we are but on the love and mercy of God. “...While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8). Luke 18:13 - In approaching God, we must cast ourselves without reservation (not holding back) upon His mercy.

#5 Confession to God

Proverbs 28:13 - A person must be honest and admit (confess) his sins openly to God.

1 John 1:9; 2:1 We must specifically name our sins to God and admit our wrong actions if we want His forgiveness.

“The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.” (Quote from the book, Repentance-An About Face! - Lesson 2, A Search For Truth Publication)

When we confess, there must be true repentance (turning from sin and turning toward God), otherwise our sins will not be forgiven. True repentance involves a godly sorrow.

It is easy to confess and not repent. But real confession hurts and always involves repentance.

Illustration: Children often confess without repentance. For instance, if you caught your little girl taking a biscuit off the shelf at the store. She would immediately say, “I'm sorry. Please do not spank me.” She really is not feeling sorrow for what she did. She is sorry she got caught and uses the words, “I'm sorry” to prevent punishment or rejection.

Often we confess or repent of a sin that we did because we do not want to make God angry and we believe it will take away our feeling of guilt.

But after a while we go back and do the same thing over again.

The sure sign of confession and repentance is a change in our behavior.

#6 Forsake All Sin

“Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezekiel 18:31).

Jesus said to the woman taken in adultery, “...Go, and sin no more” (John 8:11).

⇒ Other references: 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 1 John 2:15-16; Titus 2:11-12.

When we repent, we crucify our sinful nature at an altar of self denial and begin a new life in Christ (Romans 6:6; Mark 8:34). Paul wrote in Romans 6:1,2 “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid, How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

⇒ 1 John 3:4-9

#7 Ask God for Forgiveness

⇒ Hosea 14:2; 1 John 1:9

After a sinner has surrendered all to God, the only thing left to do is ask God to forgive you for all of your sins.

#8 Receive God's Forgiveness

Matthew 6:14 If you want to be forgiven by God, you must forgive others.

⇒ Once you have asked for God's forgiveness, you must simply accept it and forget your sinful past (Philippians 3:13,14).

⇒ Isaiah 1:18

⇒ Psalm 86:4

Additional Notes

Lesson Three Repentance, Remorse, or Reformation?

Goal: To show the difference between these three words.

Key Scripture: Romans 2:4

A lot of this information was taken from a book entitled, “Repentance-An About Face!”. A Search For Truth Publication and Tract #6140, “Except Ye Repent”

The first two lessons have given us a clear understanding of the word repentance.

“Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood” (Matthew 27:3-4).

The word “repented”, found in verse three does not mean repentance. It comes from a Greek word that means: emotion, remorse or anguish.

Judas definitely felt a lot of anguish and remorse for betraying Jesus Christ. Yet he did not experience true repentance. He did not change his mind, his course, or his direction. Instead of returning to Jesus for restoration, he went and hung himself. Judas' remorse and despair led to self-destruction. This was not repentance; it was remorse.

True repentance brings about a change.

For example, look at the life of Peter. He denied Jesus three times in Luke 22:54-62, but afterwards, when he realized what he had done he repented. He did not stop with emotions of regret. He changed his ways and found a deeper relationship with his Lord.

Repentance will always bring about a change. It will make you a better person and free you from guilt, shame and remorse.

Remorse is a feeling of deep regret, of hopelessness and even despair. But it does not lead to real change. It does not help us believe in God.

Repentance causes us to turn away from sin and helps us have faith in God to be filled with His Spirit.

Remorse is destructive; it turns us against ourselves. Repentance gives life by helping us turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:10).

Repentance is more than Reformation

To reform means to “improve one's character or conduct; to become better; to behave better; to give up misconduct; to make better by removing faults or defects.”

When one truly reforms, he starts to live a better life from that moment on.

Although reformation is good, it does not change or erase the past. It still leaves all the sins we have committed on the pages of God's record book. It still leaves the sinner under the sentence of eternal death.

Suppose that a criminal who has broken the law several times and is guilty decides to reform. From that moment on he decides to obey the laws of the land. This is good, but it still does not take away the guilt of his past crimes.

If he is caught or if he surrenders to the law, he will still have to pay for his past crimes, unless he is given a pardon.

Psalm 51:1 tells us that we were all born in sin (iniquity) and guilty of death (Romans 6:23). But through repentance, Jesus has given us a pardon.

True repentance brings about an immediate change in a person's conduct. There is great joy and forgiveness in repentance (1 John 1:9).

When we look at the Old Testament, we learn that the prophets of Israel were continually calling their nation to repent from idolatry and return to God. Many of the kings of Judah brought about a reformation (they tried to improve or correct the faults in their nation). They destroyed many idols and stopped many evil practices that were abominations to the Lord. But the hearts of the people were not turned to God.

Conditions may have appeared good on the outside, but nothing had changed in the hearts of the people.

God is never happy until the root of sin in our heart is removed from our lives and we are transformed (true repentance).

Sinners may stop drinking, fornicating or committing adultery and other sinful habits, but that will not bring about salvation. Only the Holy Spirit can change us within to make us new creatures in Christ.

Reformation changes only the surface or the bad habits men can see. Repentance changes the heart.

Limited Time!

There can be no repentance after death. The time for repentance is now. No one knows how long he or she will live. Therefore, it is not wise to say that you will repent later. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

If you have done something that has caused you to feel remorse, that is not enough. You still need to repent and make things right.

Do not allow sin to remain in your heart. It will keep you out of heaven.

But this is not the Lord's will. He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9).

Additional Notes

Lesson Four

The Results of Repentance

Goal: To describe the great joy that comes with repentance

Key Scripture: Luke 15:7, 10

A large portion of the following material has been taken from the tract "The Truth About Repentance," by Eddie Jones.

#1 Great Joy

When the Prodigal son repented, there was much rejoicing (Luke 15:23).

- ⇒ All of heaven rejoices when one sinner repents!
- ⇒ Knowing that God gives forgiveness of sins to all who confess openly brings us great joy.
- ⇒ In Acts 8:5-8, when the Samaritans listened to the preaching of Philip, there was great joy in the city.

#2 New Birth

The new birth experience consists of two elements: water and spirit. When a sinner repents of his or her sin, that old sinful nature is dead and the believer is ready for the "new birth".

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5)

Repentance is the seed from which the new birth experience stems from.

A. Water Baptism

When we repent of our sins, we are dying out to the old nature. And naturally, following a death there must be a burial.

The old sinful man must be put away. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death" (Romans 6:4).

- ⇒ Colossians 2:12

Repentance must be followed by water baptism in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the Name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

B. Baptism of the Holy Spirit

(Some of the following information has also been taken from Tract #6140, published by Word Aflame Press, UPCI.)

According to Romans 6:5; 8:11, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a type of the resurrection of Christ.

Jesus tells us in John 14:17 that the "world" cannot receive this experience. What Jesus meant was those who are unwilling to give up the carnal things of the world, through repentance, cannot receive this wonderful

gift. A person cannot receive the Holy Spirit before repentance.

The requirements for receiving the Holy Spirit are repentance and faith.

Repentance must come before water baptism and the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit completes the new birth experience and makes us new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh,... and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26,27)

The Holy Spirit is promised to all who obey the Word of God (Acts 2:4, 38, 39; 5:32).

Simply repent and claim God's promise of forgiveness. Your burdens will begin to lift as you confess your sins before God and start to feel His love and mercy. A natural response to this feeling is to worship God, who in turn will pour out His Spirit upon this repentant, believing, worshipping person.

#3 Total Cleansing

Jesus said, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

- ⇒ 1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 1:5)

When God cleanses us from all sin we are totally clean! It is as though we had never committed a sin. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

Restitution

Restitution is an important part of repentance. True repentance will produce restitution (Luke 19:8).

Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary defines Restitution as "the right of giving back to the rightful owner; a giving of something as an equivalent (of equal value) for what has been lost or damaged."

At times, true repentance is expensive. One who repents may have to return something he has stolen, or ask forgiveness for something he has said.

The repentant person changes. He not only says he is sorry he did wrong, he stops doing wrong.

Guilt and condemnation are heavy weights to carry around. Guilt makes one feel ugly, unhappy, lonely and hateful. Suppose I gave you a brick to carry for the rest of your life.

Although the brick was not really heavy when I first gave it to you, the longer you carry it, the heavier it becomes.

So it is with unrepented sins. The longer you wait to repent, the harder it is.

This applies not only to those who have never repented, but also to those who have received the Holy Spirit. Repentance is not something we do once like graduating from Senior Secondary School. It is something we do again and again, like taking a bath. It is possible to pick up little sins here and there. We need to repent (unload) daily.

If you have something wrong (maybe no one knows about it but you and God) and it is weighing heavily upon your mind. Why not repent of it today? If you need to take something back, or pay for something, or tell someone you are sorry, do it today. Get it off your mind and let the Lord blot it off your record.

The results of true repentance:

Release
Excitement
Peace
Enthusiasm
New nature
Thankfulness
Acceptance
No guilt
Comfort
Energy

Additional Notes

**Lesson Five
Is Baptism Essential?**

Goal: To clearly define baptism and the part it plays in Salvation.

Key Scripture: Mark 16:16

Baptism is an essential part of Salvation! Without it you cannot be saved.

“The FIRST MESSAGE preached by the apostles resulted in a command for EVERYONE to be baptized. ACTS 2:38. The LAST MESSAGE preached by Jesus was a COMMAND to baptize all nations. (MATTHEW 28:19.” (Quote from Lewis Manuwal’s booklet “Water Baptism according to The Bible and Historical References”)

Baptism, according to the scriptures, instructs us to be completely immersed in water. The word “baptism” comes from the Greek word “baptiso,” meaning “to plunge, bury or immerse.” Baptism must be by immersion! (The next lesson will cover this very important point.)

Three reasons why we should be baptized:

#1) Baptism is Commanded

- ⇒ Matthew 28:19
- ⇒ Mark 16:15 - Baptism is part of the Gospel message!
- ⇒ Acts 10:48 - Peter commanded those who had repented of their sin and received the Holy Ghost to be baptized.

#2) Baptism Saves

- ⇒ 1 Peter 3:20, 21
- ⇒ John 3:5 - You cannot enter into the kingdom of God without being baptized.
- ⇒ 1 Corinthians 6:11
- ⇒ Galatians 3:27

#3) Baptism remits sin

- ⇒ Acts 22:16
- ⇒ Luke 3:3 - One must first repent before he is baptized. You must first acknowledge your sins, ask forgiveness, and then have them washed away through the act of baptism. Baptism is for the “remission of sins” (Acts 2:38-41).
- ⇒ Hebrews 9:22 The blood of Jesus Christ must be applied to remit sins. What then is the Biblical way to receive remission of sins? This also is the only way to get the Saviour’s blood applied.
- ⇒ Colossians 2:11-14
- ⇒ Titus 3:5

Baptism was spoken of (foreshadowed) in the Old Testament. “For a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.” (Numbers 19:9) “But if he washed them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity” (Leviticus 17:15-16). In other words, if you are not baptized you shall bear your sin and be exempt from heaven. Exodus

30:20 states, "wash with water that thou diest not." If the priest did not first wash at the laver, he would be smitten dead.

Additional Notes

Lesson Six

How Should I be Baptized?

Goal: To explain through the Scriptures how believers should be baptized.

Key Scripture: Matthew 3:16

Baptismal Mode: Immersion in Water

As mentioned in the previous lesson, baptism comes from the Greek word "baptiso" which means "to plunge, bury or immerse." The definition of the word alone tells us that any other method is incorrect.

The word "immerse" means "to plunge or dip." Baptism is a type of the Lord's death and is the only method that retains this biblical symbol of baptism as a burial.

⇒ Colossians 2:12

⇒ Romans 6:4

Should You be Immersed or Sprinkled When Baptized?

Immersion	Sprinkling
Much Water - John 3:23	
Into the Water - Acts 8:39	
Buried in Water - Romans 6:4	
Planted in Water - Romans 6:5	

The early church definitely taught and practiced baptism by immersion. If you were not baptized this way then you need to be. Ephesians 4:5 says, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Infant Baptism?

As with sprinkling, infant baptism cannot be found in the New Testament church.

Matthew 28:19 says, "Teach all nations, baptizing them..."

Acts 8:36,37 - The Ethiopian Eunuch asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip responded, "If thou believest with all thine heart."

⇒ Believing is a prerequisite of baptism (Mark 16:16).

One must first understand and then believe. You need to repent before you are baptized! (Acts 2:38)

Baptism should first be understood by the person. A child should be old enough to receive teaching, believe, and repent of his or her sins before being baptized.

Based on the Word of God, we are able to conclude that the only biblical method of baptizing people is by immersion in the name of Jesus Christ.

Lesson Seven

The Importance of the Name

Goal: To show that the name of Jesus is vitally important in baptism.

Key Scripture: Acts 4:12

Salvation is in the Name!

One Name

- ⇒ Matthew 28:18-20
- ⇒ Zechariah 14:9
- ⇒ Matthew 1:21
- ⇒ Luke 24:47
- ⇒ John 5:43; 14:26

What is the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? - JESUS. You will discover how the early church baptized by reading Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; and 19:5.

Is it proper to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Or can we only use the name of Jesus? Let us go to the Word of God and see what the Apostles either taught or preached concerning water baptism.

<i>In Jesus' Name</i>	<i>Titles</i>
Jews - Acts 2:38	
Samaritans - Acts 8:16	
Gentiles - Acts 4:12	
Peter Taught - Acts 4:12	
Paul Taught - Colossians 3:17	

“Matthew 28:19 was a command by Jesus to baptize in a NAME. The Apostles did not repeat the words of the command, but they did obey it as seen in the scriptures above. Since Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are titles of the manifestations of the Almighty Spirit and His body, the Apostles understood His SAVING NAME to be JESUS. Can any dare say that the Apostles disobeyed the Lord, or failed to baptize properly? THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST IS LORD JESUS CHRIST. The actions of the Apostles in the Book of Acts prove this to be true.”

(Quote from Lewis Manuwal’s booklet “Water Baptism according to The Bible and Historical References”)

Six reasons why we baptize in Jesus’ name:

- (1) To take upon ourselves the family name (Ephesians 3:14-15).
- (2) The Church began with the teaching of this doctrine (Acts 2:38).
- (3) This teaching has been continued over the ages of time by the Church (Acts 2:42).
- (4) It is followed by a Promise (Acts 2:38).
- (5) His name is GREAT (Malachi 1:11).
- (6) Purged our sin for His name’s sake (Psalm 79:9).

The bride must take the bridegroom’s name!

No Name, No Claim!

Additional Notes

Lesson Eight

The Significance of Baptism

Goal: To give a summary of water baptism and show the Biblical significance for baptism in Jesus Name.

Key Scripture: Ephesians 2:1

We have both seen and understood that water baptism in Jesus Name is essential!

But what is the Biblical significance?

- #1.) God remits sin at water baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- #2.) Baptism is part of the new birth experience (John 3:5; Titus 3:5).
- #3.) Baptism indicates that we have died out to sin by repentance and are burying our past sins and sinful lifestyle (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).
- #4.) Baptism places us into the family of Christ (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5).
- #5.) Baptism allows us to enter into the New Covenant relationship with God. It is part of our spiritual circumcision (Colossians 2:11-13).

Biblical reasons for Baptism in Jesus' name.

1. The Apostolic Church followed this formula exclusively (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16).
2. Baptism is a burial with Jesus Christ and no one else (Romans 6:4).
3. Baptism is a personal identification with Jesus Christ. His name identifies us as His possession (Romans 6:3; Acts 15:14,17).
4. Baptism is for the remission of sins, and Jesus is the only name associated with remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 10:43).
5. The name of Jesus represents all the power and authority of God and makes it available to us (Matthew 28:18; John 14:14; Acts 3:6, 16).
6. Everything we do in word or deed should be done in the name of Jesus (Colossians 3:17). Baptism is both word and deed.
7. Jesus is the highest name known to mankind, and every knee shall bow to that name (Philippians 2:9-11).
8. Baptism is part of our salvation. Jesus is the only saving name (Acts 2:21; 4:12; I Peter 3:21).
9. Baptism is the outward act of an inward confession; signifying the acceptance of Jesus as our Lord and Saviour (Acts 8:12; 8:37).
10. Baptism in Jesus name signifies belief that the fulness of the Godhead is in Jesus (Colossians 2:9).
11. Baptism in the name of Jesus demonstrates reverence for and obedience to God's Word over human tradition.
12. The modern Trinitarian doctrine is not taught in the Bible. Therefore, there is no theological justification for a triune baptismal formula.

Baptism is more than a symbolic ceremony and public declaration of joining the Church.

By reading the Word of God and observing the actions of the Apostles and the early church, it becomes obvious to us all that the Jesus Name formula for water baptism is the only way to be baptized.

**Baptism saves, identifies
and remits!**

Additional Notes

Lesson Nine What Is Worship?

Note: The following lessons on Worship and Praise have been gathered primarily from Dr. John McAlister's Transformed Living Seminar.

Goal: To introduce worship and praise and show how important they are in the lives of Christians.

Key Scripture: Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16

We worship God for who He is... concerns His character.

We praise God for what He does... concerns His actions.

(Rev. Jack Hayford)

For Christians, worship is our top priority! Jesus Christ seeks (true) worshipers who will worship in Spirit and Truth.

In the process of worshipping God, He communicates His Spirit to us; thus transforming us.

We were created to worship. It is normal for us to worship God. Worship is a quality built into the human nature of man.

The Priority of Praise

Did you know that PRAISE is referred to 616 times in Psalms?

Every glimpse of Heaven shows them worshipping: Isaiah 6:1-6; Revelation 4:8-11; 5:6-14.

The space between Judges 1:1-4 and 20:18 is nineteen years. Judah means "praise." It does not remove you from battle, but assures you that you will survive to fight again!

The Samaritan Woman – John 4

We know that John is spoken of as having the closest relationship with Jesus Christ. And Jesus had the longest discussion with anyone that we know of in the New Testament with John - it concerned WORSHIP.

John 4:4 Why did Jesus have to go through Samaria? Because it was here that Christ would teach His Church about Worship and Praise.

God chose to impart this truth to a Samaritan woman (an outcast) because she represented all of humanity better than anyone else in the Bible - She had suffered broken relationships. (So have we. Examples: friends; neighbours; family, etc.)

The only true, perfect relationship is found in worshipping Jesus Christ.

Verse 7: Jesus said "Give me to drink." This is speaking of God's thirst, longing, His desire for our praise and worship. God listens for your unique voice every day.

God will always talk to you when you approach Him with praise and worship.

Your worship is limited or expanded depending on your relationship and knowledge of God.

The more you know about God, the more you will worship Him. And the more you worship Him, the more you will know Him.

A relationship with God is developed only through Worship and Praise.

True worshippers must worship Him in

- (1) Spirit
- (2) Truth

Worship is not a spiritual fad; rather it releases God's presence and power in your life. It is an all-encompassing response to a great and holy God.

Worship literally means "ascribing to God His worth; to prostrate oneself before God."

WORSHIP...

- is the supreme duty of the creature toward the Creator
- is the grand celebration of God's goodness and majesty
- is honour and adoration directed to God
- is ministry to God - giving something to God of ourselves
- is doing for God what He cannot do for Himself

To God, success in life is learning how to Worship.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP TO GOD:

(A) God describes the creation of all the world in thirty-one verses. God describes the creation of the place of Worship (Tabernacle) in 243 verses!

(B) In Exodus 30:34-36, God tells His people how to make incense (a symbol of Worship). He tells them, if you make it for yourself, you will be exiled (cut off). No one can take from God what He planned for Himself ... that is holy.

Everyone in the world is a worshipper.

We were created to worship. (People worship idols; money; True God)

Our worship and praise are for God. God is not seeking workers; He is seeking worshippers! (True worshippers are workers!!)

Worship is the only thing we will do in heaven that we are doing now. Bible reading, prayer, offerings, preaching, witnessing, etc. will all be gone.

WORSHIP is spontaneous expression to God.

Acts 15:14-17

Tabernacle of David has to do with the teachings of praise; not the tent. God will build again the tabernacle

of Worship and Praise. In verse 17: Praise is the key to world evangelism. The reason for the restoration of Worship and Praise: "That the residue (rest) of men might seek after the Lord...". According to Amos 9:11-15 only when the Tabernacle of David (teachings of praise) is restored will there be a reaping of the harvest.

Additional Notes

Lesson Ten Why Do I Worship? Part 1

This lesson has been divided into two parts due to the amount of material.

Goal: To study seven major characteristics of God and how each one benefits us. Each truth should inspire us to worship God even more.

Key Scripture: Psalm 96:1-7

Six reasons why we should worship are found in Psalm 19:7-9.

- (1) The law of the Lord is perfect.
- (2) The testimony of the Lord is sure.
- (3) The statutes of the Lord are right.
- (4) The commandment of the Lord is pure.
- (5) The fear of the Lord is clean.
- (6) The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

The key to worship is knowing God.

Read Psalm 47:7; 119:27, 130. Notice that the key word in all of these verses was "understanding".

We should worship God not because we are told to but because we want to. Praise with understanding.

Can we understand God?

Yes, if we seek Him with all our hearts (Jeremiah 29:13; Psalm 22:26). Real worship comes from within.

The most basic essential in worship is for the worshipper to understand God.

John 4:10 "...If thou KNEWEST (1) the gift of God and (2) and who it was..."

It is very important that we know who we are worshipping (John 17:3).

1 – God Is Omniscient

John 4:7-29 The first thing that the Samaritan woman learned about God was His omniscience. "Call your husband...Come and see a man who told me all things I ever did."

