

the world around her. She runs around the house, opens up drawers, pulls out pots and pans and everything else she can get her little hands into. One day, we were at a friend's house eating supper, and she was playing on the floor in their dining area while we were eating until their big black dog came strolling into the room where we were eating. My daughter immediately ran as fast as her little legs could carry her over to me yelling, "Mama!" I picked her up, and her muscles immediately relaxed in my arms. Why? Because she knew that I love her, and she trusted me to take care of her. It was but a few short minutes until she was completely at ease and was even reaching out her hand to pet the dog.

We are God's children from the moment we give Him the control of our lives. He is our protector. He is our safety and the safety for our children. He loves us, and in our fear we should immediately run to Him. In His arms He casts out fear. There is no fear when we live our lives every day under the wings of obedience to Jesus Christ.

There was a man in the Old Testament named David. He went through many difficult and scary circumstances because a man named King Saul tried to kill him. As David learned many truths about God and grew closer to Him, he wrote many poems called "Psalms". These are poems inspired by God to teach about God. There are 150 of these, not all by David, but they are found in the Old Testament. He wrote several Psalms about fear, but I have chosen one for us to read and meditate on this week- Psalm 27. Read it during your prayer time this week. If you do not have the Old Testament, I have copied for you this Psalm and included it in this material. Ask God to teach you to lay all of your fears down and climb up into His arms of love and safety.

*Close this week in prayer, but this time let each one find a partner preferably of the same gender. Talk to each other about things in your lives that you greatly fear. Then pray for each other about fears, cite them specifically before the Lord. Ask God to take away the fear and replace it with faith in Him. Tell God of your desire to put all of your trust in Him, even about those things that are terrifying.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh,
My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.
Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear;
Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.

One thing I have desired of the Lord, That I will seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.
To behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.
For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion;
In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me;
He shall set me high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me;
Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.
Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice!
Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
When You said, "Seek My Face,"
My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."
Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help;
Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.
When my father and my mother forsake me,
Then the LORD will take care of me.

Teach me Your way, O LORD,
And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.
Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries;
For false witnesses have risen against me,
And such as breath out violence.

I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the good of
the LORD

In the land of the living.

Wait on the LORD;

Be of good courage;

And He shall strengthen your heart;

Wait, I say, on the LORD!

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

By
Christy A. Brawner

“Love-The Meaning of Christ’s Earthly Ministry”-Lesson 5 Matthew 8-10

“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” Matthew 9:36

**Before starting this lesson, please check to see how many people have been having their time alone with Christ. It is important not be critical, but in love, encourage one another to stay in God’s Word every day. Invite them to continue reading the book of Matthew until the very end Ask if people have been praying for the people mentioned that need Christ.. See if anyone had an opportunity to share their testimony during the week.*

Review

1. The prophet Isaiah said that Jesus would be called Immanuel which means “God _____.”
2. Jesus said that when He finally returns to earth, everyone will see Him coming in the _____ with great power and glory.
3. Jesus said that no one knows when He will return to earth except the _____.
4. John baptized many in the wilderness who repented of their _____.
5. John said One was coming who would divide the people of the earth, and that those who rejected Him would be condemned to an unquenchable _____.
6. Jesus answered the devil three times using the _____ of God.

7. If we want to grow closer to God we must spend time alone with Him _____.
8. Jesus called all of us to be “_____ of men.”
9. What was Jesus doing on the boat during the storm?
10. Why were the disciples afraid?
11. Jesus rebuked His disciples because they were _____ and did not trust Him.
12. The Bible teaches us that when we live under the wings of Christ’s protection we do not need to have _____.

After crossing the sea of Galilee during the fearful storm, Jesus and His disciples arrived on the other side of the sea and there in that place they met two men who were demon-possessed. These men were fierce and had been in the tombs. Suddenly one of them cried out to Jesus, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”

Some distance away from where the place where the demon-possessed men were, a group of herdsmen was watching their pigs feed near the shore. The demons begged Jesus that if He were going to expel them from the bodies of the men, to send them to the bodies of the pigs. Jesus agreed saying, “Go!” When the demons entered into the pigs, the pigs sprang violently out of control plunging recklessly down the steep terrain into the sea to their deaths.

The herdsmen ran into the city telling everyone what had happened to the men as well as what had happened to their pigs. The townspeople came out and begged Jesus to leave the region. Jesus climbed into His boat, and returned to Galilee.

Having returned to Galilee, a paralytic was brought to Jesus. Jesus cured the man of his paralysis and also forgave him of his sins. The onlookers marveled and glorified God, but the Pharisees considered Him to be a blasphemer.

Moving on from there, Jesus came across a tax collector named Matthew. He called Matthew to follow Him, and immediately He did. Jesus went to eat with him as well as other tax collectors and people of terrible reputations in the city. When the Pharisees saw with whom Jesus

was eating, they questioned Jesus' disciples as to why Jesus would do this. Jesus answered them saying "I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

Now Jesus went from there and reached out to all people from all walks of life. There was another man who was a ruler among his people. This man had a daughter that had died. Jesus went to the mourning ceremony, took the girl by the hand and raised her from the dead.

He restored sight to two blind men who followed Him and begged to be healed. He restored speech to a man who not only was mute but was also demon-possessed. He cast out the demons and the man was healed.

Jesus saw the many needs of the people and was moved with compassion. The needs were so great; the people were like sheep having no shepherd. He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

He then took His disciples and sent them all over the country of Israel. He gave them power to meet many needs of the people; their purpose was to share and show His love. He gave them specific instructions to seek out people who were willing to listen to the Good News of Christ. He told them that when they found such people, they would leave the peace of God on the home of that person. But He warned them that many would reject them and their words.

He said to them, "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." He told them not to worry about the physical needs. For the Father who knows even the number of hairs on our head is in control of all things and values us greatly.

He concluded His remarks before sending them out saying, "And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

Oral Questions

1. Who did Jesus meet after He and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee after the fearful boat ride?
2. What was wrong with these two men?

3. What did Jesus do for them?
4. Why did the pigs throw themselves into the Sea?
5. Why did the townspeople ask Jesus to leave their region?
6. What did Jesus do for the paralytic?
7. Why did the Pharisees call Jesus a blasphemer?
8. What was the name of the tax collector Jesus met and called to follow Him?
9. Why were the Pharisees critical of Jesus and His dinner companions at this particular place?
10. What was Jesus' response to these people?
11. What did Jesus do for the ruler's daughter?
12. What did Jesus do for the blind men?
13. How did Jesus heal the man who could not speak? What was wrong with him?
14. What did Jesus send out His disciples to do?
15. Jesus told His disciples to be as wise as _____ and harmless as _____.
16. He told them not to worry about what kind of things?
17. He said that God knows even the number of _____ that we have?
18. He told them that if people would do as little as give a cup of water to a particular group of people that they would not lose their reward? What group of people was he talking about?

Spiritual Truths-Lesson 5

Matthew 8-10

1. Jesus cares for each person. He cares for the demon-possessed, the sick, the poor, the wealthy and especially the children. Everyone is worthy and of value in the kingdom of God!!!
2. Men do not always care for other people. In the encounter with the demon-possessed men, the townspeople were so upset about the pigs that they wanted Jesus out of their region. They didn't care about all the ways Jesus had helped the men. They were concerned about the financial losses they had suffered. It is a very easy thing to value money over people. Unfortunately, most of us fall into this trap. I Timothy 6:10 says, "The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." You also may remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:19-21 where He says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Money is powerful. It can control us, or we can give it to the Lord and He can control us.
 - Think, how do I spend my money every week? It may be good to write it down.
 - Ask the question, do I honor Jesus with how I spend my money?
 - Am I buying things or doing things that bring dishonor to God? Am I hurting others with how I spend money? Am I helping others with how I spend my money?

