PART 1: PRESERVING THE HARVEST
A Practical Guide for Discipleship in the Church
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PART 2: A 6-Week Discipleship Curriculum for New Believers
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PREFACE

This Discipleship Handbook is written not only to present, strongly, the case for discipleship, but also to answer the practical questions of how to do it. It has been compiled by Living Water Ministries Uganda in pursuit of our vision and goals, through our outreach arm – Global Outreach (GO). It is written as a result of real experiences on the mission field.

The idea of producing this book was birthed as we have followed the call of God from one city to another holding mass evangelism. When we retraced our steps to the cities we had been to, we were disappointed to find that not much follow-up and discipleship was done after the mission teams had gone home. It became imperative that such a book be compiled, and that serious effort be put into training churches in discipleship.

Various statistics have been published to indicate that, despite all the efforts made towards evangelism, and with all the praise reports of many ‘confessions’, the numbers that actually make it to churches and embark on a real walk with Christ, are very few.

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

(Acts 2:41-42, NKJV)

This scripture sets the expectation for any evangelism event, that people should not only be led to make a confession, but they should be nurtured to become disciples. Our Lord said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31).

While confession of faith in Jesus can be achieved in one event, meaningful conversion and discipleship is an ongoing process and must be aided. The new believer must be helped to become a disciple. This includes bringing them to a place where they are taught the word, where they relate with and spend quality time with fellow believers, where they have opportunity to share in communion (a demonstration of their conscious membership in the body of Christ), and participate in corporate prayer.

A converted believer is one who has come to a place of readiness to follow Christ with all their lives and to learn from Him consistently. Such will come to maturity in the faith, to no longer be tossed back and forth by various teachings or hearsay.

As you can see, this is REAL WORK that we should not engage in halfheartedly.
There is a classic story we can learn from of a dying prophet of God and a king in Israel. The king is faced with the daunting task of delivering Israel from the constant attacks of Syrians. He was instructed to enact victory over the enemy by striking an arrow on the ground. He struck twice and stopped! The man of God was very angry at this King’s complacence in defending the nation: "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it!" (2 Kings 13:19)

We should and must do everything necessary to really win souls. We must also go the extra mile, or miles, to preserve the harvest of our Lord.

This book, therefore, becomes an ideal manual for this work, as it paints the need for discipleship and gives detailed instructions on how to get started and the necessary procedure.

The contributors to this handbook, Scott Ingram of Sozo Ministries and Jacqui Dowdy of Isaiah 61 Mission, are both participating and very supportive partners of Global Outreach. They both have a wealth of practical experience in soul winning, and leadership development in the body of Christ.

Our goal in Global Outreach is to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world, especially northward along the River Nile path from Uganda to Egypt. We aim not only to hold the traditional evangelism campaigns, but to actually place the new converts into churches with the hope that they will be nurtured there. We aim to work with churches to quickly grow the young believers to a point where they too can become part of the Great Commission’s human resource.

If used intentionally this handbook will help churches, and church leaders, effectively preserve the harvest and validate the very efforts that Christianity has directed toward evangelism in any place and in any country.

Wilberforce Okumu
Senior Pastor
Living Water Ministries Uganda
INTRODUCTION

Let us begin by honoring your decision to grow as a disciple-maker. As you will quickly find in the pages ahead, it is our desire to see churches and church leadership take seriously the call of Christ to “make disciples of all nations” This is the sole reason we have invested our time and resources to write this small booklet. As you pursue growth in this area, we pray that what the Lord has allowed us to share here will be useful in your ministry to the Kingdom of God.

As you read this book, we encourage you to do so prayerfully, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you in how to put into practice the things we share. We have tried to discuss each topic thoroughly enough to be understood, yet generally enough that it can be applied to your specific church setting.

We also encourage you to read this book with other leaders around you as you seek to apply it in your church. Discussion questions have been included with every chapter, so you can begin thinking through the application of each chapter as a team.

THIS BOOK IS SEPARATED INTO TWO PARTS

The first part of this book contains general teachings on the topic of discipleship, written by Scott Ingram. These teachings are based in scripture and come from over 16 years of ministry experience. The goal is to help you understand the basics of discipleship, and then to equip you to form a discipleship strategy in your church.

The second part contains a 6-week discipleship curriculum for new believers, written by Jacqui Dowdy. This series of lessons is intended to help you launch a discipleship program within your church as you seek to turn ‘converts’ into mature disciples of Christ.

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In determining how to best distribute this book, desiring to protect the teachings we have worked so hard to share while wanting to make it available to as many people as possible, we have put it into circulation with a “creative commons” license. This allows you to legally make as many copies of this work as you would like and to give it away for free to others. What you are not allowed to do is to remove the author’s names, edit or re-write the book as your own, or to sell it for financial gain. As Jesus said, “freely you have received, now freely give.”

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your ministry!
Scott Ingram and Jacqui Dowdy
PART ONE:
PRESERVING THE HARVEST
A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR DISCIPLESHIP IN THE CHURCH
SECTION I: THE DISCIPLE-MAKING MINDSET

In this section we will attempt to shift our mindsets for ministry from simply being ‘soul-winners’ to becoming ‘disciple-makers.’ In Chapter 1 we will take a look at the Lord’s commission on the church. Next, in Chapter 2, we will discuss what it means when Jesus said we are the salt and light of the world. Finally, in Chapter 3, we will take a look at the ultimate goal of discipleship.
I have lived and worked in East Africa as a missionary for more than a decade, I have found that there is a great passion among the churches for outreach and evangelism. This is a zeal that is lacking in many parts of the world. In almost every church I visit in Uganda, Kenya, and Southern Sudan there is a willingness to gather together for open-air gospel crusades, door-to-door evangelism, and other forms of evangelistic outreach. This is very different than where I come from in America.