God does not count the hairs on your head; He knows them (Romans 16:27; Psalm 147:5; Matthew 10:30).

God does not learn - He knows. Sir Winston Churchill said "Every decision we make is based on inadequate information." Since God knows all, He makes no mistakes. God not only sees beyond the exterior (outside), but He hears the thoughts in our hearts (Revelation 2:23; Isaiah 66:18).

Benefits to us:

#1) Since God knows all and loves you perfectly, He can make all things work together for your good (Romans 8:28).

#2) Understanding that God knows everything helps protect us from sin. God is the ever present parent (I Corinthians 4:5; II Corinthians 5:10).

#3) He knows all and corrects us in love. Example: Peter denied Christ three times. In John 21 Jesus confronts Peter three times “lovest thou me?” Peter responds with “Lord, you know all things, you know I love you.”

God sees beyond our disobedience and failure to a heart of love for Him.

2 – God Is Omnipresent

God is everywhere at all times (Jeremiah 23:24). God is present everywhere and with everyone. Just because the sun’s rays may fall on a rotten corpse, the corpse does not corrupt the sunbeams. Nothing defiles God; He is everywhere and unmixed with anything. Nothing corrupts God.

Benefits to us:

#1) Gives us assurance. Everything we experience is shared by God (Hebrews 13:5; 2 Timothy 2:13).

#2) God is not only present but involved (Matthew 28:20).

#3) Since He is everywhere, He is a shield from temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).

3 – God Is Omnipotent

⇒ Psalm 106:2

God is called “Almighty” fifty-six times. God takes the same effort to make the butterfly or the universe; He never needs His strength replenished. He never sleeps (Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 21:13; 150:2; Ephesians 1:9).

God’s Power is most clearly seen in four areas:

1 - Creates something from nothing -(Psalm 33:6; 139:14; Colossians 1:16).

2 - Sustains His creation - (Hebrews 1:3).

3 - Ability to redeem the lost - (1 Corinthians 1:26-28).

4 - Ability to raise the dead -(John 5:28,29).

Benefits to us:

#1) His power inspires worship (2 Kings 17:36).

#2) When I realize my weakness (Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 6:10).

#3) No fear of falling (Jude 24; II Timothy 1:12; Romans 8:33-39; Psalm 111:4,6).

Lesson Eleven Why Do I Worship? Part 2

Goal: To study seven major characteristics of God and how each one benefits us. Each truth should inspire us to worship God even more.

Key Scripture: Psalm 96:1-7

4- God Is Immutable

You cannot change God, nor does He change (Psalm 102:25-27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17).

Everything in life changes except God (Hebrews 13:8).

Benefits to us:

#1) His love is forever

#2) His salvation is forever

#3) His promises are forever (Romans 11:29; 2 Timothy 2:13; Philippians 1:6).

5 – God Is Loving Kindness

The following verses discuss God’s lovingkindness: Psalm 36:7; 42:8; 48:9,10; 51:1; 63:3; 89:33; 107:43; 138:2.

Benefits to us:

Your life and all your future are in the hands of a God who is worthy of your perfect trust and confidence. He will never treat you unkindly...He cannot, for “God is love”.

“The true worshiper lives a life of contentment, regardless of circumstances”

(John MacArthur Jr.)

Contentment testifies: “I completely trust the lovingkindness and wisdom of my God.”

Psalm 17:7; 25:6; 26:3; 40:10,11; 69:16; 88:11; 92:2; 103:4; 111:8; 119:149.

6 - God Is Merciful

Mercy means “giving you another chance.”

Full means “no room for anything else.”

Psalm 136: “For his mercy endureth forever.” This is the only statement in the bible that appears 26 times in one chapter!

God deals with us in mercy. Can you worship this kind of a God! Doesn’t this make you want to praise His holy name.

Psalm 31:7; 37:26; 40:2,3; 100:5; 103:8, 17; 106:1; 107:1; 117:1,2.

7- God Is Holy

Holiness summarizes all His other attributes and characteristics. What is the one word that angels say in heaven as they worship God - Holy, Holy, Holy.

Webster's Dictionary defines Holy as spiritually whole, of unimpaired innocence or proved virtue. In other words, God is the only one who has it together, there is none like Him (Exodus 15:11).

God is the standard of holiness! He never does anything wrong, He is totally without sin or error (Psalm 22:3; 29:2; 30:4; 93:5; 97:12; 99:9).

Benefits to us:

Because God is holy and we are not! We can never escape the fact that all His blessings toward us are "of grace" (God's unmerited favour).

This truth should protect us from Satan's most dangerous weapon -PRIDE.

God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ (Galatians 6:14).

David Answers "Why Do I Worship?"

- (1) Worship or learn to worship and you will become a man after God's own heart.
- (2) Learn to worship and you will be an inspiration everywhere you go.
- (3) Learn to worship and you will be able to tear up lions with your bare hands and kill giants with small stones. (Giants in our lives: envy, strife, bitterness, hate, malice, etc.)

If you asked David, 'How do you know this is true?' He would say 'because I have tried it.'

Worship is a very powerful tool that we can use against the enemy!!

Additional Notes

Lesson Twelve Forces That Prevent Worship

Goal: To show us the various tools Satan uses to prevent or hinder our worship.

Worship does not have anything to do with the volume of noise you make.

Do not say that you are not the type to worship and praise the Lord. David closes the Psalms by saying "Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD." (150:6)

Satan Opposes Worship

One of the most important things in the whole world to Satan is to prevent you from worshipping God. Why?

There are two reasons:

- (1) **He knows God seeks WORSHIPERS, and Satan is determined to defeat the purposes and will of God.**
- (2) **Satan knows the great value of worship and understands that worship is of supreme importance to God, and empowers the life of any who practice it.**

Satan realizes the importance of worship. According to Ezekiel 28, Satan once led the choirs of heaven in devoted worship to God.

In Isaiah 14 we discover the reason for Satan's fall: He wanted to be equal to God and be worshipped. Satan understands the importance and significance of WORSHIP.

This is clearly confirmed in Matthew 4. After Satan shows Christ all the kingdoms of the world (verse 8), he tries to tempt the Lord by saying "All these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Christ instantly replies, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve."

It is Satan's strategy to divert worship from God to himself. He will use many different methods to try and distract your worship to God.

We must not listen or talk to him. Refuse to allow him access to your mind, and thereby render him powerless to prevent you from PRAISING and WORSHIPPING the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

James 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God (and His instructions to praise). Resist the devil (by the Word and Worship) and he will flee from you." It works!

Sin Prevents Praise

- ⇒ Psalm 66:18 and Isaiah 59:2
- ⇒ In I Timothy 2:8 we are told to "lift up holy hands..." while in II Timothy 2:22 we are admonished to "Call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

When we have sin in our hearts, remember that sin is forgiven totally by confession and the power of the blood will cleanse us. (I John 1:9; Romans 5:9; 6:14; 8:1)

Guilt Prevents Praise & Worship

You cannot be a worshiper if there is guilt in your heart. If our sin has been forgiven by God. We should not feel guilty.

Some people still feel guilty after God has forgiven their sin. Many feel they must “do something” to be free from guilt. When God says “forgiven,” there is nothing more we can or should do.

God calls forgiven sinners “saints”. We are all sinners saved by grace (II Corinthians 5:17). That is reason enough to rejoice and praise the name of Jesus!

Fear Prevents Worship

⇒ List some of the things that you fear.

Examples: future, dying, not having enough money, or even failing God. Many are afraid of fear itself.

Fear is not of God and will rob you of the joy of worship (II Timothy 1:7). Although God has given us a healthy fear which protect's us (ie. fear of sin), it is not a binding fear. God's cure for fear is LOVE. (I John 4:18)

A Wrong Self Image

Do not say, “How great I am” or “How worthless I am,” BOTH ARE WRONG!

In Luke 18:11 the Pharisee said “God I thank thee that I am not as other men.”

It is difficult to praise God when all you see is yourself. You cannot praise God with or when your eyes are on others; you praise when your eyes are on God!

Do not speak badly about yourself or say “I am almost useless because so and so can do it better than I.” There is a danger in being proud of humility. (I Peter 2:5; Romans 12:3)

What we are is not so important as what we are BECOMING! None of us are worthless.

Wrong Concepts of God

Some see God as ruthless, unreasonable, merciless, impersonal, inaccessible, and uninvolved. ALL ARE UNTRUE.

Many wrong concepts are gathered in childhood, from pictures we see. But if you will look in the Bible you will find out that God is love, merciful, compassionate, forgiving, everything good - HE IS.

Other wrong concepts that limit worship are:

(1) God is like men... does not keep His word (Numbers 23:19)

(2) God is unjust...He has been unkind or unfair. “God doeth all things well.”

Lesson Thirteen Who, Where and When?

Goal: To show us that our worship is continually before the throne of God, therefore we should worship Him at all times.

Key Scripture: Psalm 113:3

Who Worships our Great God?

All creation, nations and people. The dead praise not the Lord. If you are not worshipping? (Psalm 115:17,18)

Psalm 67:3; 69:34; 86:9; 118:21; 138:4,5; 148:11-14

The Psalms are God's Manual on PRAISE AND WORSHIP.

Where & When should we worship?

#1 - In the congregation

⇒ Psalm 22:25; 20:2; 35:18; 42:4; 107:32; 111:1; 134:1

⇒ Nothing should happen in the great congregation that does not happen in our private devotions. We are not here for show; we gather to exalt the name of the Lord together.

#2 - Among the heathen or the nations

⇒ Psalm 18:49; 57:9; 108:3

One of the best ways to witness to the heathen (unbeliever) is through song.

#3 - We worship “always”

We cannot neglect worship six days a week and worship meaningfully on Sunday.

⇒ Psalm 34:1 “at all times”

⇒ Psalm 71:6 “continually”

⇒ Psalm 72:15 “daily”

⇒ Four times David cries out for men to praise God in public and private - Psalm 107: 8, 15, 21, 31.

Nobody becomes a praise person immediately. But you gradually become a praise person. (Psalm 119:164; Psalm 145:2; Psalm 71:14)

#4 - We will worship in eternity

(Psalm 17:15; 22:27)

⇒ Worship is mentioned 24 times in the book of Revelation (i.e. 4:10,11; 7:11,12).

⇒ Twice in Revelation worshippers hold vials filled with incense defined as “the prayers of all the saints.” (Revelation 5:8; 8:3)

⇒ The Greek word, “prayers” can also be translated “worship.”

All our praises are preserved by God in the form of incense. When the great worshippers stand before God, they present all the worship of all the saints of all time. Worship is substance! God talks about the fruit of our lips. Our worship and praise are preserved in heaven for eternity (Revelation 7:11,12; 5:13; Psalm 52:9).

We will praise forever because the object of our praise and worship is Jesus Christ and He is forever!

Additional Notes

Lesson Fourteen How God Says “Worship”

Goal: To show the various ways we can worship God.

Key Scripture: John 4:11-24

A - Interior

1 – In Spirit & in Truth

If there is no joy in your worship, Christ is not there. We must praise with understanding. There must be Spirit (of the Lord) and Truth (God’s Word). Too much of either is not pleasing to God.

2 – With Joyfulness & Gladness

In order for us to truly worship God, there must be a praise in our hearts.

When there is joy and gladness on the inside, it will cause us to worship God with an overflowing joy like the early Church (Book of Acts).

Psalm 5:11; 28:7; 40:16; 63:5; 81:1; 89:15; I Peter 1:8.

3 – With Intensity

When we worship God, we should do it with our whole heart and with all of our strength. Intensity does not need volume to show itself, although many intense people are loud.

Psalm 9:1; 48:1; 63:8; 71:23; 86:12; 96:4; 103:1; 112:1
138:1.

God despises half hearted people (includes worship)
Revelation 3:15,16.

Lukewarm people make Christianity look bad. Just as God loves the sinner but hates the sin, God loves the lukewarm person but hates his lukewarmness.

B - Exterior

(Physical elements of worship)

Worship is not something that is just done in the heart. The essential concept of worship is service.

Worship requires physical involvement. One of the most important principles in worship is involvement. Paul said in I Corinthians 14:26 “...when ye come together, every one of you hath a Psalm...let all things be done unto edifying.”

God wants to avoid boredom and rituals in worship. Thus He has great variation.

1 - Singing

⇒ We are exhorted to sing 300 times.

Singing gives:

- (i) us a praise vocabulary
- (ii) a quick uniting of hearts in praise
- (iii) release of our inner emotions in praise.

Eight times we are told to “sing a new song”: Psalm 47:6; 59:16; 69:30; 98:1; 101:1; 105:2; 147:7; 149:1.

How important is singing? Important enough to receive employment - I Chronicles 9:33.

2 – Upraised Heads

⇒ Psalm 24:7; 123:1

3 – Shout For Joy

⇒ Psalm 32:11; 100:1,2; 132:9

4 – Clapping Of Hands ... Dancing

⇒ Psalm 47:1; II Kings 11:112; 149:3; 150:4

5 – Upraised Hands

⇒ Psalm 28:2; 63:4; 88:9; 119:48;
134:2; 141:2; I Timothy 2:8

We raise our hands:

- (i) The Bible tells us to
- (ii) The universal sign of surrender
- (iii) To receive from God and give ourselves to Him

6 – With Your Voice

⇒ Psalm 66:8; 26:7; 28:6; 51:15; 109:30; 145:21;
149:6.

God wants us to praise Him verbally, He enjoys hearing your unique voice.

7 – With Instruments

⇒ The Bible tells us twenty times that we are to use instruments to praise and worship the Lord.

King David made four thousand instruments to praise God! (I Chronicles 23:5) They were percussion, string, and wind instruments.

⇒ Psalm 33:2,3; 98:6; 144:9; 149:3; 150:3-5.

8 – With Silence

⇒ Psalm 46:10; Habakkuk 2:20; Zechariah 2:13.

There is importance in silence, when we stop to listen and learn from God.

9 – Serving Each other ... Your “Ministry Time” in Church

⇒ Galatians 6:2

When you come to Church, you should leave without your burden.

You can actually do this in a church service:

- ⇒ Form a small group of three or four people.
- ⇒ Tell your burden to the one beside you and then pray for them and their need.
- ⇒ We need to show that love is not just in our hearts but that we care enough to help.

Prayer is our greatest help (visitors are not forced to participate - observe).

10 – With Gifts & Offerings

⇒ Psalm 96:8, 9; Exodus 34:20

Offering is not interrupting worship. It is a part of worship. There are hundreds of verses in the Bible (especially the Old Testament) that are used by God to

describe offerings, sacrifice, gifts, etc. - related to worship and praise.

It is impossible to worship God “with all your heart” and not desire to give Him tithes, gifts, and offerings.

Additional Notes

Lesson Fifteen

What Happens When I Worship?

Goal: To show the power of worship.

Key Scripture: Psalm 29:2

We find the most beautiful description of praise and worship in the Bible in Isaiah 6.

When we worship God our lips will be cleansed (verse 5).

God's cure for depression or heaviness is found in Isaiah 61:3 - "garment of praise!"

The key to answered prayer is worship!

Seven things that happen to those who worship:

#1) We become like the God we worship.

Psalm 135:15-18. If the heathen become like the gods they worship, then we as Christians should become like our God.

Worship changes us!

II Corinthians 3:17,18.

#2) We become properly related to God.

Worship establishes submission to God:

MASTER - We are the Servant

KING - Subject

CREATOR - Creature

Worship helps deal with pride and an "out of control" ego. On the other hand worship makes us somebody, it gives us a personal relationship with a limitless source of help for all our needs.

#3) Prisons Open

We often live in prisons of fear, jealousy, envy, bitterness, strife, etc. One of our great needs is to be liberated from many habits and attitudes.

God sets us free as/after we worship and praise Him (Acts 16:25,26).

When you praise God and He liberates you, the results are amazing.

⇒ Souls are born into the kingdom of God (Acts 16:27,30). Worship leads to soul-winning!

#4 We identify with saints in eternity.

In Ezekiel 1, Isaiah 6, Revelation 4 and 5 we see those inside heaven worshipping God.

By worshipping, we are ministering to God. We worship now and prepare for our ministry to God in eternity (Psalm 23:6).

In heaven they worshipped saying "Worthy is the lamb of God." (Revelation 5:12)

#5 God moves toward us in specific benefits

⇒ Psalm 16:7; 18:3, 19; 37:4; 92:4

God's greatest benefit to us is His nearness. C.S. Lewis said "In the act of worship, God becomes real."

Only God can give fullness of joy. This only comes through praise and worship.

"For in his presence is fullness..." Psalm 16:11 and "God inhabits the praise of His people."

#6 God's Power is Released

Those who worship receive the power and the commission to evangelize the world. Jesus tells worshippers to evangelize the world (Matthew 28:16-20).

After God had successfully taught disciples to worship, He gave them the Great Commission because they were now ready.

⇒ Isaiah was ready to go after worshipping God (6:8).

Other references where worshippers were then prompted to evangelize the world are Nehemiah 8:6,10 and Psalm 67:2, 5, 7.

#7 We bring joy to God.

Our worship to God brings Him much joy and gladness.

Notice that in the book of Nehemiah when God's children returned from captivity and rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem, they celebrated by gathering and reading God's Word for six hours. Then they worshipped (Nehemiah 8:6). Look at Nehemiah 8:10 - "...the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Our worship brings JOY to God, and His JOY will be your STRENGTH!

Additional Notes

Lesson Sixteen

What is the Holy Spirit ?

Goal: To clearly define what the Holy Spirit is and to show that it is an important part of Salvation's plan.

Key Scripture: Acts 2:38

Simply put, the Holy Spirit is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

Titles of the Holy Spirit:

1. Spirit of God (Matthew 3:16; Romans 8:9)
2. Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18; Luke 3:22)
3. Spirit of the Lord (Acts 8:39)
4. Comforter (John 14:26)
5. Spirit of Truth (John 16:13)
6. Holy Spirit of Promise (Ephesians 1:13)
7. Spirit of Adoption (Romans 8:15)
8. Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9; 1Peter 1:11)
9. Spirit of Grace (Hebrews 10:29)
10. Eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9:14)

The Holy Spirit is when Jesus Christ comes into your life. According to Acts 2:38, in order for us to experience full Salvation one must repent, be baptized in Jesus Name and then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Ephesians 4:30 speaks of it as being a seal or promise. What is it a promise of? Eternal life! (Romans 6:23) The Holy Spirit is a gift. It is not something that you can buy or earn. You simply receive it as a gift from the Lord once you have obeyed the first two steps found in Acts 2:38.

When you receive the Holy Spirit into your life you receive POWER (to live a victorious life); STRENGTH to overcome (Ephesians 3:16) and a COMFORTER to be there for you during those times of grief and sorrow.

Isaiah 28:9-12 tells us that the Lord would speak to His people with stammering lips and another tongue.

Tongues are the initial evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit.

- ⇒ Acts 2:1-4
- ⇒ Acts 10:44-48
- ⇒ Acts 19:1-6

Why did God choose tongues?

- #1) An outward sign (Acts 10:46)
- #2) A uniform sign (Acts 10:44-48; 19:6)
- #3) Sign of complete control
 - ⇒ By reading James chapter three, we understand that the tongue is the most unruly member of the body.
 - ⇒ It is the hardest member to tame (control).
 - ⇒ We are told that the tongue is capable of defiling the whole body. Therefore, if the tongue can be tamed then the whole body can be consecrated to God. God knows if He can control the tongue, He can control the man!

#4) Man's Greatest Expression

"Seeing that the tongue is man's greatest expression of his spirit," (Quote taken from tract #108 - PENTECOSTAL PUBLISHING HOUSE) it is no wonder God chose the tongue to express the greatest experience that man could ever receive.

How To Receive The Holy Spirit

1. Put your faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus promised the Holy spirit to all who believe on Him as the Scripture has said (John 7:38, 39).

Peter said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39) Remove all doubt and confusion created by false theories and ideas of men, and believe that God is willing to baptize you with the Holy Spirit. "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is ...BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT." (Ephesians 5:17,18)

2. The next step is obedience. God gives the Holy Ghost to them that obey Him (Acts 5:32). The question was asked on the day of Pentecost, "What shall we do?" The response was Acts 2:38.

(a) Repentance is necessary because your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. If any man defile the temple (body) of God, him shall God destroy (I Corinthians 3:16,17). So God commandeth all men everywhere to REPENT (Acts 17:30). Jesus said, "Except ye REPENT, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3) Without true repentance you cannot receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

(b) After repentance, we are baptized in Jesus Name for the remission of sins.

3. Lift up your hands and praise the Lord.
4. Let God use your tongue to speak in tongues and simply accept the experience you have received.

What does the Holy Spirit have to do with Salvation?

⇒ Without it one cannot be saved. (Romans 8:9-11; I Corinthians 12:3)

We know that the gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The response to the Gospel is Acts 2:38.

Look at the comparison.

death = repentance
burial = baptism in Jesus Name
resurrection = Holy Spirit

To repent of your sins and be baptized in Jesus Name for the remission of sins is good and necessary. But when you receive the Holy Ghost, the same resurrection Spirit that raised Christ up from the dead now dwells within you. We identify with Christ burial and resurrection at baptism (Romans 6:3-5); however, this resurrection

power does not become effective in our lives until we receive the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:9-11)

If you do not have the resurrection power of Christ within you, then how will you rise to meet Him in the sky?

The Holy Spirit is:

- #1.) Christ in you (Colossians 1:27)
 - #2.) Power (Acts 1:8)
 - #3.) Comforter (John 14)
 - #4.) The earnest of our inheritance (II Corinthians 1:22)
 - #5.) A seal, or promise (Ephesians 4:30)
 - #6.) A rest and refreshing (Isaiah 28:12)
 - #7.) Living Water (I Corinthians 10:1-4)
 - #8.) Eternal life (Romans 6:23)
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Additional Notes

Lesson Seventeen
Why Can't I Receive the Holy Spirit?