In the Old Testament, God required of every person to give 10% of what they had to God. In the New Testament, we are told to give our lives and everything we have to God. But traditionally, we have followed the Old Testament law and given 10% of our financial earnings to the work of

God, or the church. This is called a tithe. Begin praying now, how much of your money does the Lord want you to give to His work? The Bible teaches, that God does bless those who contribute to the growth of His kingdom. The Bible also teaches that Jesus will provide for all of our needs. You may be thinking, “But God does not understand how poor I am?” “God doesn’t understand how big of a debt I have made for myself?” Jesus was also born in a very poor earthly family. Jesus understands the problems of poverty, but He asks for all of us to be faithful in obedience to whatever He asks of us to do. Ask the Lord, how He wants you to be a part of financially supporting His ministry.

3. To be a follower of Christ means to follow His example and love others like He did. It is true that we cannot heal people as Jesus did, but Jesus still cures and heals people. We should be faithful to pray for the sick. We should stay by their sides and hold their hands in their moments of pain. We should tell them of Jesus’ love for them. We should pray for the demon-possessed. Jesus still expels demons all over the world through the prayers of His people. We should pray for, and help the needy. We should do what we can to help with their physical needs, but especially tell them about the love of Christ who can transform their lives on the inside. We should especially help the children. Jesus commanded His disciples to do all these things, but He promised a special reward for people who will help children.
4. Some people are not easy to love, but God desires for us to have mercy. Tax collectors in those days were disliked for a very good reason. They worked for a corrupt government collecting money from the people, and most of them charged people more than they owed and pocketed the extra for themselves. Showing love to a person who has stolen something from you is not easy to do, especially if this person is not repentant at all for what he has done. But Jesus tells us that as followers of Him, we have no right to condemn these people even if what they are doing is completely wrong. Our duty is to pray for them, love them, and show them the truth about God’s forgiveness. If they repent of their sins they too will receive God’s complete

forgiveness. The Bible says that we are all sinners deserving of punishment. The Bible says we have received forgiveness and mercy, so we should also show forgiveness and mercy, even if this is an almost impossible thing for us to do without God's power in our lives.

5. The needs of the world are so great, we can not do this alone. There are millions of people who have never experienced the love of Christ. There are millions of people, who have never experienced love from anyone. There are millions of people, who would, if someone would show them, give their lives to Jesus and experience His love. We must do what we can, but we must also pray that God would bring others to help bring more people to know God's love.
6. You can show your love for God and one another by giving a tithe to the work of God through your local church. God uses the local church to minister to people's problems spiritually, emotionally and physically. God uses your tithe to help the church accomplish its tasks.

Discussion Questions

1. What are ways that I can, in my circumstances and in my world, show God's loves to others?
2. What are the greatest needs of the people around me? How are people hurting most where I live?
3. How can I reach out to the hurting people around me?
4. How can I show God's love especially to children?
5. In what ways do I let money come before people in my life?
6. Do I honor God with my money?
7. How can I show those around me God's mercy in my life?

**This is another good time to discuss supporting a missionary in another part of the world and praying for a people group of another country who has not yet heard of God's love.*

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

By
Christy A. Brawner

“Betrayal and Forgiveness”-Lesson 6 **Matthew 21-27:10**

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

Review

1. The prophet Isaiah said that Jesus would be called Immanuel, which means, “God _____.”
2. Jesus said that no one knows when Jesus will return to earth except the _____.
3. John baptized many in the wilderness that repented of their _____.
4. Jesus answered the devil three times using the _____ of God.
5. If we want to grow closer to God, we must spend time alone with Him _____.
6. Jesus called all of us to be “_____ of men.”
7. Jesus showed love to all people by _____ them of their sicknesses.
8. Jesus was moved with compassion for the people because He saw their many _____.
9. Jesus told His followers to go out to all people, but to be wise as _____ and harmless as _____.
10. Jesus said that He knows even the number of _____ on our heads.
11. He said that if people would give as little as a cup of water to a child they would not lose their _____.
12. Jesus told His disciples in the boat during the storm not to _____.

Jesus taught, preached and healed many people in the province of Galilee, but still many rejected His Words. Jesus explained to His disciples that this was also according to God's plan for He chose to hide His truths from the wise and prudent and to reveal them to babes.

The time came of which He had forewarned His disciples. It was time for Him to go to Jerusalem, to suffer many things from the chief priests and other religious rulers, to be killed and to be raised from the dead.

His arrival into Jerusalem was a grand affair. People lined the streets on both sides throwing down their clothes and palm branches making a carpet for Him to walk on. And as he passed by them seated on a donkey they yelled, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus spent several days in Jerusalem teaching at the temple, preaching and healing many people. But He had many confrontations and conflicts with the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' very own disciples, approached the chief priests and offered to betray Jesus to them for money. They offered Him thirty pieces of silver. He took it.

On the night of the Passover celebration, the most important Jewish holiday of the year, Jesus sat with His disciples for a final meal together. At this meal, Jesus picked up the bread that they were eating, broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he raised the glass of wine, gave thanks over it and said, "Drink from it all of you. This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins."

After dinner, all the disciples went up on the Mount of Olives. Here Jesus warned them that they would all be made to stumble. Peter stubbornly insisted that He would never betray His Lord. Jesus predicted that he not only would betray Him but would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed that very morning.

From there, Jesus took His disciples to Gethsemane. He spent the rest of the night praying. He was sorrowful even to death because of all that was transpiring. He asked His disciples to pray with Him, but they all fell asleep. They awoke only at the time of Judas' arrival in the garden with the priests and the people who came to take Jesus away.

Judas came to Jesus and kissed Him as a sign of His betrayal. The chief priests grabbed Jesus and took Him to the house of Caiaphas, the chief priest at the times. The disciples fled from Gethsemane.

While Jesus was in the house being tried by Caiaphas and the other leaders, Peter was outside in the courtyard. While he was sitting, a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.” Peter denied it. He then moved to the gate and waited there until another girl saw Him and accused Him of being with Jesus. Peter again denied it, this time with an oath. A little later, other people approached Peter and accused him of being with Jesus. This time he began to curse and swear saying, “I do not know the Man!” Immediately the rooster crowed, and Peter remembered Jesus’ words on the Mount of Olives. He went away and wept bitterly.

When the morning came, the chief priests took Jesus to Pilate to be put to death. Judas seeing that Jesus had been condemned to death was remorseful and tried to return the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests. He said to them, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They answered him, “What is that to us? You see to it!” “Judas than threw the money on the floor of the temple, went away from there and hanged himself.”