Goal: To give us some possible reasons as to why some are not able to receive the Holy Ghost.

Why some do not receive the Holy Spirit quickly (Taken and modified from J.T. Pugh's book "How to Receive the Holy Ghost")

On the day of Pentecost about one hundred and twenty people received the Holy Ghost as a group. Later on in Acts 2 we are told that three thousand were added to the Church.

⇒ In Acts 8, the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the Apostles' hands. The Apostle Paul also received the Holy Ghost under the hands of Ananias.

⇒ In Acts 10, the Holy Ghost fell suddenly upon the household of Cornelius.

⇒ In Acts 19, Paul laid his hands upon the twelve Ephesian disciples, and they received the Holy Ghost right then and there.

This leads us to believe that this experience is not something that has to be sought after for years. There is absolutely no Scriptural justification for honest-hearted persons to seek the Holy Spirit for years.

(1) Lack of real repentance

The person who is faced with a feeling that he should be personally reconciled to another, yet fails to do so, will probably never receive the Holy Ghost. A man cannot be honest and cover his sins. God is not free to operate in dishonest circumstances. Such a seeker cannot hope to be filled with the Holy Ghost, regardless of how long he seeks.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." God's very nature would not allow Him to fill the soul of a dishonest man. "...And what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14)

It is true that one can repent in his heart while he is still sitting on the pew, or even while he is on his way to the altar. If he truly turns from his sin and looks to God in faith, God in that instant will forgive him.

(2) Doubt or Unbelief

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) When a person prays in doubt, or without faith, he is praying to a displeased God. It is impossible to overstress the importance of faith. No meaningful relation of any kind can be established except it be on the basis of simple trust between the parties involved. God is deeply grieved when people doubt Him.

It is difficult to describe how great an insult it is to God when we disbelieve Him. Doesn't it cause you to feel

bad when people disbelieve your word? Think how God feels?

FORGIVE YOURSELF!

At times we refuse to accept the Holy Spirit because we cannot allow ourselves to believe that God has forgiven us. So we continue to repent and cry out for forgiveness. This act of unbelief grieves God.

What may appear to some as an over-sensitive conscience is nothing more, at times, than an attempt of the Devil to hold or keep the candidate under condemnation, so that he will not, with faith, accept the forgiveness that God has already given.

It is one thing for God to forgive, but quite another for one to accept His forgiveness. In order for God's forgiveness to be appropriated to us personally, we must by faith believe that we are forgiven and accept it.

So many times when the Holy Spirit is moving upon someone, they are unable to accept it. They seem to feel that the Holy Ghost is an overwhelming Spirit; that is altogether different from the breath of God which they feel during worship or even at the altar.

Often, the Spirit is upon a person but they fail to receive its fulness because they could not say within themselves, "This is the Holy Ghost falling on me right now. This is the Holy Ghost that I feel. This is the Holy Ghost I am receiving right now."

Another trick of Satan is to remind the seeker that he is in the flesh, and thus frighten him away from the reality of the Spirit. Faith, however, steps over such reasoning, and blindly flings itself into the arms of an approaching God.

Satan will also try and cause the seeker to doubt that he will receive the Holy Spirit right now at this particular time. "I believe that God will give me the Holy Spirit, but maybe not tonight."

The courageous, faithful seeker emphatically asks, "Why not tonight? If this gift is for me, as the Bible says it is, why shouldn't I receive it tonight?"

(3) Preconceived ideas of how one should receive the Holy Spirit

Matthew 9:29 says "According to your faith be it unto you." This statement can go a long way in determining what a seeker is willing to accept as the genuine baptism of the Spirit. If your thinking is in-correct you probably will not get it.

- ⇒ Some feel that unless they fall on the floor, run, jump, laugh, shout or cry that they have not truly received the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- ⇒ The only biblical sign for receiving the Holy Spirit is to speak with other tongues! You may or may not do the above actions upon receiving the Holy Spirit.

This will depend primarily on the person's personality.

(4) Pride.

(5) Fear

(6) Sin

God cannot enter into an unclean (sinful) vessel. Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). That is why repentance is so important.

(7) Indoctrination from other churches and traditional religions.

(8) Feel that the Holy Ghost is not for them.

Additional Notes

Lesson Eighteen

What is the Purpose of the Holy Spirit? Part 1

Goal: To explain why we are given the Holy Spirit and to give us some signs that should follow the initial infilling.

Key Scriptures: John 14:12; Mark 16:17-18; Ephesians 3:20

The purpose of the Holy Ghost (Youth Teacher's resource packet-lesson 10)

#1.) John 14:26 - The Holy Ghost will teach us all things and bring all things to our remembrance.

The Holy Spirit will let us know when we are doing something wrong. It will not stop you from doing it but it will forewarn you. The Holy Spirit will give us an understanding of the Word of God.

#2.) Isaiah 28:12 - The Holy Ghost is the refreshing and gives rest to the weary.

When you come to church and you are weary from the days work, if you will begin to worship the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to you it will revive, strengthen and encourage you.

#3.) John 16:13 - The Spirit of truth lets us know things to come in the future.

- ⇒ The Holy Ghost acts as our spiritual telescope enabling us to see what the natural man cannot.
- ⇒ It directs our lives; we are led by the Spirit.

#4.) Acts 1:8 - The Spirit gives us power for witnessing.

The word power comes from the Greek word "dunamis" and is the same word used to describe dynamite! When you receive the Holy Spirit it will give you dynamite power to be a witness for Christ and to do great things in His name.

#5.) Romans 8:11 - The Spirit is our promise that we will be resurrected.

#6.) Romans 8:26 - The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us. It helps us pray.

The Holy Spirit has a five-fold purpose in our lives:

1. It teaches
2. Refreshes
3. Looks ahead in the future
4. Gives us POWER
5. Will take us to heaven

There is no lack of supply in God's vast reservoirs. If you thirst, God will fill you.

Lesson Nineteen

What is the Purpose of the Holy Spirit? Part 2

Key Scriptures: I Corinthians 2:12; Ezekiel 36:27

At Sinai: God spoke to the people. The law was inscribed on tables of stone.

At Pentecost: God spoke through the people. The Spirit writes on the tables of the heart.

Although tongues are the initial sign of receiving the Holy Spirit in your life, it is not the only sign. There should be other signs which follow and attest to the fact that you do have the Holy Spirit. Now all of the following does not have to be in the life of every individual; however, some of these should be produced in the life of a Holy Ghost filled person.

#1 Fruit of the Spirit

⇒ Galatians 5:22,23

⇒ If we do not see some parts of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives something is wrong. We better start praying for God to help us in this area.

#2 Gifts of the Spirit

⇒ I Corinthians 12:7-13

⇒ The gifts of the Spirit can only be given to believers who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. These gifts cannot operate in a person without the Holy Spirit residing in them.

#3 Love, Joy, Peace

⇒ According to the Word of God these three characteristics (traits) should be in the life of a Holy Ghost filled believer.

⇒ Acts 13:52

⇒ Romans 5:5; 14:17; 15:3

#4 Continually Growing in the Word

⇒ John 14:26

#5 Power to be a Witness

⇒ Acts 1:8

Understanding the Power Within Us

I. The Flesh Does No Miracles

- A.) Jesus said, "...the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." (John 14:10)
- B.) It was God in Him that possessed the true power.
- C.) John 6:63 - the spirit gives life, but the flesh profits nothing.
- D.) Jesus, though robed in flesh, moved in the total power of the Spirit of God.

⇒ I Corinthians 2; Zechariah 4

II. "And greater works than these shall he do..." (John 14:12)

- A.) The works of Jesus are so mighty, yet He said the Church would do greater still!
- B.) What was the secret to the power of the Messiah?
 1. He was "possessed" by the Holy Spirit of God.
 2. His flesh was out of the way.
 3. He sought only to glorify the Name of the Lord.

III. The Works of our Lord.

- A.) He opened the eyes of the blind. John 8:6-7
- B.) He healed the lame and crippled. Luke 6:10
- C.) He resurrected the dead. John 11:43
- D.) He delivered the demon-oppressed. Mark 5:8
- E.) He overpowered the forces of nature. Mark 4:39
- F.) How could we do greater than these?
 1. The apostles laid hands on seekers and they were filled with the Holy Ghost.
 2. Acts 19:11-12: The anointed handkerchiefs and aprons were sent out from the apostle Paul that brought special healings.
 3. Tongues are spoken for the edification of the church.
 4. The church is the multiplied body of the Lord in the earth today, now doing greater works and reaching more souls than ever before!

IV. The Power in us.

- A.) It was promised when "the Holy Ghost is come upon you."
 1. Not after "earning" it
 2. Not after "enough" years in the church
- B.) It is the same power that was in the Lord.
 1. Its potential is the same
 2. It must be released
- C.) Read Matthew 11:11
The least person in the kingdom of God can be greater than John the Baptist. How? Because we move in the power of the Lord (Holy Spirit).
- D.) It is used in evangelism.
 1. Personal evangelism must be done in the same power of the Spirit as anointed Holy Ghost preaching.
 2. We do not go forth in the flesh, but in the Spirit, with tears and compassion, with wisdom and with power. Psalm 126:5,6
- E.) Some things that we can expect while moving in the Spirit and in the Power are:
 1. Expect God to work a miracle through you.
 2. Expect the Lord to confirm His Word with "signs following".

3. Expect people to receive the Holy Ghost anywhere and at anytime.
4. Expect healings.
5. Expect answers to your prayers
6. Expect revival.

⇒ You are a "POWER WITNESS" for Jesus!

⇒ God has promised to go with you. So go in the POWER!

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty Who Needs It?

Goal: To show us through the Word of God that the Holy Spirit is for ALL.

Key Scripture: Revelation 21:6

A large portion of this material has been taken from an article written by Simeon Young entitled: The Holy Ghost, who needs it?

- ⇒ Luke 11:5-13 In this portion of scripture, we find that the focus of the asking, seeking and knocking is the Holy Ghost. Here, Jesus uses a story to express to us His willingness to give the Holy Spirit to all who are thirsty for it.
- ⇒ The word “parable” comes from two Greek words: “para” which means “beside” or “alongside,” and “ballein” which means “to throw.” In a parable one thing is thrown alongside something else for comparison.

Often a parable’s lesson is drawn from the fact that the two things are alike. But sometimes the lesson is drawn from the fact that they are not alike. In this parable, Jesus uses both of these methods to teach us about the Holy Spirit.

Let us look at this parable and see what Jesus is trying to teach us:

1. The Holy Spirit is a pressing need deserving of shameless persistence.
2. God is eager to give the Holy Spirit to desperate people.

What we need and what we think we need are not always the same. A need is indispensable, something that is essential. We know that the Holy Spirit is essential to Salvation. It is a need! Everyone needs the Holy Spirit in their life.

The following is a list of various groups (categories) of people who need the Holy Spirit. From this we can determine who needs the Holy Spirit today.

#1 - Religious Leaders (Activists)

The twelve apostles, who were with Jesus for three and a half years, healing the sick and casting out devils, needed the Holy Ghost so desperately that Jesus told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). Later, in Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-4, we discover that the twelve did receive the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

#2 - Highly Favoured And Blessed People

Gabriel said to Mary the mother of Jesus, “Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women” (Luke 1:28).

⇒ Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Ghost “spake out with a loud voice, and said, ‘Blessed art thou among women...’” (Luke 1:42). Five times in this chapter we see that Mary was blessed by God.

But Mary, though highly favoured and signally blessed by God, needed the baptism of the Holy Spirit. She was one of the 120 who received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

God’s blessing and favour did not take away her need for the Holy Spirit in her life.

#3 - Sincere, But Misguided, Religious People

Saul of Tarsus was sincere. And even though he was zealous toward God (Acts 22:3) and exceeding mad against Christians (Acts 26:11), he was still misguided and needed the Holy Ghost. Ananias came to him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus...hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 9:17).

#4 - Prayerful, Generous Friends of the Church

Cornelius was a devout, God-fearing, generous, praying man. He would be a very good person to have in our church today. Yet the Bible tells us that he was not saved without the Holy Ghost (Acts 11:14). This God-fearing Gentile needed the Holy Ghost so desperately that God sent to him a reluctant Simon Peter to preach to him so that he could receive the Holy Ghost.

#5 - Those Healed and Delivered

“Unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many (Samaritans) that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:7,8).

The Samaritans’ need of the Holy Ghost is seen in the fact that Peter and John came from Jerusalem and “prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet He was fallen on none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost” (Acts 8:15-17).

#6 - Long Standing Church Members

Paul found twelve men in the city of Ephesus who had responded to the preaching of John a long time ago. They had accepted John’s baptism that required evidence of genuine repentance and were true believers. Still Paul wanted to know, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” (Acts 19:2). After Paul baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus, he “...laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues, and prophesied” (Acts 19:5,6).

The six examples that have just been presented to you should prove to us that everyone needs the Holy Spirit. It is for everyone (Joel 2:28,29). It does not matter where

you were born, what position you presently hold, or how much sincerity and zeal you have, you still need the Holy Ghost.

The parable of the eager father is evidence that God is ready to give the Holy Spirit to everyone who asks, seeks and knocks (Matthew 7:7,8).

Who needs the Holy Spirit? Everyone who does not have the Holy Spirit needs it!

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-One What are the Gifts?

Goal: To give an introduction and overview of these gifts.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 12:1-13.

Classification of the Gifts:

Administrative:

Word of Wisdom

Word of Knowledge

Discerning of Spirits

Ministering:

Gift of Faith

Gift of Healing

Working of Miracles

Communication:

Prophecy

Divers Kinds of Tongues

Interpretation of Tongues

True spirituality arises out of a perfect balance of Word and Spirit. The Word of God provides a sure foundation for the Spirit. There can be no spirituality without the presence of the Spirit, and the Spirit refuses to reside outside the bounds and guidelines of the Word. "The gifts of the Spirit were designed by God to be the very heartbeat of the living, vibrant Body of Christ." (Quote by G. Shalm)

If we accept the concept that evangelism is the basic ministry of the church, then we must realize that we are doomed for failure if we do not avail ourselves of the equipment God has provided. The most effective way of presenting the Gospel as taught by the early Apostles was one of power (Acts 4:33, 16; Hebrews 2:3,4).

It is impossible to excel in the spiritual realm with a heart that is set on the material. We must have a godly sense of priorities if we are to please God. (Matthew 6:33) It is very important to remember that the Church is a spiritual body whose function is primarily spiritual.

The gifts of the Spirit were given to the Church so we would not be ignorant (I Corinthians 12:1).

If we are ignorant of the Gifts it is for one of two reasons:

1. We were never taught.
2. We did not want to learn.

Ignorance leads to two extremes:

(1) Heresy

(2) Fanaticism

Both of these appeared in the Corinthian church as a result of ignorance.

The Purpose of Gifts:

1. to edify the church
2. to be a sign to the unbeliever
3. to give direction

4. to warn and comfort
5. to glorify the Lord

As the Church is edified, Christ is glorified! The Gifts can not be developed by an individual. They are bestowed upon persons by the Giver of all gifts (GOD). These gifts are not given to all, as verse eight specifically states to “one” and “another.” There are many gifts but only one Giver; various talents but one source.

The Holy Spirit is not one who is received after the new birth but rather at the new birth. It is Christ in our lives who makes us Christians. The gift of the Holy Spirit comes at “conversion.” The Gifts come through “consecration.” Therefore, one may possess the GIFT without the GIFTS.

The blessings, ministries, and Gifts which are bestowed are given to us so we may exalt Christ. They are an expression of love and must be operated within an environment of love. The Holy Spirit is the motivating force, love is the motivating factor.

Love is the most important divine characteristic manifested in the life of the Christian.

A church will be weak and underdeveloped if the Gifts are not operated in an environment of love. It is not the Gifts without love...it is not love without the Gifts... it is the Gifts operating harmoniously in an atmosphere of love.

Which Gifts are most important?

In I Corinthians 12:8, we find the Word of Wisdom mentioned first. And one may conclude that the order of listing indicates their relative importance. However, the closing words of this chapter are, “but covet earnestly the best gifts.”

What are the best gifts?

- ⇒ The importance of a gift depends upon its relevancy to the present situation.
- ⇒ Recall that the purpose of the Gifts is the edification of the Church to the glory of God. Whichever Gift(s) enables the assembly to reach this goal is the best Gift(s) for that assembly at that particular time.

Guidelines for the proper manifestation of the gifts:

- (1) They are for edification, not for display.
- (2) They are for the benefit of the Church, not the individual.
- (3) They are always associated with a human need.
- (4) They are not restricted to the sanctuary.
- (5) They show forth the glory of God, not man.
- (6) They require a Spirit filled life which is readily obedient to the leading of the Spirit.
- (7) They do not operate independently of each other, but like the various members of the human body, cooperate to assure an overall result.

- (8) They are, as the name implies, “Gifts.” Recognizing this, a recipient can be used mightily, and remain humble.
- (9) They open no doors for charges of fanaticism, when properly manifested and correctly understood.

Robert Kennedy once said, Some people ask ‘Why?’ Others of us ask ‘Why not?’ But I ask ‘Why not, NOW?’

Paul said in I Corinthians 12:7 “But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” The church is often compared to the natural body. We are the “Body of Christ.” Gifts are as essential to the body of Christ as our natural members are essential to our bodies. If we are going to live and work on the earth, we must move with and in the Spirit. When the Gifts are in regular operation in a church it means that it is a healthy church.

The Gifts help us to see the things of God, and perceive the power of the devil and Spiritual wickedness in high places. It is time for us to allow the Head of the Body to actually control the Body. Will you allow Him to move? Every member has at least one gift. We all have a work to do. We need to work according to the way we have been placed in the Body. “We are in the Gift. The Gift is in us. We do not possess the Gift. The Gift possesses us. We do not operate the Gift. The Gift operates us.” If we reach the place of obeying the supernatural world, the supernatural world will obey us.

For the Word of God forms the banks within which the river of the Spirit flows. It provides for orderly control in the operation of the Gifts of the Spirit.

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Two Administrative Gifts

Goal: To explain the first three gifts.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 12: 7,8,10

Administrative Gifts (Gifts of Revelation)

The first three that we will look at are the Administrative Gifts:

- (1) Word of Wisdom
- (2) Word of Knowledge
- (3) Discerning of Spirits

These gifts were designed for the successful building and oversight of the Church. They provide spiritual assistance and enable us to think like God thinks.

The Church is Spirit-designed, and thus must be Spirit-built. As men yield themselves to the Spirit, they are used by God in this building of God's Church.

Word of Wisdom

⇒ Proverbs 4:7 Wisdom is the application of knowledge to one's life and is the principle ingredient required to get understanding.

The "Word of Wisdom" is a gift that is not continuous in operation, but rather a supernatural word from God that meets the need at a given moment. It is not something we can prepare for; God gives it to us.

In Mark 12:13-17, people were sent to catch Jesus in His own words. The Pharisees and Herodians asked Him the question, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" Jesus answered with a "Word of Wisdom" by responding: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Another excellent example is found in I Kings 3:16-28, where Solomon took care of a problem between two mothers and a baby. Two mothers slept in one bed with their babies. This problem was brought before Solomon and he asked for a sword to cut the baby in half. The rightful mother, not willing to see her child killed said to give her child to the other woman. From this, Solomon knew she was the rightful mother.

Ecclesiastes 9:13-18 "Wisdom is better than weapons of war..."

⇒ Ecclesiastes 7:12

A Word of Wisdom can change a life or circumstance forever.

Jesus promised this gift to the end-time Church in Matthew 10:19-20.

Is God imparting His divine intelligence and understanding through us? The Word of Wisdom is closely related to the process of "decision making."

In Acts 15 James divinely spoke the "Word of Wisdom". This gift will be seen more and more as we become less self-conscious and more God conscious.

Word of Knowledge

This is a partner gift to the "Word of Wisdom." It is not the gift of All knowledge. It is not having unusual knowledge of the Scripture because sinners can have this and quote many verses. It is not natural knowledge given by God.

"No natural talent can be classified as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit." There is a difference between "knowledge of the Word" and the "Word of knowledge."

Knowledge of the scripture comes through studying the Word of God but the "Word of Knowledge" comes supernaturally from the Spirit. It is a supernatural revelation of natural things or physical things both in the past or present. It can identify a person, place, thing, circumstances, names, and is considered to be the toughest of all gifts. This is very probable since the person you are ministering to is living in the present and knows his/her past. The Word of Knowledge is the supernatural revelation of certain facts in the mind of God.

God knows everything and has all knowledge. He does not reveal everything He knows to us but gives us part of what He knows - a word. He tells us just what He wants us to know!

⇒ Acts 10:19 Peter would not have known that three men were looking for him had he not been told by the Spirit.

Another example where we see this gift in operation is during Paul's shipwreck (Acts 27). He told everyone to stay on the ship and their lives would be saved.

Neither of these men said this from their own knowledge. God allowed them to tap into His resources of infinite knowledge.

Discerning of Spirits

At times, this may be hard to do. But the Bible admonishes us to "try the spirits and see if they are of God." (I John 4:1)

This gift gives us a look into the Spirit world and reveals spirits. It is not discerning of devils or evil spirits. It is insight into the realm of spirits, both bad and good. It is not "mind reading" or the "gift of suspicion." It is not the gift of DISCERNMENT. It is not the power to have psychological insight, because the gift is unaided by the natural mind. It is not the ability to detect demons, but the ability to see into the spirit world. It is the supernatural revelation of the spirit and tells whether or not something is the:

- A. Spirit of God
- B. Spirit of Man

C. Spirit of Devil

Satan at times will come as a wolf in sheep's clothing. In Acts 16:16-18, a lady with a spirit of divination was set free. Paul, after many days was able to discern that this lady was not what she seemed to be. She had a hidden wolf spirit. The devil (demon possessed person) can appear as an angel of light. They will come as a wolf in sheep's clothing. We need to beware of this.

Lamb's Spirit:

- 1.) Always Gentle
 - 2.) Obedient to the Shepherd
-
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Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Three Ministering Gifts

Goal: To explain the second group of spiritual gifts.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 12: 9,10

Ministering Gifts (Gifts of Evangelism)

The next three gifts that we will discuss are Ministering Gifts:

- (1) Gift of Faith
- (2) Gifts of Healing
- (3) Working of Miracles

These gifts tend to be sensational in their operation. The Evangelism gifts, which are most prevalent throughout the book of Acts, are especially important in the evangelization of new territory.

These gifts of POWER enable the believer, when directed by the Spirit, to act like God would act. He draws attention to God's power and this attracts, persuades, and evangelizes sinners. It strengthens the evangelism thrust of the Church.

Without these gifts in operation, the outreach efforts of a church will be less effective.

Gift of Faith

Source in the supernatural will cause some great works to be performed in the natural.

Three categories of faith:

- #1) The measure of faith (Romans 12:3)
- #2) Saving Faith (Ephesians 2:8)
- #3) The Gift of Faith - which is found in the fruit of the Spirit. Faith grows like a fruit.

The Gift of Faith is the greatest of the three gifts of power. It is a gift that enables us to receive miracles. The gift of faith allows us to have an unwavering trust in God.

It calls into operation the powers of the world to come, uniting angels with men for the accomplishment of the divine purpose.

There are some things that our faith can heal but then there are other things or circumstances that require the faith of others. Even when we do not have faith, their faith will work.

- ⇒ Afflictions are something you can pray for, whereas a sickness is something you need others to pray for. (James 5:13-15)
- ⇒ Acts 4:1-14 The impotent man who needed a healing.

God will always honour: Faith & His Name!

God will sometimes give you supernatural faith to meet the need or circumstance of that time.

Faith can, at times override the WILL of God for your life (i.e. King Hezekiah), however, the outcome may not be pleasant or as you wished.

Faith is both substance and evidence (Hebrews 11:1).

The Gifts of Healing

The gifts of healing are given for supernatural healings without assistance from natural sources. Healing can be of a physical, mental, or spiritual nature. The Gifts of Healing is different from “mind over matter.” It is when God removes by supernatural means sickness, disease, and/or infirmity. It is the gift of gifts. When ALL the gifts of healing are in operation all diseases can be healed. It is not a gift (singular) but gifts (plural). The healing could be gradual.

Why the plurality of Gifts?

- (1) There are many diseases and sicknesses in this world which require different treatments and responses. While one may have cancer or leprosy, another may suffer from a nervous disorder, and still another be troubled by evil spirits. All of these conditions come within the realm of the power of the “Gifts of Healing”.
- (2) There is no one gift nor is it resident in a singular person.
- (3) Possession of the Church.
- (4) There are no Scriptural references for A faith healer.

Working of Miracles

A miracle is a supernatural act performed on a natural plain and provides instantaneous results. It is a gift which produces “energies of supernatural power.” Miracles are not something which opposes natural laws but rather is unexplainable to us in our present understanding of natural laws.

For instance: When Jesus turned the water into wine (John 2) by His Word, it was no more opposed to natural law than the gradual changing of soil into grapes by a process of nature.

However, God, the Author of natural laws, can speed up the process(es). And who are we to say what God can and cannot do.

Of the nine gifts of the Spirit, the Working of Miracles is the most sensational and dramatic.

The working of miracles goes far beyond the scope of healing. Difference between Miracles & Healing: Healing is confined to the human body, but miracles encompass all of creation.

Miracles are possible when they are necessary. God is the one to determine whether they are necessary. None of us can command a miracle just because we want it. It will come when God wills it. It is our responsibility to be in tune with God to know His Will.

Examples of Miracles:

- (1) Jesus feeding the five thousand (John 6).
- (2) Jesus & Peter walking on the water (Matthew 14).
- (3) Philip being translated from a desert (Acts 8).
- (4) Paul & Silas released from prison (Acts 16).

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Four Communication Gifts

Goal: To explain the third and final group from the nine spiritual gifts.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 12:10

Communication Gifts (Inspirational/verbal Gifts)

The final group of gifts are:

- (1) Gift of Prophecy
- (2) Divers Kinds of Tongues
- (3) Interpretation of Tongues

These final gifts enable the believer when directed by the Spirit to speak like God speaks or speak as God would speak. This is God's chosen method of communicating to the Church as well as the world; which the Church is attempting to reach.

Gift of Prophecy

In this context, prophecy is preaching. This is a gift that produces "inspired oratory."

It was preaching under divine authority! It dared to challenge the oracles of paganism that were everywhere during the time of the Corinthian church.

The gift of prophecy did not unravel the future for man's gaze, but it revealed the will of God for man's present duty.

Prophecy gave inspired authority, warnings, rebukes, encouragement and exhortations. Its purpose being to edify, exhort, and comfort.

I Corinthians 14:3 says, "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." These are the things preaching does.

As we come closer to the return of Christ, and persecution against the Church intensifies, our need for and appreciation of the "Gift of Prophecy" will be magnified.

Anointing: Is when God takes the words of a mere human and drives home a truth with conviction and power to the hearts of other humans. There should be an anointing with preaching.

Two types of anointing:

- (1) Anointing of God (2) Anointing of the congregation

Prophecy is for us today: Joel 2:28; I Corinthians 14:31

Divers Kinds of Tongues

Language is the most powerful and affective medium of communication known to man. With human speech we can bless or curse both man and God.

In the beginning, there was one universal language. It was the one spoken by Adam in the Garden of Eden. Approximately 1,605 years later at the Tower of Babel,

God confounded the languages of man in order to bring an end to the construction of Babel. With many different languages now existing, man could no longer effectively communicate, and cooperative efforts were impossible.

Through the "Gift of Tongues" man has a restored means of communication for the church. The language barrier that was created because of sin has been broken by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God has designed these gifts to enable us to reach a mature place in Him. This gift should not be confused with the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost.

Those who have the "Gift of Tongues" should only speak or use this gift when someone is present with the "Gift of Interpretation."

Interpretation of Tongues

The purpose of this gift is to compliment the "Gift of Divers Kinds of Tongues." The interpretation of an unknown tongue is as much a supernatural act as the giving forth of the message.

The "Interpretation of Tongues" must be and is 100% Spirit-controlled. However, there are times when God impresses men with ideas and allows them to express them in their own manner.

This is not the manifestation of the "Gift of Interpretation"; this is the man or woman of God operating under the "anointing of the Spirit."

There is a difference between "translation" and "interpretation." Translation: Implies a phrase-for-phrase, and if possible, a word-for-word exchange. Interpretation: Indicates a transfer of the message as a whole from one language to another.

Example: When a message is given in an easier language than English, it would become more complex when interpreted into English. A message in a more complex language would be simplified when interpreted into English.

This explains why a message in tongues may be quite lengthy, and the interpretation quite short, or the other way around. I Corinthians 14:27,28 gives us an order of operation as to how Tongues and Interpretation can be given: Remember, the SPIRIT and not the man does the interpreting.

Summary of the Gifts of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1-13

The gifts are not given for individual benefit but for the blessing of all.

As long as they operate with the body (Church) they will last. If they are operated without the body they will function properly for a short time and then die.

If any man or woman thinks they have one or more of these gifts. Remember these three points:

#1) The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet (I Corinthians 14:32).

#2) If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge God's Word and Authority (I Corinthians 14:38).

#3) He who will not submit is ignorant (I Corinthians 14:38).

Nine Biblical truths regarding Spiritual Gifts:

(1) Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift (I Peter 4:10).

(2) Unbelievers do not have spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12:27-28).

(3) No Christian has all the gifts (I Corinthians 12:28-30).

(4) We cannot choose our gift(s) (I Corinthians 12:7-11).

I Corinthians 12:11 says "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

⇒ The gifts are not divided to every man but rather to every man separately (severally: also means individually or respectively.)

⇒ All do not receive the same gift!

⇒ They are given by divine discretion, not by human desire; though at times this does have an effect. Therefore, all are not expected or intended to have the gift of faith, healing, tongues...

(5) There is no spiritual gift which every Christian possesses (I Corinthians 12:29-30).

(6) Believers will give an account to the Lord for how they use their gift(s) (I Peter 4:10).

(7) Spiritual gifts indicate God's call and purpose for a believer's life (Romans 12:2-8).

(8) Gifts used without love do not accomplish God's intended purposes (I Corinthians 13:1-3).

(9) Spiritual gifts are to edify the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:7).

I Corinthians 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Five What and Who?

Goal: To clearly show us what tithes are and who must pay them.

Key Scripture: Proverbs 3:9

What are tithes?

One's life may be ever so full, but until he learns to give, something will be missing.

In our key scripture, we are encouraged to "Honour the LORD with all our increase." It has always been God's plan that we give to Him first. In the Old Testament, when the orange tree bore oranges, the first ones belonged to God. When the sheep gave birth to the lambs, the first born always belonged to the Lord. When we give to God first, He blesses what is left (Proverbs 3:10). It is our responsibility to tithe to the LORD.

The word "tithe" in the Hebrew is "masek" and in the Greek is "dekate", which means the "tenth part." God expects us to give one-tenth to Him and He lets us keep nine times more than what we give to Him. Who could be this generous except our Lord Jesus Christ!

Tithing has been practiced since the beginning of time by worshippers of the true God as well as pagans. Today, when we mention the term "tithes" we are referring to money. However, it was not always this way. In times gone by tithes meant more than just giving money. Leviticus 27:30 states: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the Lord." In other words, the tithe was the tenth part of the land (crops and fruit).

According to Leviticus 27:32 animals were also tithed because the law stated that every tenth animal to pass under the rod when the shepherds or owners of the herds counted them would be given to God.

We must be careful not to confuse tithes and offerings; they are not the same. Although they are part of God's financial plan for the Church, their purposes differ.

There were many different types of offerings in the Old Testament. A few examples are as follows: peace offering; thanks offering; sin offering; and trespass offering. These offerings were either fulfilled or changed by the New Covenant.

Then there were the special offerings for the work of God, such as the offering brought for the construction of the Tabernacle (Exodus 35). In the New Testament, we find the Apostle Paul asking the churches to take up an offering for the saints in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:1-3). Today, we also support many worthy causes in the church with our love offerings.

Even though these offerings are a definite part of God's plan, they are not God's method for the continual support of full-time ministerial staff.

In actual fact, we do not give tithes, we pay tithes. We owe tithes to God just like we owe the utility company for the electricity we use.

Tithing is not a gift we give to God; it is an obligation to pay. In Matthew 23:23, Jesus told the Pharisees that we "ought" to pay our tithes.

The tithe is God's perfect plan for supporting the ministry. Offerings should be given over and beyond the tithe as God prospers us.

Who pays tithes?

Let's go to Genesis 14:17-20 and see what it has to say. Here we find Abraham and his army of three hundred and eighteen servants returning from the battle where they rescued Lot from the enemy. When Abraham meets Melchizedek, a priest of the most high God, he pays his tithes.

NOTE: This is the first record we have of anyone paying tithes.

In Genesis 28:12-22, many years later, we find Jacob, Abraham's grandson fleeing from his home and his angry brother. That night, while Jacob slept he had a vision. In it he saw a ladder that reached heaven and on it he saw angels going up and down the ladder.

The Lord spoke to Jacob that night and gave Him some promises. When Jacob awoke, he set up a pillar and named the place Bethel, or the house of God.

Jacob then promised God that when he returned to his father's house, he would give Him the tenth of all he had.

Look at the continual line of progression: Abraham and his children paid tithes. In Jesus day, the Pharisees, who were Abraham's children were still paying tithes. And today, we as the spiritual children of Abraham need to pay our tithes. (Galatians 3:7; John 8:39)

It does not matter if you are young or old; rich or poor; as a child of the King it is your responsibility to TITHE!

Tithes are a part of our increase. If you want to be blessed of God, then give Him your best, not what is left.

Tithing is God's financial plan for the church.

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Six Is Tithing Biblical?

Goal: To prove that tithing is a Bible principle designed by God and intended for the church today.

Key Scripture: II Corinthians 9:6-8

Tithing in the Old Testament

Tithes before the Law

It is believed that tithing can be traced back to the garden of Eden, where the tree of the knowledge of good and evil stood (Genesis 2:15-17). Here we find God setting up a principle that something should always be kept for Him. The forbidden tree taught the same basic lesson as the tithe: there is something that only belongs to God and mankind should not touch it. Another place in the Bible where the principle of tithing is taught would be Cain and Abel's offerings. This is the first place that we find man giving a percentage of his increase to the Lord (Genesis 4:3-4). It is true that children normally learn what they are taught. Cain and Abel were taught by their parents to always return something to the Lord. Thus, Adam and Eve must have received instruction from God.

The practice of tithing was handed down from generation to generation through "word of mouth" (verbally). The principle of tithing was not written down until the Mosaic Law. But we know tithing existed because some 420 years before the law of Moses, Abraham gave tithes (Genesis 14:20), and more than 200 years before the law, Jacob promised to give the tithe to God (Genesis 28:22). These two examples show us that tithing was not only for those under the Mosaic Law, but also for those who came before the law.

Tithing was before the law of Moses because it has always been a way to honour God and it was His chosen financial plan for the Church.

Tithes under the Law

Before the law, one did not have to pay tithes. You only did it if you wanted to; it was voluntary. But under the law, it became a requirement by God. You were obligated to pay your tithes (Deuteronomy 14:22).

Abraham gave tithes by faith (voluntarily), while the nation of Israel gave tithes because they had to according to the law of Moses. From these two examples we can learn a very important lesson: "God expects a tenth!" You may ask, why did Abraham give only a tenth? Why not a fifth (5%) or twentieth (20%)? The answer to this is "God guided him in this manner."

When a person finds the verse where a Bible principle is first mentioned, it is very important for us to pay close attention to the details; because from these details we discover the true purpose and practice of that principle.

Abraham paying tithes gives us reason to continue this practice and also shows us the manner in which we should pay it.

Exodus chapter 16 tells us how God provided manna for the nation of Israel while they were in the wilderness. Notice that God commanded an omer of manna to be reserved or set aside. "Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah." (Exodus 16:36) An Ephah is a Hebrew dry measure, slightly more than a bushel.

Before the law was given to Moses it seems God set the standard of a tenth. Realizing that Israel is a type of the Church, God was showing us that a tenth should be set aside, given or reserved for the Church. Exodus 16:18 tells us that each family measured a tenth.

Tithing in the New Testament

In the Old Testament, there was a penalty for tithes being late. If your tithes were late you had to pay twenty percent instead of ten percent (Leviticus 27:30-31). Since we are under grace, the penalty does not apply to us. Yet, we should still give tithes as it is taught in the New Testament. In the Old Testament some people gave out of duty. In the New Testament we should pay tithes as an obligation of love, not simply out of duty.

I Corinthians 9:13-14, is a direct reference to the tithing system under the law. Back then, those who worked with the sacred things and served at the altar (priests and Levites), got their wages from the tithes and sacrificial offerings of the people of Israel (Church). Leviticus 6:16, 26, 7:6; Numbers 5:9-10; Deuteronomy 10:9, 18:1-18.

Going back to I Corinthians 9:13-14, I want you to notice four words "ministers, live, are partakers"- this is not only talking about the priests and Levites back then but it is also referring to the ministers today. The phrase in verse fourteen "even so" means "in the same way."

"In the same way that the priests and Levites were supported by the tithes and offerings of the people of Israel, the ministers of the church would be supported by the tithes of God's new Israel, the church of the Lord." (Quoted from John F. Hopkins book "Christian Giving".)

Everything God does is honest and just, for God is a just God (Deuteronomy 32:4; Revelation 15:3). The tithe is the fair measure established by God to support the ministry under the law and under Grace. Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7 state: "the worker is worthy of his hire." It seems very clear that God always provides for His spiritual leaders through His body, the Church.

Lesson Twenty-Seven

The Purpose of Tithing and Who Controls It

Goal: To show why we pay tithes and how it is controlled.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 9:13, 14; Malachi 3:8-10

The Purpose of Tithes

Tithing has been God's chosen financial plan to support the Ministry. For a pastor or full time church worker, their main (sometimes only) source of money comes from tithing. In the Old Testament, the priest and Levites received no inheritance from the land, so God gave them a place to live and made a plan of survival for them. Since they spent most of their time doing the business of the Lord in the temple, they did not have a steady flow of income other than the tithes.

The same is true today; ministers have no steady flow of income and must depend on the Church. Tithe, as pointed out earlier in Lesson Twenty-six, is something God expects! Everything God created was made to give or help something else.

God made the sun.....it gives
God made the moon.....it gives
God made the stars.....they give
God made the air.....it gives
God made the clouds.....they give
God made the earth.....it gives
God made the sea.....it gives
God made the trees.....they give
God made the flowers.....they give
God made the fowls.....they give
God made the beasts.....they give
God made the plants.....they give
God made man.....He has a choice to give or to keep!
(Quote from Joy Haney's book "When Ye Give.")

The purpose of tithes is to support the ministry and enable the church to reach this lost and dying world with the message - Jesus saves! The only way the Church can accomplish this task is if they consistently receive financial support.

Controlling the Tithes

It is not only God's plan for us to tithe, but it is also God's plan that they tithes be under the control of the pastor (Deuteronomy 18:3-5); and the local church board.

The minister has the awesome responsibility of not only feeding the flock but also to be a wise steward over the household of God (both spiritually and financially). He will someday have to answer to God for how he handled both these responsibilities.

There are three qualities required by God to properly control His finances: integrity, carefulness and sensitivity to God.

As we pay tithes to the ministry, they must also tithe. The ministry must practice what they teach. The Levites tithed to the descendants of Aaron; likewise, the ministry should and must tithe into their storehouse (headquarters) to support the national work.

Who controls the tithes when there is too much?

First of all, there can never be too much tithes! However, if a local assembly is blessed with faithful tithe payers in so much that the Pastor is taken care of and there is still money left over, it is still the responsibility of the Pastor to use the money wisely for the Kingdom of God.

Bible examples: I Chronicles 26:20 and II Chronicles 31:10-12. The Israelites had brought in an over abundance of tithes and offerings into the storehouse; yet, this did not give them a right to make demands on it. Likewise, though a great amount of tithes be in the local church, they belong to God, not the individual members of the church and should be controlled by the Pastor and the local church board.

A final example to show that the Pastor should control the tithing can be found in Nehemiah 13:4-14. In the Bible, the storehouse was always under the supervision of the Levites. Here in this portion of Scripture, Eliashib the priest was overseer of the chamber (storehouse) of the house of God. He became friends with a man named Tobiah and after a period of time allowed Tobiah to move into the storehouse with his family and furniture. This was a big mistake as Tobiah took control of the storehouse and did not distribute the tithes for the needs of the Levites. Because of this the Levites had to return to their cities and attend to their own material needs. Leaving the spiritual matters of the people unattended. When Nehemiah arrived and saw what had happened, he threw all of Tobiah's household furniture out of the chamber himself (13:8). This teaches us that the tithe should only be controlled by the pastor and not be subject to the desires of individual members of the congregation.

The ministers must be accountable to God, the church body, and the law of the land (II Corinthians 8:21), but the people should trust their stewardship. If we cannot have confidence that our pastor will use money, which is earthly, correctly, how will we be able to trust him with the care of our soul, which is eternal? (Quoted from Joy Haney's book "When Ye Give.")

Where Should We Pay Tithes?

For one to think that they can pay their tithes wherever they want to is not correct. The Bible specifically tells us to bring our tithes "into God's storehouse" (Malachi 3:10).

In the Israelites time, the law designated a specific place where they were to pay their tithes: Deuteronomy 12:5-7.

The Israelites did not choose where they would pay their tithes. This place (storehouse) is clearly your home church where you get your spiritual food. Malachi 3:10 tells us to “Bring” not “Send” the tithes into the storehouse.

The only time when tithes should be “sent” to the storehouse is when you are away from your home church.

Additional Notes

Lesson Twenty-Eight The Blessings of Tithing

Goal: To impress upon us the necessity of tithing and the many blessings that come as a result.

Key Scriptures: Luke 6:38; Proverbs 11:24

The Necessity of Tithing

As it has already been shown, tithing is necessary. Without tithing it would be very difficult for any type of work to prosper. God has instituted the tithe to be a blessing to man, not a curse. God’s intention for the tithe was positive, not negative. It is not God’s will for mankind to live in financial struggle all their lives (III John 2). God wants His children to prosper financially and physically, but God’s first priority is our soul’s prosperity. Proverbs 3: 9,10 promises a prosperous life to those who obey God’s Word and give to His work.

Although there is a great necessity to give to the church, the only reason for giving should not be because you feel you must. Joy Haney wrote in her book, “When Ye Give” that “The proper motive for giving the tithe is not because we are forced to do so, but because we desire to recognize our God as the most high God and wish to return to Him, from hearts motivated by gratitude, a portion of our increase.”

Acts 20:35 tells us that “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” God will always honor those who put Him first. When we give freely to God, He will give freely back to us.

It was once said that “tithing opens the windows of heaven, and offerings determine how much of a blessing is poured down upon you.”