Oral Questions

1. God’s plan is to hide the truth from the wise and prudent and reveal it to whom?
2. How was Jesus treated as He entered the city of Jerusalem?
3. Why did Judas approach the chief priests, and why did they give him thirty pieces of silver?
4. During Jesus’ last Passover dinner with His disciples, He told them that the wine and bread were special. How so?
5. Jesus told them that His blood must be shed. Why?
6. On the Mt. of Olives, Jesus told His followers that they would be made to stumble. Peter denied this. Jesus than makes a special prediction about Peter, what was it?
7. With what gesture does Judas betray Jesus?
8. While Jesus was being tried by the religious leaders where was Peter?

9. Two girls came up to Peter at separate times and accused Him of something. What?
10. A third time several people came and claimed that Peter was with Jesus. How did Peter respond to these people?
11. When did Judas feel guilty for betraying Jesus?
12. Why did he go back to the chief priests?
13. What did Judas do when the chief priests refused to accept back the betrayal money?

Spiritual Truths- Lesson 6

Matthew 11-27:10

1. During Jesus' last meal with His disciples, He began a tradition that has been observed by followers of Christ all over the world since that time until today. We call this tradition the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is not a supernatural event that takes away sins or does something special in our bodies. It is not a moment in which ordinary bread and juice magically become Jesus' blood and flesh. It is a time for followers of Christ to come together, eat bread, drink wine and remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. It is a time to remember the price Jesus paid for the sins in our lives. It is a time of joy and thanksgiving as we rejoice together in the forgiveness He bought for us. 2 Corinthians 11:23-33 teaches us that it is a serious occasion; it is not something to do lightly. It is a time to meditate on His sacrifice for us and examine our own lives in light of what He has done for us on the cross.
2. God knows our failures even before we do, and He still accepts us and wants to use us in His kingdom. From the time Jesus first called Peter to be a "fisher of men", He knew that on this very night Peter would betray Him. But as we continue to read our Bibles, we learn in Acts that God used Peter to lead thousands of people to Christ. In fact there are two books in the Bible that were written by Peter. In Acts 2, right after Jesus returns to heaven, we see Peter preaching a sermon in Jerusalem in front of the very people he was so afraid of on the night of the betrayal.

In the same way, our failures are no surprise to God. Even after we accept Christ, we will have failures in our lives. We will sin; we will betray Him; we will do the very things we hate.

3. What than should we do after we fail before God?

There were two men who betrayed Christ that night. One man was Peter, a man who betrayed Christ, but eventually was used greatly by

God. The other was Judas who also betrayed God, but then committed suicide. Many people mistakenly believe that the reason Peter became successful and Judas failed was because Judas' betrayal was greater. This is not so. The Bible teaches us that we are ALL sinners. We all betray God and deserve eternal punishment for our betrayal. But if this is not true, what was Judas' tragic mistake?

-Judas did not repent of His sins and seek God's forgiveness.

There are many people who know when they have done something wrong. Many people feel horrible guilt for things they have done in their lives that were wrong. Some people have done things so terrible that they feel that even God could never forgive them for these things. The Bible teaches us that THIS IS NOT TRUE.

I John 1:9 says, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness.”**

This means that if a person:

- ◆ Comes to God
- ◆ Tells God what he/she has done
- ◆ Repents
- ◆ Asks God to forgive him/her of this sin
- ◆ THEN GOD IS FAITHFUL TO FORGIVE THIS PERSON OF ANYTHING-NO MATTER HOW HORRIBLE THE SIN IS, JESUS' SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS IS WORTHY ENOUGH TO CLEANSE THIS SIN.

This also means, that as a follower of Christ, we should never live defeated remembering past sins that have already been forgiven by God. We do not need to live in guilt for things Christ has already forgotten. Peter repented of his sins and was able to be used by God. We also may repent of our sins and be used greatly by God.

Judas truly did have wickedness in his heart. It is a horrible thing to betray a close Friend, and to cause this Person to suffer a horrible death when He

was completely innocent of all wrong doing. However, the truth is that God still had a plan for Judas' life. Even Judas was worthy of forgiveness by God. Jesus' sacrifice of His life on the cross was big enough to forgive even Judas. If only he had come to Christ, but instead he allowed the guilt to take control of his life, it became too much and he ended his own life.

4. Jesus told His disciples that our covenant or agreement with God is made possible because of His blood that was shed for the forgiveness of sins. We did nothing to receive God's forgiveness in our lives. Once we have accepted Jesus into our hearts, there is nothing we can do to lose this forgiveness. Ephesians 1:13b-14 says, "in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." John 3:16 says that you have "eternal life". Once Christ enters you He never leaves you. You are saved forever from that point on. The Bible says that we should remember Christ's sacrifice for us and quit sinning. We must do our best to live every day of our lives in complete obedience to Him. But 1 John 2:1 reminds us that if we do sin, we must remember who is living inside of us. We must remember that Jesus is in our lives as our defender before the Father. He is the substitute payment for our sins.

Discussion

1. What do you think of Peter and of Judas?
2. What does the word, "forgiveness" mean to you?
3. Have you ever felt so guilty that you can identify with Judas?
4. Do not say anything out loud, but is it possible that you did something so horrible you find it difficult to accept Christ's forgiveness in your life?
5. What is Jesus words to you in this situation? **Have everyone recite or read aloud 1 John 1:9**

Each person should bow your head and speak to God all that is in his/her heart. If there is sin there, confess it. Ask God to take away the guilt. Ask God, by His mercy, to keep you away, at all costs, from this sin.

Confess openly that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is enough to forgive you of your sin. Claim this truth.

***It may be that later on, Satan may try to attack you with accusing thoughts of guilt. These thoughts are NOT from God. These thoughts are not real guilt but false guilt. If you begin to have these feelings of false guilt about something God has already forgiven, immediately stop and pray. Say,**

“Thank you Jesus for Your forgiveness of my sin (say the sin specifically). Lord, thank you that Your sacrifice is worthy to forgive even me. I trust in Your blood, and I ask that You remove these guilty thoughts from my mind.”

God is faithful, and He will do this. If you pray to God every time Satan attacks you, it won't be long before he will quit attacking, and you will be free of these thoughts of guilt forever. We have complete victory over every area of our life in Christ!

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

By
Christy A. Brawner

“The Crucifixion of Christ”-Lesson 7 **Matthew 26-27**

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” I Corinthians 1:18

1. The prophet Isaiah said that Jesus would be called Immanuel, which means, “God _____.”
2. Jesus said that no one knows when He will return to earth except the _____.
3. John baptized many in the wilderness that repented of their _____.
4. Jesus answered the devil three times using the _____ of _____.
5. If we want to grow closer to God and be able to resist temptation, we must spend time _____ with Him _____.
6. Jesus called His followers to be “_____ of _____.”
7. Jesus told His disciples not to _____ because of His presence with them.
8. Jesus spent His time on earth _____ in the synagogues, _____ about the Kingdom of God, and _____ the diseases of the people.
9. Jesus told His followers to go out to all people, but to be _____ as serpents and harmless as _____.
10. Jesus said that He knows even the number of _____ on our _____.
11. On the Mount of Olives Jesus predicted that _____ would betray Him three times before the rooster crowed that morning.

12. _____ was the disciple who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
13. _____ repented of His betrayal and was later used greatly by God.
14. _____ felt very guilty for what He had done and went out and killed himself.
15. The Bible teaches that if we “_____ our sins, He is faithful and just to _____ us our sins and cleans us from _____ unrighteousness.”