If you have a debt to pay, tithe first and pay your debt to God. Remember, God will be a debtor to no man! He will meet your needs (Philippians 4:19). It is not right to use money that does not belong to you, whether it is to pay for bills or not. The tithe is God’s money. “Nine-tenths with God’s blessings will go farther to meet your needs than ten-tenths with God’s curse.” (Ralph V. Reynolds, Dividing the Word of Truth-10th Edition)

Will a man rob God?

The Bible speaks of judgment for those who forsake the biblical principle of “tithing”.

If we forsake the house of God by not giving momentarily to His work, we are robbing God. This is true under the law and under Grace. Malachi 3:8,9 states: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse. For ye have robbed me...” This plainly tells us that we are cursed if we fail to tithe and give offerings.

Further on in this chapter, we are able to conclude that if we do not tithe God will not rebuke the devourer and he shall destroy the fruits of the ground.

This seems like a hard price to pay for not tithing, but read I Corinthians 6:9-10. God puts the thief in the same category as the drunkard, adulterer and idolater.

The definition of a thief is one who steals, especially secretly. A thief is a robber!

A person who steals or robs from God will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the person who bountifully gives to God will be blessed!

The following scriptures admonish us to tithe out of all our financial increase: Deuteronomy 14:22,28; 6:12; Numbers 18:28; II Chronicles 31:5; Malachi 3:10,12; and Luke 18:12.

The Blessings of Tithing

The key to understanding and appreciating tithes is to remember that everything comes from God and everything will go back to Him.

Giving is an attitude. It is either a negative or positive gesture, but we do give out something. "You will give yourself to many things; why not give yourself to something that will increase you instead of decrease you?" (Quoted from Joy Haney's book "When Ye Give.")

If our financial foundation is built on God's plan and if He is our source, then we will always have enough! When you seek the Lord, desiring to follow all His teachings you will not want for any good thing (Psalm 34:10).

Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The blessings of tithing are continually poured out upon those who give and are eternal. God's system of tithing always works! Through tithing "God's work is blessed, and the giver of tithes is blessed over and over again." (From Joy Haney's book, "When Ye Give.")

To give means to make over or bestow without receiving in return; to grant without compensation; to bestow freely or fully; to devote, surrender, or apply; to yield. Our giving to God will effect more than just the Pastor; it will effect untold thousands.

Joy Haney wrote, "Giving starts with the heart. The hand is just an extension of the heart and mind. The closed fist is a closed mind. The open hand is an open generous heart. Real generosity is the surest way of thriving."

Tithing is a Bible Principle. It was taught since the beginning of time and will continue until the end of time. TITHING is GOD'S FINANCIAL PLAN for the Church today!

Lesson Twenty-Nine God is One

Goal: To prove that God is One through the scriptures.

Key Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4,5; Mark 12:29

In this world that we live in, there are those who believe in the plurality (many) of gods. This is not what the Bible teaches! There are not three gods nor are there two gods; there is only ONE God.

The first commandment God gave to Moses was "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3) Our God is a jealous God and will not give His glory to another (Exodus 20:5; Isaiah 42:8; 48:11). He alone is God and there is no one with Him or like Him (Deuteronomy 32:39; Isaiah 46:5,9).

Some Old Testament references to ONE GOD:

⇒ Isaiah 43:10-11

⇒ Isaiah 44:6, 8, 24

⇒ Isaiah 45:5, 6, 21-22

⇒ Zechariah 14:9

The Bible also refers to God as being the "Holy One".

⇒ Psalm 71:22; 78:41

⇒ Isaiah 1:4; 5:19,24

⇒ I John 2:20

⇒ The scribe in Mark 12:32 believed in only ONE GOD.

⇒ In John's heavenly vision, he saw only ONE sitting on the throne (Revelation 4:2).

⇒ Even the devils admit that there is ONE GOD and they tremble (James 2:19).

Some New Testament references to ONE GOD:

⇒ Mark 12:29-30

⇒ Romans 3:30

⇒ I Corinthians 8:4,6

⇒ Galatians 3:20

⇒ Ephesians 4:5,6

⇒ I Timothy 2:5

There is one thing the Lord cannot do. He cannot lie (Titus 1:2). That means what God said in Isaiah 45:18 must be true: "I am the LORD; and there is none else." God does not know of any other gods!

God is a Spirit

The first point in understanding the ONENESS OF GOD is to realize that God is a Spirit (John 4:24).

A spirit is invisible to human beings but can become visible at will; it is supernatural. God is a Spirit. He is invisible to mankind unless He chooses to reveal Himself in some visible form; this is the only way we can see God.

⇒ Colossians 1:15

⇒ I Corinthians 1:17

The Bible tells us that no man can see God and live.

- ⇒ Exodus 33:20
- ⇒ I Timothy 6:16
- ⇒ I John 4:12

Here are five attributes of God:

#1 – God is Omnipresent (Everywhere Present)

- ⇒ Psalm 139:7-13
- ⇒ I Kings 8:27
- ⇒ Isaiah 66:1

#2 – God is Omniscient (All Knowing)

- ⇒ Psalm 139:1-6
- ⇒ Job 42:2

God knows everything. He can even read the thoughts of man (something Satan cannot do) and see ahead into the future.

He is “the only wise God” (I Timothy 1:17).

#3 – God is Omnipotent (All Powerful)

- ⇒ I Timothy 6:15
- ⇒ Revelation 19:6

There are many references where God calls Himself the “Almighty.” Here are two examples: Genesis 17:1; 35:11.

#4 – God is Eternal

He always existed. He had no beginning nor will He have an ending (Deuteronomy 33:27; Isaiah 9:6).

#5 – God is Constant

He never changes (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).

If God was ONE at the beginning of time, He will remain ONE throughout time and eternity.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty Jesus is God

Goal: To give us the identity of God.

Key Scripture: John 10:30

⇒ John 14:9

Jesus is the expressed image of the Father (God). We know God is a spirit, and that means He is invisible. Yet we can see God through His son Jesus. God has revealed Himself to humanity through Jesus Christ.

⇒ II Corinthians 4:4

⇒ Colossians 1:19; 2:9

⇒ Hebrews 1:3

When Jesus was on the earth, God was inside of Him (John 14:10; II Corinthians 5:19) as well as in heaven (God is omnipresent).

The reason God became flesh and dwelt among us was to redeem mankind from their sins (Hebrews 2:9, 10, 14; I Timothy 3:16).

⇒ Read Job 9:8 and Matthew 14:25

Job talks about God as being the ONLY one who can walk on the sea. But Jesus walked on the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus could walk on the water not only on this occasion but also in John 6:19 because He is God.

Paul on the road to Damascus asked the question, “Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” (Acts 9:5)

God’s Body is Jesus

If God is a spirit, how did He reveal Himself to the prophets of old? In the Old Testament God revealed Himself through various forms and temporary manifestations. One way God chose to reveal Himself to the men of old was through theophanies. A theophany is a visible manifestation of God. Here are a few examples:

- ⇒ The Burning Bush (Exodus 4:2,14). The Lord manifested Himself through the burning bush.
- ⇒ The fourth man in the fire (Daniel 3:24, 25).
- ⇒ At times, the Bible speaks of God as “the angel of the LORD.” In Genesis 16:7-13, “the angel of the Lord” appeared unto Hagar, yet he spoke as though he were God. Hagar acknowledge him as God.
- ⇒ God also revealed Himself to the nation of Israel through thunder, lightning, a cloud, smoke, fire, and earthquakes. (Exodus 19:11-19; Deuteronomy 5:4, 5, 22-27)

God did not take a permanent form or body until the birth of Jesus Christ. Then “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself”. (II Corinthians 5:19)

⇒ Hebrews 10:4, 5

⇒ Colossians 2:9

Lesson Thirty-One

The Dual Nature of Jesus Christ

Goal: To show how Jesus was both man and God.

The Bible clearly shows us that Jesus Christ was different than any other person, He had two distinct (different) natures. One nature of Jesus Christ is the human or fleshly part while the other nature is divine or Spirit. He was both God and man.

“The name Jesus refers to the eternal Spirit of God (the Father) dwelling in the flesh. We can use the name Jesus to describe either one of His two natures or both. For example, when we say Jesus died on the cross, we mean His flesh died on the cross. When we say Jesus lives in our hearts, we mean His Spirit is there.” (Quoted from D.K. Bernard’s book “The Oneness of God.”)

As a Man, Jesus:

1. was born as a baby - Luke 2:7
2. increased in wisdom and stature - Luke 2:52
3. was tempted by the devil - Luke 4:2
4. became hungry - Matthew 4:2
5. got tired - John 4:6
6. cried - John 11:35
7. was scourged and beaten - John 19
8. died - I Corinthians 15:3
9. did not know all things - Mark 13:32
10. had no power - John 5:30
11. was a servant - Philippians 2:7,8

But As God, Jesus:

1. existed since the foundation of the world - Isaiah 48:12, 13
2. never changes - Hebrews 13:8
3. cast out devils - Matthew 12:28
4. was the Bread of life - John 6:35
5. gave rest - Matthew 11:28
6. forgave sins - Mark 2:5-7
7. rose from the dead - John 2:19,20; I Peter 1:21
8. redeemed mankind - Luke 1:68; Revelation 5:9
9. knew all things - John 4:25, 26, 29
10. had all power - Matthew 28:28; Colossians 2:10
11. was King of kings - Revelation 19:16

There is no doubt that Jesus was a man (Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:7,8). The Apostles preached about Jesus and spoke of Him as “a man approved of God among you by miracles.” (Acts 2:22)

In John 8:40, Jesus spoke of Himself as being a man. Yet we find the Bible telling us over and over again that Jesus and God are ONE (I Timothy 2:5; John 10:30).

When we understand the dual nature of Jesus Christ then the “Oneness of God” becomes clear. Whenever we read verses about Jesus or read verses where Jesus speaks, we must ask ourselves the following two questions:

Another version of this same verse puts it this way: “For in Christ there is all of God in a human body.” (The Living New Testament)

Jesus was God in the flesh!

⇒ John 1:1, 14

You cannot have one without the other. God dwells within the body of Jesus Christ (I John 2:22, 23). If you have Jesus, then you have God.

The Old Testament tells us that Jesus is God:

1. Isaiah 9:6
2. Isaiah 35:4-6 Is this not what happened when Jesus came to earth? YES it is (Luke 7:22).
3. Micah 5:25

The fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3 is seen in Matthew 3:1-3 as John the Baptist prepared the way for the Messiah (Jesus).

The New Testament tells us that Jesus is God:

1. Acts 20:28 The church of God was purchased by God’s own blood. And whose blood would that be? Jesus Christ’s (Romans 5:8,9).
2. Titus 2:13 - “... the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”
3. II Peter 1:1 speaks of those “... that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”
4. Thomas identified Jesus as both Lord and God. (John 20:27, 28) Jesus told Thomas (who doubted at first) to “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”

It is plain for all to see. Jesus is our Lord and our God.

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Matthew 1:23)

Jesus is God!

Additional Notes

- (1) Are these verses describing Jesus as man or as God?
- (2) Is Jesus speaking as man or as God?

At times we can become confused when the Bible describes Jesus in these two different roles (natures) in the same story. For example, in Mark 4:38-41, Jesus was asleep one minute and the next minute He calmed the storm. Whenever we see the two natures of Jesus, we should not think of them as two separate Gods, but rather, we should think of it as Spirit and flesh; which is the dual nature of Christ.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Two Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Goal: To clearly show us through the scriptures that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one.

Key Scripture: I John 5:7

Our key scripture lets us know that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; it then goes on to say that these three are ONE. The "Word" that is spoken of in this verse is Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14).

We do not believe in three separate, distinct beings (Persons). We do believe that there is only ONE GOD and His name ONE. The Bible teaches that God can manifest Himself to mankind as the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost. These are not three individual gods but simply three ways in which God has chosen to reveal Himself to humanity.

Here are three very good reasons why God chose these three manifestations or forms.

#1 – The Father

When we use the word "Father," it speaks of security, comfort and provision. When you were a child and you became scared or got in trouble, who did you run to for protection? Who did you depend on to meet your needs? Who normally supports the family? The answer to all of these questions is the "Father." So when we speak of God as being our Father, we are referring to a God we can go to in our time of trouble and He will protect us.

God the Father gives us the sense of security that we need when we are scared or have needs in our lives.

The Bible tells us again and again that "God is our Father" (Malachi 2:10; John 8:41; Romans 1:7) and we are "His children" (I John 3:10; 5:2; Hebrews 8:16,17; Ephesians 5:1).

One day, Jesus was preaching a sermon on a mountain, and He was giving an example of how the men as fathers know how to give good gifts to their children. He concluded by saying "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:11)

So as our Father, God not only wants to protect us from danger and harm, but He also wants to give us bountiful blessings and many good gifts!

#2 – The Son

John 1:3 tells us that all things were made by God, and without him was not any thing made. Yet, we see that God needed a way to redeem mankind from their sins. The plan that God chose to redeem mankind back to Himself was through His son Jesus Christ. Through Him,

God would give the world hope for eternity (Colossians 1: 20, 27).

God came to earth in the form of a man (Jesus) and was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). As a man, Jesus knew what it was to be tired, hungry, lonely, and sad.

Through Jesus Christ, God understands the temptations and trials that we face from day to day; and knowing our human weaknesses, He stands, ready and willing to forgive us when we fail (Psalm 103: 13, 14; Hebrews 4:15, 16).

In I John 2:1, the Father is identified as “Jesus Christ the righteous.” This tells us two very important facts:

1. Jesus is the Father (Isaiah 9:6; John 10:30).
2. Jesus, who is our redeemer is also our Father (Isaiah 63:16).

There is no way that we can separate the Son from the Father. They are ONE! Read John 14:8-10. When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, He said “Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me?...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

#3 – The Holy Spirit

We have seen through the scriptures that Jesus (Son) and God (Father) are ONE.

In John 16:7, Jesus promised to send back the Comforter, which is the Spirit of Truth. We are told in John 16:13 that this Spirit will lead and guide us into all truth. It will also give us POWER to be a witness and will take us to heaven when Jesus comes back for “His children” (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:11). Who is this “Spirit of Truth”? It is Jesus (John 14:6). The Holy Spirit is Christ living inside of you! He is the Spirit of Truth.

The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God are the same.

Luke 1:35 “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

The Bible plainly tells us that God is a Spirit (John 4:24). Luke recorded that the Holy Ghost (Spirit) overshadowed Mary, while Matthew 1:20 tells us that the Holy Ghost is the Father.

Jesus Christ was conceived by the “Spirit of God.”

Romans 15:6; II Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3 all tell us God is the Father of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures prove that “God is the Father in creation; the Son in redemption, and the Holy Ghost in regeneration.”

God has chosen to reveal Himself to humanity in these three forms or manifestations to better relate to all our needs.

When you feel like your troubles are so big and you desire someone who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere present, you have God. When you have failed God and sinned, you can find a compassionate, understanding God who is willing to forgive you and be merciful; His name is Jesus! And when you are fearful or feel alone or you need direction in your life, you can go to God in prayer and He will minister to your needs as the Comforter.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three separate persons, but rather three different personalities or roles that minister to you according to your situation.

Example: To my children I am their father, but to my parents I am their son. And to you I am your pastor (deacon, etc.). Depending on the situation or circumstance, I take on a different role or personality. I do not become a different person!

Father=Son=Holy Spirit=ONE GOD

If you take any one of these out, the equation will not work.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Three What is Prayer?

Goal: To clearly define prayer and its purpose.

Key Scripture: Luke 11:1

Prayer: One of our greatest blessings and one of our biggest struggles.

Prayer is one of the greatest blessings God offers, but it is also a source of frustration and guilt.

However, a life filled with prayer is a life of great blessing. Prayer should project the full range of human emotions, from exuberant joy to frantic despair. Prayer gives strength.

The Bible teaches that we serve a God who is simply looking for opportunities to pour out his blessings on us (Leviticus 26:3-6; Deuteronomy 28:2-6,12; II Samuel 12:7-9).

God listens for your unique voice every day. We can see the theme that God is ready and willing to share His resources with his people all through the Old Testament. In the New Testament this concept is extended and made even more precious.

Jesus taught us to call God "Father," actually, Papa. The most repeated prayer in the Christian church begins, "Our Father...."

God loved us so much that He called us His sons (I John 3:1,2).

And since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. (Galatians 4:7)

In Romans 8:16-17 God has adopted us as His sons and daughters. Therefore what is His is ours (we are heirs). Most fathers love to be generous with their children. Jesus understood this, and that is why he used fathers to explain God's generosity (Matthew 7:9-11).

If imperfect fathers love to bestow blessings (gifts) on their children, imagine how our perfect Father in heaven must delight in giving good gifts to us, His beloved children.

No one's voice sounds sweeter to God than yours.

If We Don't, He Won't

⇒ Jeremiah 33:3

We must recognize the nature of prayer. It is not just asking God for something. Prayer is a relationship; it is abiding in the presence of the Lord. Prayer is the most intimate communion with God.

God will not do what we do not ask! (James 4:2, 3) We must daily send our praises up before God. Realizing:

1. God is not a distant God but an ever present God (Isaiah 59:1).

2. Prayer is an incense before God (Revelation 5:8; 8:4).

God loves prayers so much that He likens it to a sweet smelling incense to His nostrils.

⇒ Psalm 141:2 - "Let my prayer be set before you as incense."

Exodus 30:7, 8 - Every morning and evening an incense should be sent up to our God. Nowadays, we do not need Aaron; for we are spiritual priests and offer up spiritual sacrifices unto Him.

How can we have fellowship with God without prayer? We cannot. Prayer is not only talking to God but communicating to God. We can know the mind of God! (I John 1:3)

Giving God our attention is vital to prayer.

Three essential elements for a fruitful and fulfilling prayer life can be found in Psalm 54:2:

- (1) God
- (2) Believer
- (3) Communication

- Take away any one of these and prayer is impossible.
- Without God no one listens.
- Without the believer no one speaks.
- Without communication, nothing is said.

The Recipient of Prayer

Our ordinary conversations reflect our attitudes toward the listener, and the same is true in prayer.

Our thoughts and attitudes about God largely determine how we speak to Him.

We need to continually deepen and clarify our concept of God so our communication with Him will grow in quality and value.

Christians adjust their communication with God to match their perception of Him. How BIG is your God.?

The recipient of prayer is GOD.

The Source of Prayer

Prayer always involves a human source. We must learn how to "speak to ourselves" when we pray.

Self-awareness is a very important part of prayer. What are my attitudes, ideas, and circumstances?

The Words of Communication

We must be conscious of our words to God when we pray. Variety in prayer is vital to effective communication with God.

Following the same pattern again and again will destroy a prayer life, just as surely as it destroys an earthly conversation.

Believers should pay attention to themselves in prayer because they are the source of prayer. The more aware we are of ourselves, the more sincere our prayers will become.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Four A Prayer Pattern

Goal: To give us a pattern of prayer in an attempt to help cultivate an effective and consistent prayer life.

Key Scripture: Matthew 6:5-13

ACTS - method

(Taken from Bill Hybels book "Too Busy Not to Pray.")

Adoration

Four reasons to begin prayer with adoration:

- (1) It sets the tone for the entire prayer. It causes us to focus our attention on God.
- (2) Reminds us of God's identity and inclination. Praise God for who He is, lifting up His character and personality gives us a greater understanding of who God is.
- (3) Purifies the one who is praying.
- (4) God is worthy of adoration (I John 3:1).

A God who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent and yet He loves us, watches over us and gives us good gifts. This is something to get excited about. Our heavenly father is worthy of our worship, and so right at the beginning let us offer it to Him.

How to adore God:

- ⇒ List His attributes.
- ⇒ Use psalms of praise such as Psalms 8, 19, 23, 46, 95, 100 and 148.
- ⇒ Sing to God.

Confession

We often like to leave this out or we lump our sins together in a pile; not making them appear as bad. When you pray, confess your sins individually and be specific.

When you have the courage to call your sins by their true names many things happen:

- (A) Your conscience will be cleansed.
- (B) You will begin to learn the meaning of peace as you are flooded with relief that God has a forgiving nature.
- (C) Then you will feel free to pray.

Thanksgiving

- ⇒ Psalm 103:2; I Thessalonians 5:18

There is a difference between feeling grateful and expressing thanks. For example, the story of the Ten Lepers found in Luke 17:11-19. All ten were healed and had tremendous gratitude for what Jesus had done. But only one came back to thank Jesus. Jesus felt disappointed by the ones who felt gratitude but did not take the time to express it.

Thank God every day for four kinds of blessings:

1. answered prayers
2. spiritual
3. relational

4. material.

Supplications (requests)

⇒ Philippians 4:6; James 4:2

If you have adored Him, confessed your sins and thanked Him for all His good gifts, you are ready to tell Him what you need. Break down your requests into groups that suit you, such as family, God's will, personal, etc.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Five The Problem With Prayer

Goal: To try and identify some common problems with prayer and give solutions.

Key Scripture: Isaiah 59:1, 2

As mentioned in our first lesson, "Prayer is one of the greatest blessings God offers, but it is also a source of frustration and guilt."

A Servant's Gaze

Often it is easy to get our eyes on the size of our problem instead of realizing the size of our GOD. An effective prayer life is developed through a "Servant's Gaze."

As servants of God, we are in utter need of His provision. His hand alone comes between us and eternal death. Only when we acknowledge our complete dependence upon God can we begin to enter prayer with a proper focus on God.

A fruitful, life-giving prayer rests firmly on the foundation of recognizing our need for God; it begins with the attitude of a dependent servant.

Our focus in prayer should be God. When we focus too much on what we need, we are bound to neglect the ONE whom we need.

Sometimes, when we pray, little attention is given to God. We mention Him at the beginning and end of our prayer, and we even use His name throughout the prayer "Lord...Lord...Lord...." But apart from the beginning and ending of a prayer, and a few phrases in between, our focus is not really on God. In a ten minute prayer we will usually spend less than sixty seconds focusing primarily on God. Our mind wanders off on many different activities of and/or for the day and we list off all our request. Then we are finished our prayer.

Addressing God

The values of addressing God with commonly used names and titles are at first, fresh, rich and hold much significance. However, the danger in this is as time goes on the names become familiar terms and lose their freshness. When addressing God in prayer, use names relevant to your present situation.

Different people need God in different ways. For instance: to the fatherless He becomes a father, and to the lonely He becomes a friend.

Some of the many ways the Bible addresses God are as follows: Morning Star; Alpha and Omega; Firstborn of Creation; Righteous Judge; Advocate; King of kings; Prince of Peace; Chief Cornerstone; and Lamb of God.

Our words express what is in our hearts. Our words will either hinder or enhance our communication with God.

Therefore, we should be very conscious and aware of what we are saying when we pray.

Read Psalm 56:1-13 and answer the following questions:

- (a) List three ways the psalmist thinks about God.
(Mercy, Avenger, Deliverer)
- (b) List three ways how the psalmist shows awareness of himself in prayer.
- 1 - Uses the personal pronoun "I" and "ME" a lot.
 - 2 - Acknowledges "HIS" need for help.
 - 3 - Personally gives God the praise(s) due His name.
- (c) Give three points that show how this prayer differs from your usual pattern of prayer.
- 1- Starts with a plea unto God for help.
 - 2 - Repeats his praise to God at the end.
 - 3 - Ask God about the final outcome of his enemies and his own welfare.

Note: These answers may vary depending on how a person prays.

Before bringing a request to God, ask yourself these questions. If God granted this request,

- Would it bring Him glory?
- Would it advance His kingdom?
- Would it help people?
- Would it help me to grow spiritually?

Three possible reasons why prayers are not answered:

#1 The request may be inappropriate.

#2 The timing may be off.

#3 The problem lies within ourselves (i.e. sin; bad attitude).

Some malfunction (sin) in our lives is blocking our prayers; even the appropriate, well-timed ones.

God is committed to developing people who will reflect His character in this world, and His character always expresses concern and compassion for the afflicted (Isaiah 58:3-9; Proverbs 21:13).

If your ear is open to the afflicted, God will keep His ear open to you.

The more you are convinced of God's ability, the more He demonstrates His power to you. How big is your perception of God?

Ways in which God speaks to us:

- (1) Through His Word
- (2) Through people
- (3) Leading of the Holy Spirit

When we pray, there will be times or there should be times when God will lead us by His Holy Spirit. God will only talk to us when we are willing to listen. In your

prayer time, take time to simply listen for the voice of God.

How can we know if the leadings are from God?

1. All leadings that come from God are consistent with His Word.
2. God's leadings are usually consistent with the person He made you to be.
3. God's leadings usually involve servanthood. It normally requires some sacrifice or steps of faith.

Sometimes we stop praying because we do not believe God is able to meet the need. Often, our prayers are weak because our faith is weak! We must believe with and in our heart that there is POWER IN PRAYER.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Six The Power of Prayer

Goal: To plainly show that there are results from praying.

Key Scripture: James 5:16

God's channel of power flows primarily to people who pray. When we work, we work; but when we pray, God works.

We need to recognize the power of prayer. When we pray correctly, God does answer prayer. Matter of fact, you can go to a house without being there - through PRAYER.

Some teach that we need to pray to obey; in obedience to God's Word and not for profit. This is not true!

***We pray to obey.
We pray to profit.***

God has established a LAW OF PRAYER: I will move when you pray. (II Chronicles 7:14) Prayer can affect God. It does have an influence. The Lord will not act independent of the prayers of His people (Matthew 7:7-11; James 4:2-3). Prayer is not telling God what He can do. Prayer releases God to do what He wants to do.

- In Mark 10, Jesus knew what Blind Bartemaus wanted, yet He still asked Him. Prayer changes history (Exodus 32:9-14)

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

To be effective in prayer, we must believe that God is ALL-POWERFUL and that He can do anything He wants to.

God's Omnipotence Shown in Many Ways

- 1. God's power over nature.**
 - Exodus 14; Joshua 3 - Parted the waters.
 - Mark 4:35-41 - Calmed the storm.
 - Joshua 10:12-14 - Caused the sun to stand still.
 - Exodus 17:1-17 - Brought water from a rock.
- 2. Power over circumstances.**
 - Acts 12 - Peter delivered from jail as a result of prayer.
- 3. Power over lives.**
 - Exodus 3-4 - God made shy Moses a leader.
 - I Kings 19:15 - God kept discouraged Elijah from quitting.
 - Acts 9:1-31 - Turned Saul the persecutor into Paul the Apostle.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. He does not change. (Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6)

Until you believe that God is able to do anything, you will be a faint-hearted prayer.

"A PRAYER WARRIOR is a person who is convinced that God is omnipotent - that God has the power to do anything, to change anyone and to intervene in any circumstance." (Quote: Bill Hybels book, "Too Busy Not To Pray")

When you truly believe this then you refuse to doubt God.

You can pray about anything (Philippians 4:6); you can pray wherever you are (I Timothy 2:8); and you do not have to be scared or shy (Hebrews 4:16).

Jesus' Prayer Principles Matthew 6: 5-13

#1) Pray Secretly

This is not saying that we are not to pray in church. It is referring to our daily walk with Christ. We do not pray for everyone to see. A private place of prayer helps minimize distractions. When we find a place where we can pray alone, then it is easier to focus on God. When you meet with the Lord regularly at the same place, you will find yourself looking forward to going there to talk with Him.

#2) Pray Sincerely

God does not like babble. Memorizing certain phrases to say when you pray does not please God. He wants us to be real, honest and personal with Him. God wants us to "Pour out our hearts to him." (Psalm 62:8) Talk to Him like you would a friend or father. Say "Lord, this is how I feel today. I have been thinking about this recently. I am worried about this. I am happy about this." Talk to Him sincerely. Casting all your cares upon Him, knowing He cares for you (I Peter 5:7).

#3) Pray Specifically

"Our Father" Remember, if you are God's child then you are praying to a Father who could not love you more than He already does.

"Who art in heaven" Reminds us of God's power (omnipotence).

"Hallowed be thy name" Worship and praise Him when you come to God in prayer. Don't list all your needs right away; take some time to hallow His name.

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" Give your will to God. Put His will first in your life - in your marriage, family, career, ministry, money, body, relationships, and church.

"Give us this day our daily bread" Philippians 4:6. Lay out all your concerns, big or small, before God.

"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" Live with a forgiving spirit toward others. Be sure you are not the obstacle!

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" Pray for protection from evil and victory over temptation.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.” End your prayer with more worship. Acknowledge that everything in heaven and earth is God’s. Thank the Lord for caring about you, for making it possible for you to talk to Him through prayer.

“Amen” This word means “let it be so”.

Remember, make your prayer sincere. It should include worship, submission, requests and confessions. Never forget that “God’s prevailing power is released through prayer.”

Prayer moves the hand that moves the world!

Additional Notes

**Lesson Thirty-Seven
Prayer Guide
Could you not tarry one hour?**

(Source: Unknown)

#1) Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name:

- A. Picture Calvary and thank God you can call Him “FATHER” by virtue of the blood of Jesus.
- B. Hallow the names of God corresponding with the Five benefits in the New Covenant, and make your faith declarations.

Benefit	Name & Meaning
Sin	Jehovah – Tsidkenu “Jehovah our righteousness”
	Jehovah – M’kaddesh “Jehovah who sanctifies”
Spirit	Jehovah – Shalom “Jehovah is peace”
	Jehovah – Shammah “Jehovah is there”
Soundness	Jehovah – Rophe “Jehovah heals”
Success	Jehovah – Jireh “Jehovah’s provision shall be seen”
Security	Jehovah – Nissi “Jehovah my banner”
	Jehovah – Rohi “Jehovah my shepherd”

#2) Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done:

- A. Yourself.
- B. Your family (mate, children, other family members).
- C. Your Church (Pastor, leadership, faithfulness of people, harvest).
- D. Nation (City, State, and National political and Spiritual Leaders).

#3) Give us this day our daily bread:

- A. Be in the will of God (prayer life, church, work habits, obedience in giving).
- B. Believe it is God’s will to prosper you.
- C. Be specific.
- D. Be tenacious (hold fast; firm grip).

#4) And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors:

- A. Ask God to forgive you.
- B. Forgive and release others.
- C. Set your will to forgive those who sin against you.

#5) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

- A. Put on the whole armour of God (Put on the Lord Jesus Christ).
 - 1. Loins girt about with TRUTH.

2. Breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS.
 3. Feet shod with the PREPARATION (READINESS) of the gospel of PEACE.
 4. Shield of FAITH.
 5. Helmet of SALVATION.
 6. Sword of the Spirit which is the WORD OF GOD.
- B. PRAY A HEDGE OF PROTECTION (you are my Refuge, my Fortress, my God).
1. Because thou hast made the Lord thy habitation.
 2. Because he hath set his love upon Me.
 3. Because he hath made known My name.

#6) For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever:

- A. Make your faith declarations.
- B. Return to praise.

Additional Notes

**Lesson Thirty-Eight
What is Fasting?**

Goal: To give us the origin of fasting and clearly define what fasting is.

Fasting in the Old Testament

The very first reference to fasting that we have in the Bible is when Moses fasted 40 days on Mount Sinai as he received directions about the construction of the Tabernacle and the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9).

The word "fast" comes from the Hebrew word "tsom," which refers to "self-denial." It seems that fasting first began as a natural expression of grief. When a person was in great distress or sorrow, they had a loss of appetite and would not eat. For example:

1. I Samuel 1:7 - Hannah was so distressed because she was barren that "she wept and did not eat."
2. II Samuel 1:12 - David and the men that were with him fasted to express their great sorrow and grief over the death of Saul and Jonathan.
3. II Samuel 3:35 - David fasted to express his grief for the death of Abner, son of Ner.
4. I Kings 21:4 - King Ahab "would eat no food" when he failed in his attempt to buy Naboth's vineyard.

From these examples, we can conclude that fasting first began as a result of extreme grief or sorrow which caused a loss of appetite. As time went on fasting became a customary practice to show one's grief to others and then later became a religious practice to turn away God's anger (Jonah 3:5-9).

However, in the Old Testament, people did not fast just to express their grief and sorrow; nor did they fast simply to turn away God's wrath and anger, but they fasted for:

1. Answers (Daniel 9:3; 10:2, 3)
2. Direction (Ezra 8:21-23)
3. Protection (Esther 4:15, 16)

Fasting in the New Testament

We have seen how fasting was a common practice among the people of Old. They understood the power of fasting and seeking the face of God through prayer.

Prayer and fasting still work today and are powerful weapons that are available to every Christian who desires to us them.

"In the New Testament, fasting was a widely practiced discipline, especially among the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist." (Quoted from Elmer L. Town's book "Fasting for Spiritual Break Through.")

- ⇒ Jesus began His public ministry with a forty day fast (Matthew 4:12).
- ⇒ Paul fasted often (II Corinthians 6:5; 11:27).

⇒ Cornelius fasted and God brought Salvation to his household (Acts 10:30, 31, 44, 47).

Fasting is not only something we read about in the Bible, but it is something Jesus expects us to do. Notice that Jesus, in Matthew 6:16 (Sermon on the Mount) said "When ye fast," not "if". Jesus assumed we would pray, pay our tithes and offerings, fast and forgive. To Jesus, these disciplines were as natural as breathing, sleeping or eating and He presumed they would naturally happen in the lives of every believer.

When the disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus why his disciples did not fast, Jesus answered them in Matthew 9:14, 15 by saying they would fast when He was taken away from them.

It is interesting to note that in the New Testament, the word "fast" still refers to "self-denial." Like prayer, fasting takes discipline! Yet when we practice fasting we discover power to overcome barriers and obstacles in our lives; our faith is increased; and healings along with miracles take place.

Fasting is a very powerful tool that brings results. When the disciples could not cast out an evil spirit from a man's son, Jesus told them that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:21)

Fasting will do what prayer, left on its own, cannot do.

Three Types of Fasts

(Taken from Elmer L. Towns' book "Fasting for Spiritual Break Through.")

#1) The normal fast. This means going without food for a definite period of time. The duration can be one day, such as the one found in Judges 20:26. Other biblical fast went for three days, one week, one month and as long as forty days.

#2) The absolute fast. One does not eat or drink. This type should be short. Moses' forty day fast would kill a person without supernatural intervention; one cannot go without water for such a long period of time.

#3) The partial fast. With this type, one may skip a meal or not eat certain foods for a period of time. For example: John the Baptist, Daniel and the three Hebrew boys along with Elijah are all examples of partial fasts.

One should not fast to prove their spirituality to those around them. Fasting for this reason is wrong! The principle of fasting is still "self-denial." By going without food we are demonstrating to God that we are serious about our need(s) and look to him in prayer for divine help.

Elmer Towns said in his book "Fasting for Spiritual Break Through" that "The purpose of all worship, including fasting, is to change the worshipper in ways that have social and interpersonal impact. We worship not just to

gratify ourselves, but also to become empowered to change the world!"

Through fasting, we become more sensitive to God's Spirit and begin to see how weak we really are and how strong He really is. Fasting allows us to hear the voice of God more clearly as He speaks to us and it causes us to listen to what God wants us to be and do.

Additional Notes

Lesson Thirty-Nine Why Fast?

Goal: To give us some biblical reasons and examples for fasting.

Key Scripture: Isaiah 58:6-8

In our first lesson, we learned how fasting first began and what it means to fast. Now we are going to look at some reasons for fasting.

Have you ever had problems that you simply did not know how to solve? Have you ever had to make tough decisions? What about protection? Through the Word of God we will look at several reasons why Christians should fast.

Fasting brings results. In fact, Isaiah 56:6-8 gives us nine reasons why we should fast:

- (1) To loose the bands of wickedness
- (2) To undo heavy burdens
- (3) To let the oppressed go free
- (4) To break every yoke
- (5) To give bread to the hungry and provide the poor with housing
- (6) To cause the people's light to break forth as the morning
- (7) To bring good health
- (8) To cause your righteousness to go before you
- (9) To cause the glory of the LORD to be your reward (or rear guard)

God has designed fasting for all these reasons. Even though the book of Isaiah was written thousands of years ago, they still apply to us today. Through prayer and FASTING, we can find solutions for every problem.

Here are just six reasons why fasting should still be a part of our lives.

#1 - Fast for guidance

Fasting causes us to focus on God and allows us to become more sensitive to His Spirit. It was not uncommon for New Testament believers to fast and pray for direction in finding the will of God.

For instance, in Acts 13:1-3, direction was given to Paul and Barnabas as a result of fasting.

As Paul and Barnabas travelled to the different cities and towns they continued to teach the importance of prayer and fasting through public example (Acts 14:21-23).

#2 - Fast for intervention

Fasting gets the attention of God! If you are ever faced with hopeless situations or you are presently in a hopeless situation, begin to fast and pray. It may be that God will see your sincerity and discipline and intervene. He did this for the people of Ninevah. They were hopelessly doomed for destruction, but through prayer

and fasting, they gained the attention of God and caused Him to change His mind (Jonah 3:5-10).

#3 - Fast for protection

This is a proven fact: Prayer and Fasting not only give us divine direction and intervention from God, but it also brings divine protection.

In Ezra 8:21-23, this godly man needed protection for the Jews who were returning to the Promise Land. They had been captives in the land of Persia but were now free to return to their homeland if they wanted to go. But they had a problem. Ezra just told the king that God takes care of His children and looks after them, however, the Jews that Ezra would lead back to their homeland had families, household goods and treasures.

In order for this group to get from Persia to Israel, they had to cross the wilderness. This area was very bad and had lots of thieves who would rob travellers as they journeyed. Ezra had 25 tons of silver; 100 silver articles weighing 150 pounds and 7,500 pounds of gold (Ezra 8:26) to transport to the promise land. And he was scared that this treasure might be stolen. What would he do? He needed protection but he was ashamed to ask the king for some soldiers and horsemen to help protect them against the enemy on the road. After all, he had just told the king how God protects His children. So what did they do? They fasted and prayed for protection and direction - God answered their prayers.

#4 - Fast for personal needs

The Bible tells us that God not only supplies our needs but He can also supply some of our wants or desires (Psalm 23:1; 34:9; 37:4,5; 107:9; Philippians 4:19).

A woman in the Bible named Hannah desired to have a son and she faithfully prayed regarding this matter. Yet it was not until she started fasting that she gained the attention of God and He granted her request (I Samuel 1: 7, 8, 10, 27).

Note: Not all of our needs, wants or desires require fasting. Some simply take prayer and then an exercising of our faith in God for the answer(s). However, some require a more diligent approach, that of prayer and fasting.

Simply because you fast and pray does not mean all your needs and desires will be met. Although fasting is a powerful weapon in gaining answers from God, it will never go against His will or the principles found in the Bible. An example of this can be found in II Samuel 12, where David fasted for seven days in an attempt to change the judgment of God. He had sinned and committed adultery with Bathesheba and one of the judgments for David's sin was the "death" of his baby boy.

If what you are fasting for is wrong, selfish or sinful, fasting will not make it right.

#5 - Fast for revival

The majority, if not every, significant revival that has ever taken place since the beginning of time has been a result of prayer and fasting.

#6 - Fast for worship

Romans 12:1, 2 - Fasting is one way we can present our bodies as a "living sacrifice" unto God. We are giving up something we like (eating) to spend time in prayer with God. By doing this, we are telling God that "He takes top priority in our lives." Fasting allows us to focus on God and increases our awareness of the things of God. It gives us a proper perspective of life and God.

At the center of true worship lies sacrifice. All throughout the Old Testament we see that worship involved a sacrificial lamb. Sacrifice means "to give something up which is very important to us." Fasting is one method of doing this.

Listen to what the Amplified Bible says in Luke 2:36-37, "And there was also a prophetess, Anna...She did not go out from the temple enclosure, but was worshipping night and day with fasting and prayer."

Worship means "to pay divine honour to someone or something; it has to do with adoration." By fasting, we are making a personal sacrifice of praise and worship to our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. And He always takes notice of our praise, worship, and sacrifice.

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty The Benefits and Results of Fasting

Goal: In this lesson we will look at the benefits of fasting and then some of the results of fasting.

It was once said, "We fast and pray for results, but the results are in God's hands."

The benefits of fasting are not only spiritual but physical as well. Fasting does more than increase your sensitivity to the Spirit. It gives you power to break down the many barriers and obstacles in your life.

Some benefits of fasting are:

#1 – Clears the mind

Fasting allows the body to clear itself of toxic products and purifies the blood. This allows people to think clearer and increases the sensitivity of our five senses (seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and hearing).

#2 – Gives rest to the body

When we fast, it allows our body to rest. Fasting also gives our body time to purge itself from any impurities or extra waste that is inside.

#3 – Helps break addictions

"It is possible to make an item of food your god by becoming addicted to it. Anything that becomes an addiction displaces God from His rightful throne in our lives." (Quoted from Elmer L. Towns' book "Fasting for Spiritual Break Through.")

We must be careful not to allow any chemical, food or drink to become our god. Did you know that some sicknesses are the result of too much (addiction) of one particular substance that we once rarely had. A good way to prevent this from happening is to fast periodically.

Not only will we be blessed physically, but we will also be blessed spiritually.

The results of fasting are many and may differ depending upon the person involved. However, here are just a few results of fasting. Once you begin to practice this great discipline you will likely experience many more blessings than the ones given here today.

Results of Fasting

1. Your spiritual authority will increase.
2. You will receive clear direction for your life and/or ministry.
3. Fasting will increase your desire to pray.
4. Give you victory over satanic strongholds.
5. Increase your sensitivity and awareness of God's presence.
6. Your faith will become stronger and you will receive more power for spiritual warfare.

Purpose of Fasting

- (A) To subdue or bring our body under subjection.
- (B) To humble our soul (Ezra 8:21).
- (C) To seek the face of God (II Chronicles 20:3,4).
- (D) To prepare for Spiritual Warfare (Matthew 17:21).

The principle of fasting is still the same, "self-denial." It is through prayer and fasting that we bring our bodies under subjection and begin to offer unto God sacrifices of praise and worship. Then we start reaping the blessings that come with fasting.

Some Blessings From Fasting

- #1 - Answered prayer, insight, and restoration (Isaiah 58:9-12).
- #2 - Joy, gladness and cheerfulness will become your companions for life (Zechariah 8:19).
- #3 - God will reward you openly (Matthew 6:17,18).

I have heard it said before that "fasting is not a requirement, nor is it a church ordinance that should or must be followed. But rather it is a discipline that strengthens believers, and when properly applied (used) provides answers to our prayers."

I close by reminding you of five very important points:

- ⇒ Jesus fasted.
- ⇒ Jesus expects us to fast.
- ⇒ Demonic powers are broken through prayer and fasting.
- ⇒ Fasting brings both spiritual and physical blessings.
- ⇒ Fasting brings results. It works!

Why not give fasting a place in your life? As a Christian, you will see a difference in your walk with God.

Experience the POWER today!

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-One Clean or Dirty?

Goal: To define true holiness and give us some principles that we can use as guidelines to help us live a holy life.

Key Scripture: II Corinthians 7:1

Are you clean or dirty?