While Peter was outside the door to Caiaphas' house, Jesus was inside being accused by all kinds of false testimony. None of it was credible enough to convict Him. Jesus allowed His accusers to continue to attack Him without even opening His mouth in His own defense. Having been unable to accomplish anything, Caiaphas asked Jesus, “Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Finally Jesus broke His silence saying, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

This was evidence enough for Caiaphas, and he ripped his clothes pronouncing Jesus a blasphemer. They took Jesus, spat on His face, mocked Him, and beat and slapped Him.

When morning came, the chief priests and leaders bound Him and led Him away to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor over the province of Judea. The governor asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” His answer was simply, “As you say.” The chief priests then proceeded to bring forth their list of accusations, but Jesus again did not even respond. The governor marveled at Jesus' ability to remain silent. He did not find Jesus guilty and tried to find a peaceful way to release Him.

As it was Passover, the most important Jewish holiday of the year, it had always been Pilate's custom to release one prisoner at the will of the people. This year, he brought forth two men before the people. One was Barrabas, a hated convict, and Jesus. He asked the people which one they wished for him to release. The people, having been stirred up by the chief priests, hollered out for Barrabas to be released and Jesus to be

crucified. Pilate then yelled to the people, “Why, what evil has He done?” Their answer was, “Let Him be crucified!” Pilate saw that he could no longer do anything with these people for they were out of control, so he consented to their demands saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.” The people responded by saying, “His blood be on us and on our children.” Pilate released Barrabas and commanded Jesus to be whipped and then sent Him to his headquarters, called the Praetorian, where He would be further tortured.

At the Praetorian, He was stripped and dressed in a scarlet robe. They gave Him a reed to hold and stuck a crown of thorns into His scalp. The soldiers made fun of Him and spat on Him. They kneeled before Him in mock tribute. Then they took the reed that had been in His hand and struck Him on the head with it.

After the soldiers had finished all they were to do in the Praetorian, they put His clothes back on Him and led Him away to Golgotha, meaning Place of the Skull. This was the place where the crucifixions were to take place. As they were walking from the Praetorian, they forced a man named Simon to carry Jesus’ cross for Him.

While Jesus was hanging on the cross, the soldiers divided up His clothes and threw lots to see who would get what. They watched Him die from underneath the cross. The chief priests and other elders also came out to see Him hang, they laughed at Him and made sarcastic comments as to why He wouldn’t get down from the cross. Many other people came by the place where He was crucified shaking their heads and making rude comments. Even the two thieves who were hanging next to Him on the cross did not refrain from making hateful remarks.

But from the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the earth. Jesus cried out to God, “Eli, Eli Lama Sabachtani!” Which means “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?!” Hearing this cry, an onlooker ran and got a sponge full of sour wine and tried to give it to Jesus. The rest of the crowd said, “Let Him alone. Let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.” Then Jesus cried out again and gave up His Spirit.

At His death there were many strange things that occurred all over Jerusalem testifying to who He was. The veil in the temple which separated

the Holiest place from the rest of the temple ripped from top to bottom; the earth quaked, rocks shattered; but also many graves were opened and the bodies of followers of Christ who had already died came out of their graves and walked around the city of Jerusalem.

The evening of Jesus' death, a very rich man named Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked if He could take the body to be buried. Pilate agreed, and Jesus was taken to a brand new tomb that had been carved out a rock. Joseph took Jesus' body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, laid Jesus down in the cave and rolled a large stone over the entrance of the tomb before He departed with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary from that place.

Oral Questions

1. How did the Jewish leaders finally convict Jesus in the trial at Caiaphas' house?
2. How did Jesus respond to all of their accusations against Him?
3. How did Pilate react to Jesus' ability to remain quiet before all of His accusers?
4. Who was Barrabas?
5. How did the Roman soldiers treat Jesus?
6. How did the priests and other onlookers treat Jesus as He hung on the cross?
7. What happened all over the earth between the sixth and the ninth hour?
8. What did Jesus cry out before He yielded His Spirit to God?
9. What strange things happened at Jesus' death?
10. What did Joseph of Arimathea do with Jesus' body?

Spiritual Truths- Lesson 7

Matthew 26-27

God's ways are not man's ways. Let us read together a passage of Scripture found in I Corinthians 1:18-21,27. *Read this passage two or three times, so everyone has time to think about what the Bible is saying.*

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written:

‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe....But God choose the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things that are mighty.”

As we look at the life of Christ, we can see that God's ways are not man's ways.

- ❖ When an earthly king is born, he is born in a palace. But God sent Jesus, the King of Kings, to be born in poverty.
- ❖ When someone is to announce an important message or the arrival of an important person, this messenger is rich, beautifully dressed and driving around in an important vehicle. God sent John the Baptist wearing camels' hair to announce the arrival of Jesus in the desert where people had to go out of their way to hear His announcement.
- ❖ When a human king has an enemy who he can easily overpower, he destroys Him immediately. Jesus deliberately went out in the desert to be tempted by Satan, and He has not

- yet destroyed Satan.
- ❖ When a human king chooses His closest companions, He picks men who have graduated from the finest schools, come from the finest families, and who have lots of money. Jesus chose, among other common professions, fishermen and tax collectors.
 - ❖ An earthly king forces his people to obey Him and punishes those who defy him. Jesus taught us to love. He allows people to choose to follow Him or reject Him.
 - ❖ A human king makes others work for him, pay taxes and some even kill those who betray His government. Jesus died on the cross deliberately because He wanted to pay the price for our sins. He wants us to be free to live eternally with Him.
 - ❖ When an earthly king dies, he is buried and his son takes his place. When Jesus died, He rose again and reigns for eternity.

Jesus is not a man. He is God. He is to be worshipped, adored and obeyed. He loves us and wants the best for us. His life here on earth is totally incomprehensible. God's ways are so much greater than are small minds can comprehend that they are illogical to men.

*The Bible teaches us that one of the things that the Lord loves is to hear the praises of His people. Praise simply means to tell Jesus how much you love Him and appreciate all the wonderful things that He is. God loves to hear our hearts love for Him. He loves to hear things like, "I love you Lord because you loved me;" or "I praise you Lord because you are a great and powerful God." These are phrases that tell God who He is to me personally.

As we think about the life and death of Christ, we can only be amazed to think what God, the Creator of the universe did for us. His love for us is more than we can ever understand. His ways are so much greater and better than anything we could ever even appreciate. This is an appropriate time to stop for a moment and praise God.

The purpose of His crucifixion was to be a sacrifice for our sin. He was

punished, judged and condemned for your sins that you have committed and will commit. We should thank and praise Him daily for being our Lord and Savior.

We are going to do something called “sentence prayers.” A sentence prayer is where everyone prays a sentence at a time as thoughts come to his/her mind that he/she would like to express to God. Let’s all bow our heads and think about God, Jesus, what He did during His ministry on earth, what He did on the cross, on His return, and what He is doing right now in our lives. Then let’s take turns putting in words our feelings towards God. For example, “Dear Father, I love you because you saved me.” Than another person says another sentence, “Father God, You are a kind father to me.” Each person can and should pray as many times as he/she feels led to by the Spirit. This is a time to share publicly that, which is in our hearts. Continue for as long as needed. Then move on to prayer requests and pray for one another.

**Leader, remind members to begin to include a time of praise daily in their time alone with God. Be sure to ask members every week how their quiet times are going. Encourage the ones who are having trouble, and allow people to share things that God has shown them or neat things God has done for them.*

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

By
Christy A. Brawner

“The Resurrection of Christ”- Lesson 8 **Matthew 27**

**“For I know the thoughts I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”
Jeremiah 29:11**

Review

1. The prophet Isaiah said that Jesus would be called Immanuel, which means, “God _____.”
2. Jesus said that no one knows when He will return to earth except the _____.
3. John baptized many in the wilderness that repented of their _____.
4. Jesus answered the devil three times using the _____ of _____.
5. If we want to grow closer to God and be able to resist temptation we must spend time _____ with Him _____.
6. Jesus called His followers to be “fishers of _____.”
7. Jesus told His disciples on the boat not to _____.
8. Jesus was moved with compassion for the people because of their many _____.
9. Jesus told His followers to go out in His name being wise as _____ and harmless as _____.
10. Peter betrayed Jesus by _____ Him three times in Caiaphas’ courtyard.
11. Judas betrayed Jesus by turning Him into the priests for _____ pieces of silver.
12. Jesus _____ ALL of our sins when we confess them.

13. How did the Roman soldiers treat Jesus?
14. The chief priests came to the foot of the cross to _____ at Jesus as He died.
15. There were many strange occurrences when Jesus died including many dead people who _____ around the city of Jerusalem.
16. Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus' body to lay it in a _____.

The day after Jesus was crucified, the chief priests and Pharisees met together and again approached Pilate. They told Pilate that Jesus had prophesied that He would be raised from the dead on the third day. They asked if special security measure could be taken to ensure that no one stole the body. Pilate agreed to their request, so the group of them went to the tomb and sealed the rock that was blocking the entrance into the cave. They also left armed guards there to watch that place.

Now the day after the Sabbath, that is the very first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went back to the grave. But when they got there, there was a great earthquake and the stone that had been blocking the entrance into the tomb had been moved. An angel of the Lord that had come down from heaven was sitting on top of the rock that had been used to seal the grave. The angel's clothes were white like snow, and He looked as if He were lightening. The soldiers who had been guarding the tomb were also there shaking in fear until they became like dead men.

The angel told the ladies not to fear. He said, "for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come; see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

The ladies hearing this were filled with joy and turned to run quickly back to the disciples. On their way, Jesus met them saying, "Rejoice!" So they stopped, held Him by the feet and worshipped Him. Jesus reminded the ladies to tell the disciples to meet Him in Galilee.

Meanwhile, the guards got up and went back to town to tell the chief priests everything that had happened. The chief priest met together and agreed to offer the guards a large sum of money for them to go around and

tell people that they had fallen asleep and that people had stolen Jesus' corpse. The priests then promised to protect them if Pilate found out, and they got in trouble. So the soldiers took the money, and many rumors floated around Jerusalem for many years.

The disciples went to Galilee to a specific mountain where Jesus had instructed them to go. He came to them, and they worshipped Him. However some doubted. Then Jesus spoke to them His final instructions before ascending into heaven. He said, **“All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”** Amen.

Oral Questions

1. Why did the Pharisees want to put guards at Jesus' grave?
2. What two ladies came to visit the gravesite?
3. What did these ladies see when they arrived there?
4. What did the angel tell them?
5. What happened to the guards?
6. Where did the guards go after the angel appeared?
7. What was the offer made them by the chief priests?
8. Who did the ladies see as they were running back to meet the disciples?
9. Where did Jesus tell His disciples to meet Him?
10. What was the command that Jesus gave His followers on the mountain before He ascended?
11. With whom did Jesus promise to be from now until the end of the age?

Spiritual Truths- Lesson 8 **Matthew 28**

1. The message of Jesus is to be shared to all people. It could be that God has been working in your heart giving you the strength and the desire to share His message with others. There are many ways to tell others about the love of Christ. One good way is to lead a person, or group of people, through the story of His life. You can do this through this material in seven weeks. Since lesson four, we have, as a group been praying for specific people God has laid on your heart. Hopefully you have had a chance to tell these people a little about the change that has occurred in your life. If not, make this week the week you approach them.
 - Do NOT go to this person and tell them how horrible of a person they are and that God is going to send them to unquenchable fire if they don't repent.
 - DO invite them to do a short Bible study with you in **their** home. Tell them that you have been learning about the Bible and were wondering if maybe they would be interested in studying with you about the life of Christ for seven weeks.
 - When you go to their home, take a partner with you. Maybe somebody from your Bible study group, or a person you met at church. Your Bible study leader may want to go with you.
 - When you go, spend time talking to the person about things going on in their lives. Meet their family members; listen to their needs. Pray for them, their job, their family, and ask God to bring His peace on their home.
 - Start with the first story about the birth of Christ. Allow them to ask questions. If you don't know the answer that is okay. Just tell them you will ask your Bible study leader because you don't know, and then bring the answer back the next week.
 - Do NOT stay at their home for over one hour. Remember this is a short Bible study.
 - Everyday that week and every week thereafter, pray for this person and their family. Ask your group members to join you in prayer for them.

REMEMBER: Just as we do not have power to cure anyone or expel any demons, we do not have any power to convince people of their need for Christ. The one who has the power is the Holy Spirit who lives in us. He has power to cure people of diseases; He has power to expel demons from people's lives; and He is the one who breaks the chains of sin in a person's life and brings them to repentance in Christ. Our responsibility is to share and pray.

It may be that you are in a situation where you do not have an opportunity to do a seven- week Bible study with a person, but would like to share with them about Jesus Christ.

What to do:

- Tell them, as best you can remember, the story of Christ. Tell them of His birth, His baptism, His life, His miracles, His love, His message of repentance, His betrayal, His death and His resurrection.
- Tell them that like the people in Jesus' time, we have all done wrong before God, even if we are very good people. This means we have all sinned. Give them examples of some sins: lying, stealing, hate, envy, adultery, etc.
- Tell them that just as God forgave the people in the Bible, He forgave you when you repented of your sins.
- Explain a little about your life before Christ, the moment you chose to follow Christ, and your life since Christ (your testimony).
- Read or recite one of the most important verses in the Bible, John 3:16. It says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
- Ask the person if they also would like to repent of their sins, believe in Christ and accept the forgiveness that He can give them.
- Explain that to believe means to turn your life over to Christ. This is to trust Him and commit your life to Him.
- If they say, "yes" help them to pray a simple prayer giving their lives to God.

- If they say, “no” ask them if they would permit you to pray for them at this moment, then pray to God that He would help them understand His truth for their lives.

*Stop and take time as a group to practice presenting Christ to another person. Divide up in pairs and let each person go through an entire presentation.

After having practiced, you might think, “This is impossible, I can never tell anyone about Christ.” Think about this final truth in this study:

2. “And, lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age.” The Bible teaches that the moment we accept Christ, the Holy Spirit of God comes and dwells within our lives. You may have not realized it, but He has already been at work in your life (John 14:7).
 - He is the one who teaches us in our time alone with God everyday (John 14:26)
 - He is the one who makes us feel guilty when we disobey God. He is the One who enabled us to understand for the first time that we were sinners and needed Christ’s forgiveness in our lives. (John 16:8-11)
 - He is the one who gives us wisdom and guides us in God’s perfect will for our lives. (John 16:13)
 - He comforts us when we are sad. (Acts 9:31)
 - He empowers us with special gifts so we can do things we never even dreamed we could do. He gives us the words to tell others about Christ. (I Corinthians 12)

We may think that we can never become the kind of follower of Christ that we need to be. We may think that obeying God is impossible. The truth is that this is true. We can never do anything to follow Christ, but God can through the Holy Spirit who dwells within our lives.