Holiness is not something that happens overnight. It is a progressive change. We should be constantly changing to become more like Christ; "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Just like most children look and act like their parents, God, our heavenly Father wants us to look and act like Him.

Baby Illustration: Imagine that you are the judge at a baby beauty contest. The first baby has not had a bath for a long time and her hair is messy and all tangled. Her nose is running and her eyes are matted. She smells like sour milk. The second baby is clean and cuddly. She smells very nice and her eyes sparkle. She also has a nice big, bright smile. Which baby would you vote for?

God desires His children to be clean. His Word says that we are to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

⇒ Discuss and list sins which cause us be filthy physically and spiritually. Then talk about how we can cleanse ourselves from these sins and present ourselves as clean, cuddly, and courteous children of the King.

So what is holiness anyway? Is it a list of do's and don'ts? No, although it involves some "do's" and "don'ts," holiness "is a change of mind that causes us to live in a way that separates us from the ugly, dirty side of life and transforms us into the image of our Father."

Holiness:

1. That which belongs to God exclusively.
2. Refers to our being new creations in Christ.
3. Refers to our separation from the world.

Two-fold nature of holiness: Psalm 24:3-4

1. Outward - Cleans Hands
2. Inward - Pure Heart

Holiness is a part of worship. "Lifting up holy hands" (I Timothy 2:8).

Martin Lloyd-Jones once said "The glory of the gospel is that when the Church is absolutely different from the world, she invariably attracts it. It is then that the world is made to listen to her message, though it may hate it at first."

Holiness is more than simply how you look; it is an attitude. Here is a poem by Lois Blanchard Eades which asks the question:

“What would you do if He came to your house?”

When you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door with arms outstretched in welcome to your Heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in? Or hide some magazines, and put the Bible where they had been?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymnbooks out?

Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about? And I wonder - if the Saviour spent a day or two with you, Would you go right on doing the things you always do? Would you go right on saying the things you always say?

Would life for you continue as it does from day to day? Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you had planned to go? Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends? Or would you hope they stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on? Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone? It might be interesting to know the things that you would do, if Jesus came in person to spend some time with you.

In everything we do, say, think, and enjoy we should ask ourselves the following questions:

- #1) Will it bring glory to God? (I Corinthians 10:31)
- #2) Can it be done “in the name of the Lord Jesus” asking His blessing on the activity? (John 14:13; Colossians 3:1)
- #3) Will this activity focus my priorities on things that are profitable and that will help me spend more time with Jesus? (Mark 4:19; Luke 10:41-42)
- #4) Will this activity help me be a better Christian example, or will it take away from my witnessing power? (I Corinthians 10:23; I John 2:6)
- #5) Will my action(s) weaken the sincere convictions of others or perhaps offend them? (I Corinthians 8: 11-13)
- #6) Will it weaken my desire for spiritual things, God’s Word, and prayer? (Luke 8:14; Matthew 5:6)
- #7) Does this activity pass the test of I John 2:15-17 with flying colours?
- #8) Were the Lord Jesus here in person, could I invite Him to participate with me and involve Him in this activity?
- #9) Finally, if there is a doubt about acceptability, do not do it!

Holiness is more than “do’s” and “don’ts.” It is also more than an outward appearance. Holiness is a lifestyle that is characterized by our attitude.

Lesson Forty-Two Conformed or Transformed?

Goal: To encourage us to stand for what we believe and not to conform to the world’s view of holiness.

Key Scripture: Romans 12:1-2

What types of sacrifices were offered in the Old Testament? Why do we not offer animal sacrifices today?

⇒ Blood sacrifices are no longer required because Jesus shed His blood for the sins of the world. The only sacrifice God wants us to make now is one of a holy life. He does not want us to die for Him. He wants us to live for Him - a holy and clean life which is acceptable and pleasing to Him.

Living a holy life is the “reasonable” thing to do. God does not ask us to live a holy life for His benefit. Living a holy life benefits us.

⇒ Discuss the heartaches and problems people can avoid by presenting their bodies “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.”

Phillips translation of the Romans 12:2 says, “Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within...”

Transformed means “changed or converted.” A transformer changes or converts electricity from one current or voltage to another, but what happens when a transformer blows? The electricity goes off; it loses power.

The Holy Spirit is a spiritual transformer which changes or converts us. It renews our minds. When our ugly, dirty minds are cleansed, we are transformed; then we can discern or understand what is the “good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” And we can see the beauty of holiness.

Before the old carnal nature is “transformed,” a person cannot understand holiness. They may say “I do not see anything wrong with that little thing.” But when he is transformed, holiness makes sense. They then say, “Why, it’s only reasonable not to do that.”

The world would like to pressure you into “being like everybody else.” But consider :

- If you were the only good orange in a basket of rotten ones, would you want to “be like everybody else?”
- If you were the only clean person in a bunch of dirty ones, would you want to “be like everybody else?”
- If you were the only healthy person in a hospital, would you want to “be like everybody else?”
- If you were the only rich person in your neighbourhood, would you want to “be like everybody else?”

- If you were the only Christian in your area, would you want to “be like everybody else?”

God’s children are not common, ordinary, people.

We are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should SHOW FORTH the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” (I Peter 2:9).

God’s people are like diamonds in a sack of rocks.

A large portion of the following information has been taken from the booklet “Something Holy is in me - Lesson 6” A Search For Truth Publication.

Do you really want to become more like Christ? Do you really want to be transformed by His power? If you do, then pay close attention to the following:

To grow in holiness means your entire thought-life, attitudes, plans, and ideas will be gradually replaced by Christ’s. Instead of seeking for gifts (“Lord, I want... or Would You do this for me?”), you will be more interested in producing spiritual fruit - the characteristics Christ displayed. Those found in Galatians 5:22, 23.

Spiritual “children” are all anxious to see a spectacular demonstration of the supernatural. From church to church they go, looking for entertainment or another display of powerful gifts. Only mature Christians recognize the spiritual strength and nourishment derived from fruit. Yes, they also desire powerful gifts - and make themselves available for the Spirit to work through them. But they have chosen “the more excellent way.” To best serve others, they want Christ’s attributes to be seen in everything they do.

Materialism is another evidence of spiritual immaturity.

A child cannot tell the difference between the worth of 10,000 cedis and a package of biscuits. How many of God’s children demonstrate their childishness by craving for material things such as a fine home, expensive car and leave spiritual things in second or third place. God has designed that a growing, developing Christian allows this to happen:

Romans 12:2 - “Renewing of your mind.”

Philippians 2:5 - “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 8:29 - “To be conformed to the image of his Son.”

Galatians 4:19 - “ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”

Galatians 2:20; 3:27 - “Christ liveth in me...For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

Colossians 1:26,27 - “Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Ephesians 4:22,24 - “That ye put off... the old man,...And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Holiness does not conform you to the ways of the world; but rather, it transforms you into a “Christ-like” person (Christian).

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-Three Holiness Involves Attitudes

Goal: To demonstrate to us that once we are converted (transformed), our attitudes will also change as we mature in holiness.

Key Scriptures: I Thessalonians 2:10; 3:12-13; Ephesians 1:4

Examining your beliefs and values is really looking at who you are and what you stand for. It is looking at your identity. Your principles define who you are. Live as you believe and you are being faithful to yourself and the world.

Most of the following information has been adapted from the booklet "Something Holy is in me - Lesson 6" A Search For Truth Publication

The statement was made in our first lesson that "holiness is a lifestyle characterized by our attitude." Holiness is not simply looking good on the outside, but it is having our thought life transformed and having a proper outlook on life. A person's character is composed of his nature, temperament, personality, emotions, and ATTITUDES. Holiness should transform each of these areas in our lives to be more like Christ.

Based on Love

The word "holy" is often connected with "unblameable" - meaning: without blame; without condemnation, reproach, or censure.

To be without blame expresses a faithful obedience to Christ's faintest whisper about our daily conduct.

It is a willingness to be taught about imperfections or blind spots in our character.

Have you ever heard unbelievers discussing bad attitudes that are often displayed by Christians? Such as: being harsh, unkind, critical, sharp-tongued, lazy, jealous, high-tempered, dishonest, rude, greedy, or impatient.

If these bad attitudes exist in the life of a Christian, they need to pray that God will help them to become more like Him. Sure, they may appear holy outwardly, but they are not "holy and without blame."

The Bible speaks of a godly man who possessed this quality of being "holy and blameless." He is found in Daniel 6:3, 4). He lived in such a way that no one could point a finger at any flaw in Daniel's character. What a testimony to the unbeliever! Many years of holy living had yielded his character faultless!

According to Ephesians 1:4, the only way we can properly project holiness and blamelessness to those around us is with love. This principle is so important that Jesus designated the chief mark of discipleship to be love (John 13:35; I Thessalonians 3:12-13).

This "holy, unblameable love" is first expressed to God's family members, or "especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). Then it extends outward "toward all men."

Unless holiness is combined with love, it becomes offensive, fanatical and even unpleasant - WRONG!

Which attitudes please God the most?

The most important aspect of holiness is the right kind of attitudes.

When we have proper attitudes toward God and man, we will excel in every area of life.

But if our attitudes are not right, no amount of outward holiness will replace the lack of true holiness within. Long before we "look" differently, we begin to act and think differently. (This is the initial sign of a potential backslider. They begin to act and think different before they look different.) A person's attitudes begin changing before the manner of dress changes.

Bill Gothard, with the Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, has translated some holiness characteristics into definitions that are beautifully simple and simply beautiful.

Refer to this chart on the next page.

To be holy is to imitate Jesus Christ in all His attitudes and characteristics. When His personality replaces my personality and His mind replaces my mind, I am a real "Christian," or "Christ-like."

To determine if your attitudes are like His, ask yourself, "What would Jesus do if He were faced with this situation? Would He enjoy or feel comfortable with this? Would He approve of going to this place? How would He respond to this accusation? How would He answer this question?" The attitudes displayed by Christ are the perfect measurement for our actions.

To excuse a flaw in our character by saying, "This is just my personality," is really confessing, "I do not have the personality of Jesus Christ."

Remember, holiness involves your attitude.

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-Four What About My Hair? Part 1

Goal: This lesson should give us a scriptural viewpoint regarding the issue of hair and thus influence our actions regarding this subject.

Key Scripture: I Corinthians 11:3-16

One cannot discuss holiness without getting into some specific areas of our personal lives.

Cheryl Riddick, in her article on "Long Hair" wrote: "Holiness is not an option: it is a command that we are to obey in all aspects of our lives. Holiness means thinking as God thinks, loving what He loves, hating what He hates, and acting as Christ acts. Holiness is not a means of salvation but a result of salvation. Holiness does not come by works of the flesh but only by submission to the Holy Spirit."

A love for God will produce a faith in God. And faith in God produces obedience.

"If we believe God, we believe His Word; and if we believe His Word, we accept its teachings and apply them to our lives. The greater our love for God the more we want to know what it takes to please Him. Our desire for holiness becomes our way of life." (Cheryl Riddick, Missionary wife to Terry Riddick, Cameroon, Africa)

Hair in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is always the foundation for truths revealed in the New Testament. To the Jews, a full head of hair was a sign of strength and perfection. Those who lost their hair, had lost their glory and power.

- Proverbs 16:31 - Refers to gray hair as a crown of glory.

In the Old Testament:

- Cutting the hair symbolized disgrace or mourning (Ezra 9:3; Nehemiah 13:25; Isaiah 22:12; Ezekiel 27:31; 29:18; Micah 1:16).
- A lack of hair signified barrenness, sin, and God's judgment (Jeremiah 47:5; 48:37; Ezekiel 7:18; Amos 8:10).
- God's judgments on proud women were to replace well set hair with baldness, showing their shame and dishonour (Isaiah 3:17-24).
- Cut hair was also used by God as a symbol of backslidden Israel's rejection by God (Jeremiah 7:29).
- God instructed Ezekiel in chapter 5:1-4,12 to cut his own hair as an object lesson. Cut hair illustrated the glory of God departing from Jerusalem.

The Principle of Authority

Taken from Word Aflame Press Tract #6107

The subject of I Corinthians 11:3-16 is authority. A good point to remember is this: The signs of submission can be seen in the appearance of both men and women.

- Verse 3: A chain of authority is given.
- Verse 4: Christ is man's head. Therefore, Christ is dishonoured if a man prays or prophesies with his head covered.
- Verse 5: The man (husband or father) is the head of the woman (wife or daughter). When a woman prays or prophesies with her head uncovered, she dishonoureth her head (the man). This dishonour applies whether a woman's hair is shorn or shaven; they are both "a shame" unto her (verse 6).

The word "shorn" comes from the Greek word "KEIRO" and simply means "to cut."

Spiritual Significance

Taken from Word Aflame Press Tract #6107 and "Something Holy is in me - Lesson 6" A Search for Truth Publication.

Once you have given your life to Christ, your hair is long if it remains "uncut." Uncut hair is a glory to women, honours her head, and pleases God.

Verse 7: God has chosen that a man's uncovered head reflects His image and glory. In a similar manner God has chosen a woman's covered head to reflect the glory of the man. This reflected glory is based on the order established at creation (verse 8,9).

Verse 10: This verse tells us that we should have power (authority) over the angels, "Because of the Angels." Here are two reasons for this scripture:

1. One-third of the angels were cast out of heaven because of pride and rebellion. Now the angels watch to see if women will also be rebellious, or if they will wear the mark of "consecration, submission and power with God."
 - The Bible often refers to the Church as a woman (Bride of Christ). Her actions show the angels how submissive the church is to Christ, the Head of the Church.
 - Her uncut hair is a symbol of submission to authority.
2. Believers (both men and woman) shall judge angels:
"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (I Corinthians 6:3)

If someday we shall judge angels for their refusal to submit to God's authority, we must presently show submission by obeying God's Word concerning the hair question.

Angels are spirits. It is not just in the physical realm that the authority represented by the long (uncut) hair is

important; even angels take note of a person's obedience or disobedience in this matter.

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-Five What About My Hair? Part 2

The Covering

Taken from Word Aflame Press Tract #6107

The inspired Apostle Paul believed the church at Corinth would naturally understand his well-grounded (sound) teaching on this subject: "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?" (verse 13).

He did not think this should be a surprise to Christians, for the lesson of a clear distinction between male and female in this matter is deeply rooted even in nature: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (verse 14-15).

The words "have long hair" in these verses are translated from the Greek word "komao," which means "to let the hair grow." The word "hair" in verse 15 in the phrase "her hair is given her for a covering" is translated from the Greek "kome," which refers to uncut hair. This further explains verse 6, which declares it to be a shame if a woman's hair is shorn (cut) or shaven. Her long, uncut hair is a glory to her, for it illustrates her loving submission to her husband or father.

On the other hand, it is a shame for a man if he allows his hair to grow uncut. For a man to cut his hair reflects his submission to Christ; uncut hair on a man symbolizes rebellion against his head, Christ.

The covering mentioned in this passage is the woman's uncut hair. Verse 15 is the only place the word "covering," a noun, appears in the passage. Previously, the words "uncovered" and "covered" appear. These two words are adjectives (descriptive words); they do not specifically declare what is the covering. But verse 15 specifically says, "Her hair is given her for a covering."

The word "for" is translated from the Greek "anti," which means "against" or "instead of." Here the Bible itself declares that a woman's long, uncut hair is given to her instead of (for) a covering, and this is the inspired explanation of verse 5 and 6.

Thus, if a woman cuts or shaves the hair on her head, it is in the eyes of God a shameful dishonour of her father or husband (head). If a man allows his hair to grow long, it is a shameful dishonour of Christ.

Contention

Taken from Word Aflame Press Tract #6107

The discussion on submission (hair) is concluded by verse 16, "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."

Contention is always the result of pride (Proverbs 13:10). If any man proudly argued against this teaching, he

needed to realize that none of the churches of God had a custom of allowing men to pray or prophecy with their heads covered with long, uncut hair. Nor did they permit women to pray or prophecy unless their heads were covered with long, uncut hair.

Conclusion

Some of the following information has been taken from Word Aflame Press Tract #6107; Cheryl Riddick's article entitled "Long Hair"; and "Something Holy is in me - Lesson 6" A Search for Truth Publication.

The sincere person who wishes to please God will want to obey His Word in every respect.

In the Bible, divinely appointed symbols represent holy things. The night Jesus was betrayed, for example, He gave His disciples bread to eat and a cup to drink. The bread, He said, represented His body, and the cup was a symbol of His shed blood (I Corinthians 11:23-25). While the bread and cup are only symbols, what they represent is very holy and those who do not properly respect them are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (verse 27).

By studying and reading the Scriptures, it seems God has chosen for the length of people's hair to symbolize their relationship to Him and to the authority He has placed over them. This truth is presented to us in I Corinthians 11:3-16.

Just as a person will partake of the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper with great reverence because these symbols represent the body and blood of Christ (verse 20); a man will cut his hair, while a woman will allow hers to grow because these symbols represent their relationship to God and to God-given authority.

Modern culture promotes the cutting of women's hair, but the Bible always links this practice with shame. God desires for all women, regardless of culture, to have long hair. Many women think long hair is just too much of a sacrifice because of the time it takes to keep it nice. However, the question today is, do you obey the Word of God as a sacrifice to Him, or do you obey because you want to worship God?

In Genesis 22:1-10, we find that God told Abraham to go to a place that He would tell him of and there offer Isaac, his only son, for a burnt offering (Genesis 22:2). Abraham did not question God. He did as he was told.

In verse five Abraham told the young men to abide with the donkey while he and Isaac went up the mountain to worship. What God called offering (sacrifice), Abraham called worship. Having uncut hair is not a sacrifice. It is a woman's glory and is worship unto the Lord.

A Sign of Separation

God has always had a separate, holy nation of peculiar people (I Peter 2:9). The way we wear our hair (both men and women) is a declaration of our desire to be

separate unto the Lord. Today the identification marks for God's people are: water baptism in Jesus Name, infilling of the Holy Spirit, and holy living. These marks separate or distinguish us from the world.

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-Six

A Closer Look at Holiness

Part 1

Goal: To examine some key characteristics that should be in the life of a person trying to live a holy life before the Lord.

Key Scripture: I Peter 1:14-16

We have an admonition from the Lord to “be holy, as He is holy.” A very good question to ask yourself is: What does holiness consist of? Well, let us see what the Bible has to say about this question.

The Practical Application of Holiness

Taken from David K. Bernard’s book on “The Essentials of Holiness”

There are two categories for holiness standards:

(1) Clear teachings of the Scripture. Examples: fornication, lying, drunkenness, and adultery. These are standards which should be followed immediately after conversion.

(2) Practical applications of scriptural principles to modern situations. Examples: adornment (Things to make you look better, such as earrings, necklaces, and rings), apparel (clothes), and amusements (entertainments, things a person does for fun; things that make you happy).

Here are some important biblical principles that we need to apply to our lives as Christians desiring to be holy:

#1 - Attitudes

(Galatians 5:19-23; Ephesians 4:23-32). We must put away evil attitudes such as envy, jealousy, complaining, rebellion and a critical spirit. True holiness will bear the fruit of the Spirit. We must learn to forgive, to be obedient to authority, to be thankful, not to let things offend us, and not to be busybodies in others’ lives.

#2 - Thoughts

(II Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8). A person eventually becomes what he allows his mind to dwell on. We must think on things that are true, honest, and virtuous. We must cast out evil thoughts, taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. Temptation is not sin unless we yield to it. We must not yield ourselves to entertaining and retaining evil thoughts.

#3 – The Tongue

(James 1:26; 3:1-12; 5:12). Things that we must avoid are talebearing, backbiting, slander, sowing discord, swearing by oath, using the Lord’s name in vain, pronouncement of curses, reviling, lying, idle words, and suggestive, indecent speech.

#4 – The Eye

(Psalm 101:3; 119:37; Matt. 6:22-23). The eye is the gate to the soul and the primary source of input for the mind. We must be very careful what we set before our eyes.

We should not read material that is indecent (vulgar) and full of sensuality.

Since violence, illicit sex, lust, evil speech, sinfulness, and vanity dominate Televisions and movies; it is best for Christians not to own a T.V. or watch movies (at the theatre or on video). The reason being, these devices weaken our spiritual values and priorities and feed the carnal desires.

#5 – Stewardship of the Body

(I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:12, 19, 20). Since our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, we should not use things that harm or defile the body, cause intoxication, or cause addiction. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and illegal drugs violate this principle.

#6 – Sanctity of Marriage

(Heb. 13:4). The Bible condemns all sexual relations outside of marriage. It opposes lustful thoughts and actions and admonishes youth to flee from fornication and lust. Since God’s plan is lifelong marriage, we should not follow worldly examples and seek divorce on grounds of a mistake, incompatibility, or falling out of love.

The Biblical Standpoint on Marriage & Divorce:

- (1) Matthew 5:31-3 (Luke 16:18)
- (2) Matthew 19:3-9
- (3) Romans 7:2
- (4) I Corinthians 7:10-13

#7 – Honesty and Integrity

(Mark 10:19). The Bible condemns all forms of dishonesty and corruption; this includes lying, stealing, defrauding, refusal to pay debts, bribery, and cheating.

#8 - Fellowship

(Matt. 18:15-18; I Cor. 5:9-6:8; 15:33; II Cor. 6:14). We must not become identified with sinful attitudes or lifestyles.

We should not have fellowship with so-called Christians who continually indulge in sinful activities, nor become yoked with unbelievers (such as by marriage).

In the church, we are to resolve all disputes according to the procedure given by Christ, not by suing one another in civil court.

#9 – Worldly Activities

(I Thess. 5:22; Titus 3:3; I John 2:15). We must honestly and maturely watch (regulate) music, sports, games, and amusements. There are some places that we should avoid going to and some things that we should not do

because the atmosphere, influences and associations are worldly and do not promote Christian Living.