This is the secret to telling others about Christ; it is the secret to living a life without fear; it is the secret to making right decisions every day. When we

allowed the Creator of the Universe to enter into our lives, He gave us the gift of His constant presence. The presence of the Holy Spirit is our source of strength and power. This is the exciting thing because the Bible teaches us that God has awesome plans, incredible ideas, and a beautiful purpose for every one of our lives. Let us finish this study with very special promise found in Jeremiah 29:11-13:

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU AS YOU CONTINUE TO
SEEK AND KNOW HIM!**

**DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING FOR LOCAL
LEADERS**

Waylon Moore - Thomas Wade Akins

Pioneer Evangelism Series

The Wheel of the Christian Life

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 1
Waylon Moore

A life filled with the Holy Spirit has Christ in the center

The body requires certain things in order to live and grow: food, air, rest, and exercise. Without these four things, in balanced proportions, the body gets sick and can even die. This is true spiritually as well. Certain things are necessary, and are necessary in a certain order or priority, in order that we may be in a correct relationship with Christ, who is our life. God wants his children to develop and mature spiritually. Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:13-15.

We use the illustration “The Wheel of the Christian Life” to demonstrate that a Christian should live in this world in an adequate relationship with the Lord and with others. The wheel represents the Christian and his life (draw a circle for the class). He/she should be in contact with the world (draw a line under the circle as I have done). Be in the world, but do not be of the world (John 17:11,14).



Each wheel has a central axle. This center is fundamental to its ability to function. Each person has something in the center of his/her life. Sometimes it is work; other times, family; and other times it is recreation, etc. (Write CHRIST in the center of the wheel). The axle is the heart of the wheel. Around it, the wheel is built and centralized, on it is the wheel is supported and balanced; from it come direction and impulse. The purpose of the wheel is always to move forward, in the direction the axle is directing. In the life of the Christian, there is stable and continual progress only when Christ is in the middle. When Jesus is not in the center of the believer's life, the career of the Christian is interrupted and his testimony voided. The Christian then runs from the purpose for which God created and saved him.

God does two wonderful things for those who trust in his Son. Through these things, He gives a quality of life that is completely different from those of the world. There are certainly more things besides these two mentioned, but they form the base for the new relationship of the Christian and for his growth in grace.

First, we have life in Christ (II Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:6, 9, 10; give these references). Our life is in Jesus. The Holy Spirit put us in the extraordinary position of being: in Christ. In times of difficulty, crisis, and tension, we must always remember this very meaningful truth.

Secondly, Christ is in us. He is our life, our axle; He is in us. We have been taken, invaded, by him! Many Scripture speak of this incredible truth: John 15:5; Philippians 1:6, Galatians 2:20; II Corinthians 13:5, etc. The source of the Christian life is the Lord Jesus, himself. Christ "in us" is literal and actual. "Remain in me, and I will remain in you"; "I in them and you in me" (John 15:4 and 17:23).

We see, for example, what Paul said in Philippians 1:21. He did not say, "For me to live is to imitate Christ", neither did he say, "For me to live with Christ as my helper," nor did he say, "For me to live is to be like Christ". He confirmed categorically, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

C.G. Trumbell says in his book *The Life that Wins*, "The Lord does not want us to work for Him, but rather, to let Him work through us, using us like we use a pencil to write; better yet, using us like we use one of our

fingers. When our life is not only of Christ, but is Christ, it will be a life of good will and of service.”

The connection between the wheel and the axle is established through the spokes.

They transmit to the wheel the impulse and the direction that comes from the axle. What are the spokes that allow us to relate our lives to Christ? There are at least four primary spokes in our relationship. (Draw the four spokes and ask the students to mention four things that are necessary for the growth of a baby) A little baby, in his growth, needs to eat, talk, walk, and communicate. These four acts correspond to the spiritual terrain: to assimilate the Bible, to pray, to obey, and to witness.

TO EAT- Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2; Acts 2:42; Jeremiah 15:16; II Timothy 3:16-17; Colossians 3:16.

Each Christian needs to learn to eat regularly of the Word of God. It is spiritual food. A baby does not know how to feed itself, it needs someone to give him/her food. Through growth, he/she learns to feed himself; however, he/she still needs someone else to prepare it. As the baby develops into an adult, he/she will learn prepare his/her food by him/herself. Only when the person reaches a higher level of growth can they feed someone else. This also occurs in the spiritual realm. Sometimes Christian go directly from the receiving phase to the giving phase.

(Bring out the point that we eat every day, and we also need to study the Word every day.)

To participate in a spiritual banquet once a week, on Sunday is not, by any means, enough to feed a child of God. He/she needs daily food to meet his/her needs.

The Bible is a true “spiritual supermarket”. It has 31 thousand verses: these are canned, packaged, and frozen foods. There is adequate food for each need: vitamins, proteins, and minerals. The Christian should develop his/her capacity to select the proper food, to prepare it, and to eat it. It is also important, that he/she is able to prepare delicious and attractive refreshments for others.

TO TALK- John 16:24; Matthew 21:22; Hebrews 4:15-16; I John 5:14-15; Psalms 66:18.

To talk to God in prayer and to eat the Word of the Lord are two spokes that complete each other. These are the spokes of the wheel's passive power; they are the holders of the energy. A child is not born knowing how to talk by him/herself. He/she learns from others. Children of the faith learn to pray, by listening to others pray, and assimilating the spirit of these prayers. God desperately desires communication with us. He seeks him who worships Him in prayer (John 4:23). There are five basic types of prayer: praise and worship, thanksgiving, intercession, petition, and confession.

(Emphasize the need to daily reserve a time alone with God.)

TO WALK- John 14:21; 15:10; Hebrews 5:8-9; Genesis 22:18; II Corinthians 5:7; Amos 3:3.

We learned to walk physically one step at a time. Spiritually to walk is to obey the Lord. A life of obedience to the will of God consists of a series of steps. Paul used the word to walk to describe a normal life of a Christian (Eph. 2:10; 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15). To walk is a normal act of a child during growth; abnormal, and even tragic, is it if a child cannot walk. Disobedience paralyzes the Christian life. Submission to the Holy Spirit, moment by moment, capacitates the Christian to walk correctly and be worthy before the Lord. "And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work growing in the knowledge of Christ" (Colossians 1:10).

TO COMMUNICATE- I John 1:3; I Peter 3:15; Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 22:15.

Selfishness and egocentricity ruin life. A small child is egocentric; he/she is the center of his/her own little universe. As his/her perception develops, he/she begins to understand they he/she has relations and responsibilities with others.

It is the same way with the Christian. With spiritual growth, he/she will feel the need to give, communicate, and to share. A testimony is his/her way to do this. Through one's own witness, he/she can live

altruistically and share with others his/her most precious possession: life in Christ. We testify either positively or negatively through what we say and how we live. Our witness is the overflow of Christ's love. Our obedience and witness are the spokes that are our active power; they are the energy distributors.

(The teacher should, at this time, show the difference between the "gospel" (I Corinthians 15:3-4), "a testimony" (Acts 26:3-30) and "to win souls" (Prov. 11:30; James 5:19-20).

When the Spirit uses a Christian to work in a person until they surrender to Jesus Christ, this is what is called "winning souls."

The four spokes of a wheel are interdependent to each other, and they all depend on the energy taken from the Word of God. Without the reserves of the Word and prayer, there would be no energy flow for obedience and testimony. Each spoke is indispensable. If one breaks, or is departed, the turn of the wheel is greatly inhibited. (The teacher should take out one spoke after another, etc., showing the interrelationship of the four, and emphasizing that all become useless if they are not positioned correctly, that is, firmly on the axle each in its place.)

The Holy Spirit. Many ask, "In naming these spokes wasn't the Holy Spirit left out? No, because the Holy Spirit is in all of them. He is in each phase or aspect of the Christian life, and He is indispensable to each one. These verses that we have listed below show the relationship the Holy Spirit has with each spoke of the wheel.

In salvation- John 3:5,8

In giving Christ first place- John 16:13-14

In prayer- Romans 8:26,27

In obedience- Galatians 5:25

In witnessing- Acts 1:8

The Holy Spirit, the agent of salvation, is who enables us to be in Christ. Since the moment we were saved, He came to dwell in our lives, making of us an earthly home (I Corinthians 6:19,20). We become his property. We become his "base of operation", through Him, Jesus Christ is introduced to the world. There is not a victorious life outside his

constant control. We are filled by his Word, “be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). The Greek word “to fill” means “to control.” He is the Person who controls us, when, by faith, we submit to Him. The man who is dominated and guided by the Holy Spirit is always someone whose spokes are firm and placed correctly. In such a life, obviously, Christ is the center.

GOD'S PLAN THROUGH YOUR LIFE - Part I

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 2

Waylon Moore

1. Why did God create you? “For His glory”

- “If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” (I Peter 4:11)
- “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks, or the church of God.” (I Corinthians 10:31,32)

2. How to glorify God?

- “He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God.” (Psalms 50:23)
- “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16)
- “This is my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” (John 15:8)
- “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds, and glorify God on the day he visits us.” (I Peter 2:12)
- “And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.” (John 14:13)
- “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” (I Corinthians 6:19,20)
- “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.” (Revelation 4:11)

3. How can we please God?

- “And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father.” (Colossians 1:10,11)
- “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality, that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,” (I Thessalonians 4:3-4)
- “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)
- “We who are strong ought to bear with the failing of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: ‘The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.’” (Romans 15:1-3)
- “I will praise God’s name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than an ox, more than a bull with its horns and hoofs.” (Psalms 69:30,31)

4. Example of Jesus’ reaction to people- Faith in daily walk.

- “He said to his disciples, ‘Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?’” (Mark 4:40) Jesus did not see faith in his disciples.
- The episode of Jesus walking on the water. “...When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. ‘It’s a ghost,’ they said and cried out with fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: ‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.’ ‘Lord, if it’s you,’ Peter replied, ‘tell me to come to you on the water.’ ‘Come.’ He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ‘You of little

faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' (Matthew 14:22-31) Jesus saw little faith in Peter.

· Episode of the Canaanite woman. "Jesus answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.' The woman came and knelt before him, 'Lord, help me!'" she said. He replied, 'It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs.' 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table,' Then Jesus answered, 'Woman, great is your faith!'" (Matthew 15:22-28)

· The Christian needs to mature in Christ to become like Him. "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ." (Ephesians 4:14-15)

The goal of the Christian life is not success, but the character of Christ. People are called by God to achieve perfection among the Christian. God's goal for us is MATURITY. II Corinthians 4:7 says, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

GOD’S PLAN THROUGH YOUR LIFE - Part II

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 3

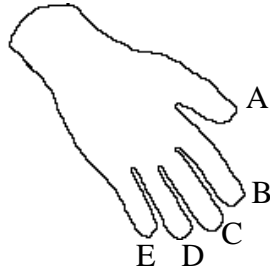
Waylon Moore

Understanding the Word of God

- A. LISTEN** to God speak. “Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mark 3:35)
- B. READ** to grow. “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of the Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.” (I Timothy 4:13)
- C. STUDY** the Word to change. “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11)
- D. MEMORIZE** in order to take the Word everywhere.
- E. MEDITATE** to apply. “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty. (Jeremiah 15:16) “But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.” (Psalms 1:2)
Some questions must be made when studying the Word of God.
 - What is the most important lesson?
 - What is this text saying about God...Jesus?
 - Does this chapter give me:
 - something to know
 - something to change
 - something to do
 - something to start

THE HAND SKETCH

- A. LISTEN
- B. READ
- C. STUDY
- D. MEMORIZE
- E. MEDITATE



“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the men of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (II Timothy 3:16-17)

HOW TO HAVE A TIME ALONE WITH GOD - Part I

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 4

Thomas Wade Akins

INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to be a disciple of Jesus Christ except by being a person of prayer. You must be determined to make your time alone with God a priority in your life. If this is not the case, you will not know God in a deep way, you will not stay in his ways, nor will you produce fruit.

Do you know who you really are? Are you the kind of person who acts normally when no one is watching you? Who are you in the dark? Think! That person is you in reality! So, during your time alone with God, no one is watching you except God.

Let us observe eight aspects of prayer that you may use during your time alone with God.

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

The Bible says in Psalms 48:1, “Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise..” Psalms 34:1-3 says, “I will extol the Lord at all times; His praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.”

We praise the Lord during the worship service in church on Sundays. But, do you worship God when you are alone with Him from Monday to Saturday? The Bible says in Psalms 22:3, “Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; You are the praise of Israel.”

What is worship? Worship is praising God for who He is. Thanksgiving is thanking Him for what He has done for us. Worship is praising the character and attributes of God.

To worship God, Biblically speaking, man must use his mind, will and emotions. It is not wrong to express your emotions in the worship service when you are worshipping God. To say that this is wrong is the same thing as saying you cannot use your mind or your will. That is absurd! Man has a body, a soul (mind, will, and emotions), and a spirit (I Thessalonians 5:23).

However, there is a big difference between emotion and emotionalism. Emotionalism is to lose control of one's emotions. If this happens, the worship service is out of Biblical limits. The Bible does not prohibit us from using our emotions during a worship service; however, it is against emotionalism.

How can you worship God in your time alone with Him? Here are a few suggestions!

A. Sing hymns using the Baptist Hymnal or any other hymnal.

If there are people in the same room, simply read the words of the hymn to God in your mind. For example, the hymn number 1, "Holy, Holy, Holy" is a great hymn of worship. Read the first verse. Stop. Think and meditate on the meaning of the words and praise God based on the words of this verse. Follow on with the second verse, and do the same thing. Continue through the rest of the hymn. In the subject index of the Baptist Hymnal, there is a list of hymns of worship (or praise).

B. Sing or read spiritual choruses.

The Bible says in Ephesians 5:19-20, "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Be assured that spiritual choruses are Biblically correct. In other words, be assured that the spiritual choruses that you use are not false doctrines.

C. Read the passages and prayers in the Bible to God, and personalize each verse.

Psalms 8:1 says, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens." To personalize this verse, put your name in the verse. For example, "O Lord, "my" Lord, how majestic is Your name in all of the earth. You have set your glory above the heavens. Read

each verse one time as it is written in the Bible, and afterwards read it again and personalize the verse so that you may use the Word of God to worship Him.