Lesson Forty-Seven **A Closer Look at Holiness** **Part 2**

Additional Notes

#10 - Appearance

APPAREL: The Bible stresses that men and women should look different! A man is not like a woman nor is a woman to be like a man. It is a sin for women to try to appear like men and vice-versa (Deut. 22:5). God has made the man to have one place and the woman to have another (I Cor. 11:8, 9). It is wrong for women to appear masculine, and it is equally wrong for men to appear effeminate. Matter of fact, I Corinthians 6:9, 10 tells us that the effeminate will not inherit the kingdom of God. Our actions and dress project an attitude.

ADORNMENT: It is not God's intention for us to write out every little thing one can and cannot do, but what He does expect of us is to be honest, sincere and "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14)

I Timothy 2:9, 10 Gives us a measuring rod by which we can judge ourselves. First of all, let's see what some of these words mean.

- modest: means "to be orderly, well arranged, becoming, decent, proper, not excessive."
- apparel: comes from the Greek word "katastole" which means "long robe; lowered, let down."
- shamefacedness comes from the Greek word "aidos," meaning "modesty or reverence."
- This word implies respect, reverence, self-restraint, modesty or bashfulness toward men, not being bold or forward.
- sobriety: in verse 9 and 15 means "prudence or moderation."

When one takes these words and the principles from these verses and actively, honestly with sincerity tries to apply them to their life, adornment will not be an issue.

Why would you want to wear make-up when the Bible only speaks of women involved in adultery and harlotry as participants in such things. Nowhere in the Bible is painting the face associated with virtuous women.

- Ancient Egypt first introduced painting of the eyelids to enhance sexual appeal about 3000 B.C.. This practice, referred to by Solomon, describes an evil, whorish, adulterous woman: Proverbs 6:25.
- Read how Jeremiah described Judah's backslidden state in Jeremiah 4:30.
- Ezekiel 23:40 He gives us a description of lewd harlots who used make-up to entice men to sin.
- II Kings 9:30 The wicked queen Jezebel painted her face.
- Can you think of any godly women in the Bible who wore make-up? That should tell you something.

What about jewelry and ornaments? The Bible speaks often about two very important principles: moderation and temperance. Everything we do in life should reflect these two principles.

- I Peter 3:3-5 Holiness has to do with separation from sin and the world; it speaks of a dedication to God and His will.
- “In sum, holiness means to imitate Christ, to be Christ-like.
- The holy person will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature, but he will put on the personality and mind of Christ and will let Christ be formed in him (Romans 13:14; Galatians 4:19).” (This is a quotation from D.K. Bernard’s book, “Essentials of Holiness”)

A Historical Viewpoint

(A lot of the material in this section has been taken from Separated-Because of Him! Lesson 7 - A Search for Truth Publication)

“From ancient days, people from every race and nation have adorned themselves with rings on the big toe, the thumb, and every finger - lip rings, neck rings (necklaces), nose rings, anklets, bracelets, and earrings.”

People thought that the wearing of jewelry would protect them from evil spirits and considered rings to be a “magic circle.”

It seems that the ancient people wore rings for magical reasons, such as to cure disease, to give strength, luck, general protection to the possessor, or to defend from evil spirits. According to the ancient Oriental view, metals and precious stones belonged to certain gods. Any trinket that diverts attention from the wearer to itself served as a protection against the “evil eye.”

In Genesis 35, God instructs Jacob to return to Bethel and build an altar. Look at what Jacob tells all the members of his household to do in Genesis 35:2,4.

An initial step in turning to God through consecration and prayer was to remove their jewelry.

In Exodus 12:35-36, Israel took many golden and silver ornaments from the Egyptians before their departure. Jewelry had long been associated with heathen adornment and idolatry.

However, it was God’s purpose for His people to use it in the construction of the Tabernacle, not for ornamentation. Later in the book of Exodus, when Israel sinned by worshipping a calf made from their golden earrings, God threatened to kill them all. He was vexed. In Exodus 33:5-6, God commanded that they remove their ornaments as a sign of their utter remorse for their sin.

Because of their consecration, the Lord came down in a cloud of glory to talk to Moses. Stripping away their

offensive gold and jewelry proved to God that Israel truly wanted Him. Self-denial still touches the heart of God.

In all we do we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

- (1) Does it serve a useful purpose?
- (2) Does it agree with Paul’s teaching on modesty, shamefacedness, and sobriety?
- (3) What is my motive?
- (4) Would Jesus be pleased?
- (5) Would it draw attention to me?
- (6) Would this be attractive to the opposite sex in a sensual way?

- Psalm 29:2
- Revelations 22:11-12
- Deuteronomy 7:6

Additional Notes

Lesson Forty-Eight Holiness in Perspective

Goal: To give a summary of holiness and some guidelines by which we can live a holy life unto the Lord.

Key Scripture: Leviticus 19:2

- Holiness and faith are very important to God. In fact, the Bible declares “if a person does not have holiness, he cannot see God.” And we know that without faith, it is impossible to please Him.

Principles of Holiness

A large portion of this section was taken from David K. Bernard’s booklet, “Essentials of Holiness.”

#1 A Love for God and not the world.

Holiness means that we are not to love the things of this world nor participate in its sinful pleasures and activities. (James 4:4).

I John 2:15-16 specifically tells us to avoid three major areas of temptation and sin.

- (1) Lust of the flesh
- (2) Lust of the eyes
- (3) Pride of life

The purpose of holiness standards is to protect us in one or more of these areas.

Temperance is an important principle to use in every aspect of daily living (I Corinthians 9:24-27).

It means self-discipline, self-control, and moderation in all things. We are to deny self-will and surrender to the will of God.

As Christians we must abstain from all appearance of evil (I Thessalonians 5:22) and have nothing to do with it.

#2 A change within and without.

Holiness involves both the inner person and the outer person (I Cor. 6:19-20; I Thess. 5:23). We are to perfect holiness in our lives by cleansing ourselves of filthiness both of the spirit and of the flesh (II Cor. 7:1). For example, lustful thoughts as well as acts of adultery are sinful (Matthew 5:27-28), and hatred as well as murder is sinful (I John 3:15).

Holiness, includes attitudes, thoughts, and spiritual stewardship on the one hand, and actions, appearance, and physical stewardship on the other. Both are needed. A person who has a true spirit of holiness in time, will manifest it outwardly, but the outward appearance of holiness is no good if you do not have inward holiness. For example, a modest spirit will produce modest dress, but modest dress is of little value if it conceals a lustful heart.

God expects continual growth in grace and knowledge and increasing production of spiritual fruit (John 15:1-8; II Peter 3:8).

Holiness is a daily walk with the daily goal of overcoming sin (John 5:14; 8:11). As Christians we are not to sin; if we do, we can receive forgiveness by repentance and confession (I John 1:9; 2:1).

The church still needs to be concerned about ‘worldliness.’ Worldliness is defined as ‘living only for this world.’ This would include things such as drinking, smoking, fornication and adultery.

These things are wrong for several reasons:

- (1) They are not healthy.
- (2) They can ruin your reputation.
- (3) Sin is an offense against a Holy God who desires His image to be revealed in us.

Motivation for holiness comes by faith, love, and walking after the Spirit. Love will go to any extent to please. Love always goes farther than duty.

#3 The disciple is willing to practice discipline.

When we draw closer to God we feel uncomfortable in our sin. The closer we look at Him, the more overwhelmed we become by His holy nature. Isaiah saw the Lord and said, “Woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips.” Even today, God is still saying to His people, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

#4 True holiness is a humble mind set...

... that says, “I want to be like Jesus.”

We Pentecostals must NOT be intimidated by the pressures of the outside world.

Standards were not made to make our lives miserable. They have a purpose. “The Church is appointed to be the ambassador of Jesus Christ.” (Quote taken from the book Why? A Study of Christian Standards)

#5 As ambassadors we should reflect His light to all the world.

After all, we are called to be a light in this darkened world.

“A standard is a flag or banner. Just like flags represent certain customs and traditions of a country or people, their lifestyles and philosophies of life.

They are particularly interested in demonstrating their uniqueness and individuality. Similarly, standards (in a moral sense) become an identifying object and a representation of distinction. They are the patterns or criteria by which the world identifies our uniqueness and distinction as children of God. They are the flags that let the world know we belong to Jesus.” (Quote taken from Why? A Study of Christian Standards.)

The following information was taken from the book "Something Holy is in me - Lesson #6" A Search For Truth Publication

#6 A new person is born.

When the Holy One comes to live inside, He brings with Him a new nature - which is actually Christ Himself. This nature should fill all the space within our bodies. His mind should replace our own; His thoughts should be dominant; His personality should replace our own.

#7 Holiness is letting Christ's personality shine through.

His Spirit, His actions, His words, His attitudes must be displayed to the world through dedicated instruments of righteousness.

In this way, Christ uses our voices, our hands, and feet to attract others to Himself. When sinners see the good works Christ prompts us to do, they will "glorify our Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Additional Notes

**Lesson Forty-Nine
Says A Little, Does A Lot!**

Goal: To illustrate the seriousness of words and inform us how powerful this invisible weapon is.

Key Scripture: James 3:2-4

Words are powerful! So be careful how you use them!

Tongues and self denial

In the above Scripture, James uses "the tongue" as an illustration to make a point regarding self-denial. Self denial means to yield in obedience to the will of God.

The hardest muscle in our body to control is the tongue. At times it can be deadly, shooting harmful words that damage the spirit of man.

The true sign of spiritual maturity is the control of one's tongue. In verse two, James addresses the whole issue of living by saying, "If man offend not in word (does not say anything wrong; if he can control his speech), the same man is a perfect (mature) man, and also able to bridle the whole body."

Anyone who can control his tongue, can control himself and will keep himself from trouble (Proverbs 21:23).

Small but Powerful

Although the tongue is small, it is very important! The bit in the mouth of a horse is small, yet with it the whole horse can be turned. Just as a large tractor trailer is controlled by one man behind the wheel, so the nature of man is controlled by one small object, his tongue.

"To reply to a nasty remark with another nasty remark is like trying to remove dirt with mud."

Mother Theresa once said, "Words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness..."

There is nothing in the world that functions completely on its own. We are all influenced by something, someone, or someplace. As the tongue controls the body, the MIND controls the mouth. So if you want to control your mouth, you must first control your MIND. You cannot rise above what you allow yourself to think or say (Proverbs 23:7; 4:23,24).

- There are three areas that we receive thoughts from:**
- #1 MIND – flesh (five senses) and Soul (mind, will, and emotions).
 - #2 ENEMY – Satan attacks your mind by planting thoughts there. He does not know what you are thinking. Only God knows the thoughts of man! (Psalm 94:11; I Corinthians 3:20)
 - #3 SPIRIT – God's communication.

Romans 8:7 tells us that the natural mind cannot know God. God speaks to us through our spirit (John 4:24) and our spirit speaks through our mind.

Whether or not your mind can use these thoughts depends on whether or not your mind is renewed by the Word of God (Romans 12:2).

The MIND is like a computer. You must program it. It knows nothing except what is placed there.

Your "heart" or Spirit man is the real you, from where the issues of life flow and is where Jesus made reference to the "rivers of living water" (John 7:38).

At times we need to not only program, but re-program our MINDS. When our programming (how we are trained) does not line up with the Word of God then some changes should be made! We can and must think like God. The mind of Christ can be found through His Word and prayer. (I Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5)

After re-programming – censor thoughts!!

II Corinthians 10:4, 5 states, "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

THOUGHTS: original ideas

IMAGINATIONS: the image

STRONG HOLDS: result of thoughts that come to the reality

Jesus has given us authority over our thinking. Therefore, we need not only take authority, but stay in authority. It is an Act of your Will! When situations or circumstances arise that cause you to want to speak out, practice self-denial and learn to keep your mouth shut!

Here are five suggestions from the Holy Scriptures on when NOT to speak out:

- (1) In the heat of anger (Proverbs 14:17; 15:1).
- (2) When you do not have all the facts (Proverbs 18:13; John 7:51).
- (3) When you have not verified the story (Deuteronomy 17:6).
- (4) If your words offend a weaker brother (Romans 14:15; I Corinthians 8:11).
- (5) If your words will be a poor reflection of the Lord or your friends and family (I Peter 2:21-23).

The tongue is a weapon that can destroy lives without making a physical contact. "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile" (Psalm 34:13).

Lesson Fifty The Untamed Member

Goal: To show how the tongue is simply an indication of what is in the mind and is the greatest measuring rod for self-control.

Key Scripture: James 3:5-8

A subject that the Bible deals with quite frequently and directly is that of self-control.

The Duty of Self-control:

- Over the Spirit - Proverbs 16:32
- Over the life - Acts 24:25
- Over the lusts of the flesh -Romans 6:12; I Corinthians 6:12
- Over the TONGUE - James 3:2
- It is a virtue - I Peter 1:5-7

Tongue & Self-control

In our key scripture reading, James is using the tongue as an example of self-control. In order for Christians to live a fruitful life that is blessed daily by God, we must control our bodies. The only way to control the whole body is to control our tongue.

Did you realize that the secret of the tongue is found in the heart? Whatever comes from the tongue had its origin in the heart.

The word "tongue" actually refers to our thoughts, to our inward desires, to our imaginations and in a very real sense to ourselves.

When we understand this, then we can clearly see that James is not using the "tongue" simply in its physical sense, but he is also referring to the inward thoughts of man.

When one thinks, he is really talking to himself. In other words we are "tonguing" our thoughts over in our minds.

The tongue in itself is simply our inward ideas being formulated and being formed.

Listen to Phillips version of James 3:5-8. "The human tongue is physically small, but what tremendous effects it can boast of! A whole forest can be set ablaze by a tiny spark of fire, and the tongue is as dangerous as any fire, with vast potentialities for evil. It can poison the whole body, it can make the whole of life a blazing hell. Beasts, birds, reptiles and all kinds of sea-creatures can be, and in fact are, tamed by man, but no one can tame the human tongue. It is an evil always liable to break out, and the poison it spreads is deadly."

The tongue is a "world of wrong, occupying its place in our bodies and spreading evil through our whole being! It sets on fire the entire course of our existence with the fire which comes to it from hell itself...." (Today's' English Version)

Additional Notes

James is actually emphasizing that all this applies to us. He is talking about the human nature of each of us. It is no wonder unbelievers have a hard time controlling their tongue. And even we as Christians battle to keep it suppressed. Only by God's grace can we deny ourselves and practice self-control.

James helps us to see that the tongue, as small as it may be, expresses our mind. It is a reflection of ourselves. All the perils of our human imagination, including covetousness, envy, jealousy, lusts and our private thoughts, run and rave like a forest fire.

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Proverbs 13:3 says, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."

1 Peter 3:10 - "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."

The Control Test

"You will never be hurt by something you don't say."

The following is a summary from The Arabian:

If you are tempted to reveal a tale that has been told to you by someone about another; make it pass through the three gates of gold before you speak. These narrow gates: First, 'Is it true?' Then, 'Is it needful?' In your mind give a truthful answer. The next gate to pass through is the last and narrowest, 'Is it kind?' And if to reach your lips at last it passes through these gateways three, then you may tell the tale, nor fear what the result of speech may be.

Five suggestions from the Holy Scriptures on when NOT to speak out:

- (1) If you would be ashamed of your words later (Proverbs 8:8).
- (2) If your words would convey a wrong impression (Proverbs 17:27).
- (3) When you are tempted to tell an outright lie (Proverbs 4:24).
- (4) If your words will damage someone's reputation (Proverbs 16: 27).
- (5) If your words would destroy a friendship (Proverbs 16:28).

No amount of training will ever result in godliness. The only way we can control our tongue is to yield ourselves to God. In order to discipline our human nature into something acceptable to God, we must follow the admonition in John 3:7, "Ye must be born again." Then, deny the flesh and crucify the "natural man" in us (Galatians 5:24).

We can actually be saved from ourselves by the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Galatians 5:16).

Lesson Fifty-One A Blessing or A Curse

Goal: To demonstrate the two sides of our tongue. It can either be used to praise God or exalt the devil.

Key Scripture: James 3:9,10

NOTE: James is not writing to unbelievers. He is writing to the believers.

How to live the Christian Life.

Beans or Weeds?

A number of years ago a young man decided to grow a garden. The first year was a failure and the second year was much the same. So he concluded that the soil was not any good. Later on in life a friend came by and asked this man if he was interested in growing a garden. He replied, 'Yes, but this soil will not grow anything.' The friend asked, 'Where did you try to have it?' The young man pointed, 'over there.' His friend said 'What do you mean it will not grow anything? Look it has got weeds growing on it.' The young man looked at his friend as he made this single comment with a smile: 'Don't you know that any soil which will grow weeds will grow beans?'

This is so true! And the illustration can be applied to our tongue. In church, we are worshipping God and then when we leave we talk filthy and speak evil about our leadership. James says that this ought not to be so. Although the potential to do so is there, we should not allow our tongues to speak both good and evil.

Any of us who walk in the wrong way, could walk in the right way. Any of us who walk in darkness, could walk in the light. Any of us who walk away from God, could walk to God.

"Out of the same mouth" - just like a garden; out of the same soil we can have beans or weeds. Out of the same mouth we can have blessings or cursing. James shows us through the example of the tongue how we need to practice self-denial and self-control. If we let the tongue run wild, this will be evil. He is referring to the inner thoughts of man, the kind of thinking we do inside ourselves where no one can stop us. We must guard the tongue!!

James shows us that the tongue, our inner thinking apparatus could be neutral but is often evil. In the natural, our tongue is evil, but it does not have to be this way. It can be used to the glory of God! James wants us to realize that none of us by himself, nor human nature, nor the flesh can tame the tongue. We all need the grace of God operative in our hearts.

The truth of the matter is that on every side there is evidence that as the tongue is an unruly member of our body, so is the whole nature of man. It is willful, self-inclined, self-indulgent, and proud, envious of other people and jealous of other people. All these

characteristics appear in mankind (Romans 3:12). However, we will not deal with solving the problems of mankind, since human nature is unreliable. Instead, we will deal with how to control the tongue.

Jesus Himself said about man, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man." (Matthew 15:18). James speaks of the tongue and here the Lord Jesus speaks of "out of the mouth." This tells us that the words we utter, the thoughts we entertain come first from the heart before they reach the tongue.

When a man's hands are dirty from working in the sand, or working in the mud, or working in the grease of the garage, the man is not defiled (Matthew 15:20). It is the inward thoughts of a man coming through the mind, uttered by the tongue, that defiles a man (Mark 7:15-23).

What are we talking about? Controlling the thoughts that come into our minds! These thoughts must be controlled. The Bible says that from "the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matthew 12:34). This is why Philippians 4:8 gives us thoughts to think on...whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, are virtuous and full of praise.

Sometimes, the best strategy if we cannot follow the advice of Philippians 4:8 is to keep quiet. We do not want to be guilty of speaking words of praise and words of discouragement.

So we will try to follow the five suggestions on when to keep our mouth shut.

- (1) When you are tempted to make light of holy things - Ecclesiastes 5:2.
- (2) When you are tempted to joke about sin - Proverbs 14:9.
- (3) If the issue is none of your business- Proverbs 14:10.
- (4) When your are feeling critical - James 3:9.
- (5) If you can't speak without yelling - Proverbs 25:28.

If the ground can grow weeds, it can grow beans. The mouth that expresses profanity can also express blessing. A mouth that can be used in violent argument can also be used in gentle praise. If we can use our minds and thoughts to harm people, we could use our minds and thoughts to help people. We need is a new birth experience because with it comes a new tongue. If we want to live a victorious Christian life, we must daily practice self-denial, self-control and simply rely on God's grace!

Lesson Fifty-Two

Good Roots Produce Good Trees

Goal: If your heart is right, then your body will do right and look right. The Lord wants us to be fruitful.

Key Scripture: James 3:11-13

Two Aspects of the Gospel

As the gospel is presented to the Christian, there are two separate and distinctive parts.

#1) *The Christian's inner experience.*

Explanation: When we hear the gospel and believe it, no one else knows. No one on the outside knows that we have righteousness and joy and peace through the Holy Spirit. This is an inward, personal thing. Although our personal acceptance of the promise of God in Christ Jesus happens inside our hearts, there will be an outward manifestation (change).

#2) *Our testimony.*

This is our outward conduct as we witness to other people and inter-act with the public. It is our relations with others that we face the issue of self. The human nature is constant.

It will always pull us down into the things that are natural. But the power of the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus sets us free from these things.

By yielding ourselves to Him, we will be lifted above our natural selves.

It is in this state that we can bring our tongue into subjection and live the life Christ intended for us. We should be lifted above the natural to the point where the effect of the grace of God can be seen by all.

Our witness, our outward conduct, and our personal testimony are seen in our inter-personal relationships (the way we deal with people).

“Good conversation” means good manner of life. How we talk has a lot to do with how we act. Christians dealing with other people should show “his works with meekness of wisdom.” He can be wise and knowledgeable but he must never be over-bearing. He cannot be proud but he must quietly and meekly act with good sense.

If we can do this, then our outward testimony among other people will be good and it will be effective.

How will you use your mouth?

Five suggestions on when to keep your mouth shut:

- (1) When it is time to listen - Proverbs 13:1.
- (2) If you may have time to eat your words later - Proverbs 18:21.
- (3) If you've already said it more than one time. (Then it becomes bragging) - Proverbs 19:13.

- (4) When you are tempted to flatter a wicked person – Proverbs 24:24.
- (5) When you are supposed to be working instead - Proverbs 14:23.

Additional Notes