Some chapters that are adequate include: Psalms 8, 9, 19, 24, 65, 92, 104, 139; the prayers of Jesus and of the apostle Paul, and other chapters of the book of Revelation, amongst these are chapters 4 and 5. You may also look up the word “praise” in a concordance.

Praise is very important for the spiritual growth of our lives. Read Revelation 4 and 5 to understand what we will be doing in heaven.

Exercise: Right now, use the Baptist Hymnal or a spiritual chorus or verse to worship in your time alone with God.

HOW TO HAVE A TIME ALONE WITH GOD - Part II

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 5

Thomas Wade Akins

CONFESSION OF SINS

I do not believe that you should use a lot of time in confession. If you commit a sin, I believe the Holy Spirit will convict you of it at that time. When He speaks to your conscious and tells you that you have sinned, you should confess that sin at that time. The Bible says in I John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.”

But, during your quiet time, perhaps God will bring to mind some recent sins. Perhaps you have a bad attitude towards someone, anger, or bitterness. In this case, you should confess all of these sins in your heart.

THANKSGIVING

The Bible says in Philippians 4:6, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Thanksgiving is to thank God for His actions. For example, “I thank-you Lord for my health, my food, my job, etc.

HEARING GOD’S VOICE

The Bible says in Psalms 6:5, “Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him.” Psalms 46:10 says, “Be still and know that I am God...”

How can you hear the voice of the Lord? Personally, I have never heard the Lord speak to me in a loud voice to me, but I have heard the voice of the Lord many times in my life. How?

God primarily uses two ways to speak to you daily: the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Romans 10:17 says, “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

The Bible is a love letter from God to you. God's desire is to talk with you everyday by the Holy Spirit through the word of God. I would like to suggest some ways to hear the voice of the Lord.

- A. Begin with one book of the Bible. My suggestion is to begin with the book of Ephesians.
- B. Ask the Lord to show you a spiritual truth or truths in each verse or paragraph. For example, Ephesians 1:1 says, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus." What spiritual truths are found in this verse?
 - 1) Paul is a Christian and an apostle of Jesus Christ.
 - 2) He was chosen by the will of God.
 - 3) The word "saints" refers to the Christian in Ephesus.
 - 4) These Christian were faithful in Christ Jesus.
- C. Personalize each spiritual truth. God is speaking to you through each of these truths. The Bible is a love letter from God to you. For example, God is telling me three truths in this verse:
 - 1) Wade, you are a disciple of Jesus Christ by My will.
 - 2) Wade, I choose you by My will.
 - 3) Wade, you are a saint in Belo Horizonte.
 - 4) Wade, I want you to be faithful in Christ Jesus.

PARAPHRASE THE WORD OF GOD

You can use a verse to pray. For example, use Ephesians, "My Father, my God, I thank You Lord because You called me to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. I thank you Lord because I am a saint of Jesus- a person separated by the Lord. Father, my desire is to be faithful to Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen."

After doing this, read the next verse and do the same thing.

Exercise: Do this right now with your group.

HOW TO HAVE A TIME ALONE WITH GOD - Part III

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 6 -

Thomas Wade Akins

INTERCESSION

The Bible says in Ephesians 6:18, “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

Intercession is prayer for other people. Maybe you have a blank page in your Bible. Divide this page in columns or in a notebook, and make a list of the people for whom you will pray each day.

For example, write the word “DAILY” in your first column or on your first page. Under this word write the names of your spouse, your children, your mother, father, brothers, etc.

On the next page or column, write the word “SUNDAY”. Under this word, make a list of people that includes your pastor and his wife, and your Sunday school teacher and classmates.

Write the word “TUESDAY” on the next page or column. In this list write the names of the members of your extended family and your friends.

On the next page or column, write the word “WEDNESDAY”. This list may include the names of some missionaries, the leaders in the Convention, and other leaders in your church.

On the column marked “THURSDAY”, write the names of the political leaders. I Timothy 2:1-2 says, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”

Write the word “FRIDAY” on the next column or page. Under this word, make a list of the people who have back-slidden from the church or other lost people.

Write the word “SATURDAY” in the last column or on the last page. On this list write the names of those people who are your friends, other members of your church, and the names of special projects with which your church is involved.

If you do this, you can pray for many people each week. Read Romans 16. Some think this chapter is Paul's prayer list for the Christian in Rome.

Exercise: Right now, the pioneer should help each member of the group make group make lists of people and countries of the world each day. group make lists of people and countries of the world each day.

SUPPLICATION

The Bible says in Hebrews 4:16, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess."

To supplicate is to make requests to God.

HOW TO HAVE A TIME ALONE WITH GOD - Part IV

Discipleship Training for Local Leaders - Lesson 7

Thomas Wade Akins

MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible says in Joshua 1:8, “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” This verse says that if you meditate on the word of God day and night, God will change your life. Romans 8:29 says that God’s purpose is to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. The result of this is that you will prosper in your ways and experience success in your life. How can you meditate on God’s word day and night?

How can you meditate on God’s word day and night when you are asleep? Do the following to meditate on God’s word.

- A. Choose one verse of the Bible per week.
- B. Read this verse in context.
- C. Ask God to show you a spiritual truth from this verse.
- D. Personalize this verse in prayer.
- E. Write this verse on a card and include the reference.
- F. During the day read this verse several times. You can do this when you are waiting in a line or during your time alone with God. Do this at least five times a day.
- G. The last thing to do each night is read the verse, by doing this the verse will enter into your subconscious.

Exercise: Give each person in the group a verse and card and go through items A-G.

BIBLIOGRAFY

- AKINS, Thomas Wade. Treinamento Para Testemunho Pessoal. Junta de Missões Nacionais da CBB. Ríó de Janeiro, Brasil. 1989.
- AKINS, Thomas Wade. Na Beira do Abismo. Junta de Educação Religiosa e Publicaciones da CBB. Ríó de Janeiro, Brasil. 1994.
- BARNES, Frank. O Que Jesus Deseja Que Você Faça. Junta de Missões Nacionais da CBB. Ríó de Janeiro, Brasil. 1991.
- BLACKMON, Dennis Lester. Pré-evangelização. Junta de Missões Nacionais da CBB. Ríó de Janeiro, Brasil. 1989.
- BROCK, Charles. Indigenous Church Planting. Broadman Press. Nashville, Tennessee. 1981.
- GREENWAY, Roger S. Guidelines For Urban Church Planting. Baker Book House Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan. 1976.
- HODGES, Melvin L. The Indigenous Church. Gospel Publishing House. Springfield, Missouri. 1976.
- LORD, Peter. Hearing God. Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1988.
- MOORE, Waylon B. Multipling Disciples. Missions Unlimited. Tampa, Florida. 1981.
- MOORE, Waylon B. New Testament Follow-Up. Wm. B. Eerdmans Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1963.
- NEIGHBOUR, Ralph W. Jr. Survival Kit. Convention Press. Nashville, Tennessee. 1979.

TIPPIT, Sammy. The Prayer Factor. Moody Press. Chicago, Illinois. 1988

WILLIS, Jr. Avery, T. Vida Magistral. . Junta de Educação Religiosa e Publicaciones da CBB. Río de Janeiro, Brasil. 1994.

WINTER, Ralph D. Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. William Carey Library. Pasadena, California. 1981.