As a former leader in multiple churches in Texas, in the heart of what is called “the Bible Belt,” I know from personal experience that it is a difficult thing to get large numbers of American Christians together for sharing the gospel. If you try to do an open-air meeting, it is usually not-well attended.

In Nigeria and other places, Reinhardt Bonnke leads mega crusades, which are attended by millions of people daily. It is an incredible sight, with oceans of people stretching past the horizon. However, a few years ago, I attended a Bonnke Crusade in Houston, Texas – one of the largest cities in America – in a stadium that only seats about 22,000 people, plus whatever can be added at ground level. From my perspective, the stadium appeared to be one-third of the way full. I don’t think that is the fault of Bonnke. It is because the churches and believers in Houston were not unified in the mission to see the crusade become a success.

Here in East Africa, the church is good at outreach. Churches lead big crusades. They coordinate together to form mass choirs. Teams are able to canvas an entire city, door-to-door, in a few days. And it is common to see thousands of people put their faith in Christ. I am truly impressed at what I see here!

Can I tell you what the church is not good at in East Africa?

We are not good at bringing the harvest of souls into the storehouse (the church) and preserving the fruit! All too often, the harvest is simply left laying out in the field where it
was picked. Churches go out and lead many people to Jesus, yet they do not do well (on a large scale) at turning those converts into long-term disciples.

This is not just an East Africa problem. This is a global epidemic. It is becoming a whole-church problem!

**THE GREAT COMMISSION**

When Jesus prepared to leave this earth and return to His throne in Heaven, He came one last time to the 12 disciples and gave them this charge:

> "And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’" — Matthew 28:18-20.

The problem I see with our most common methods of outreach in East Africa, and around the world, is that the commission of Jesus on the church was not to "go and make converts!" It was never to simply go, preach the gospel, and lead people in a prayer to accept Jesus as their Savior. It wasn't even to go and do signs, wonders, healings, and miracles so that people see the power of God or have an experience with Him!

All of those things are great, and we need to do them even more. However, the commission is to "make disciples." Until we learn to take those who pray the prayer of salvation and those who are touched by the power, and bring them into the body of Christ to disciple them, we are **failing** at the mission given to us by Christ.

If someone gets saved, but does not get discipled, we are picking the fruit that is ripe for harvest, but leaving it laying in the field. To say it another way, we are becoming spiritual fathers and mothers to people, long enough to give new-birth, then leaving them as bastard children in the world, with no nurture or guidance to help them grow.
DEFINING DISCIPLESHIP

The Lexham Theological Workbook defines discipleship as, “the process of devoting oneself to a teacher to learn from and become more like them. For the Christian, this refers to the process of learning the teachings of Jesus and following after his example in obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit. Discipleship not only involves the process of becoming a disciple but of making other disciples through teaching and evangelism.”

So discipleship is the process of taking a lost person, seeing them saved by introducing them to Jesus, and then walking with them into maturity as a believer in their relationship with the Holy Spirit, until they are able to make disciples of others as well.

I used to think that discipleship was defined by the persons actions. The first step would be to begin small – leading them in things like repentance of sin, baptism, church attendance – then as time goes on, the person should grow to learn to pray, study the scriptures, and serve in the church. Eventually, they step into leadership and begin evangelizing the lost, teaching biblical truths to others, and discipling others in their own Christian walk.

Those things are good and necessary, but as I have come to realize, it is not the actions alone that make someone a true disciple of Jesus. There is more to it than that. It has more to do with intimacy with the Lord, and finding their new identity and destiny in Him!

CONVERTS VS. DISCIPLES

To truly make a disciple we must take the now-saved person and help them draw closer to the Lord. They must learn to hear His voice; to walk in obedience to Him; and to discover how to live their new life in Christ. We must help them fulfill the destiny they are called to in the Lord, and to do this in such a way that every action comes from relationship with Christ, and gives all the glory back to God. That will involve all the actions mentioned above, but it is also so much more!

Let me break this idea down a bit:

**Question:** Should a new believer come to Church?

**Answer:** Yes, obviously!
**Question**: Is the primary goal to get a new believer to become a church attender? Is that “success?”

**Answer**: No.

The goal of getting a new believer into church is so they learn to worship the Lord and begin to serve with God’s people. Attending church is necessary, but it is not the final goal. Church attendance should lead people into the life of worship and service.

I hope you can see the difference: A *convert* simply becomes a church attender. A *disciple* transforms to become a worshiper and a servant.

Our job is to take a lost person, bring them to Christ in conversion, and then continue the process of leading them to become mature disciples. This is how we preserve the harvest Christ has given to us.

Discipleship matters because the world is full of converts to the Christian religion, but God’s desire is mature sons and daughters. We have to do more than go into the field as harvesters, we have to invest the time, energy, and resources to preserve the harvest God has given.

Discipleship matters because it is at the heart of Jesus’ command. When he returns, we know He is coming for a bride who has been made ready, but that requires more than “soul-winning.” We are prepared for Him through “disciple-making.”

**Discussion Questions**

- How would you define discipleship?
- Have you been discipled by mature believers in your Christian walk, or were you left to struggle on your own?
- How is your church investing in the next generation of believers to see them grow to full maturity in Christ?
- Will you make a commitment today to become more than a “soul-winner?” Will you decide to be a “disciple-maker?”
CHAPTER 2: SALT AND LIGHT

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. ‘You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.’”

(Matthew 5:13-15; English Standard Version)

Among the famous statements of Jesus, one of the most quotable things He ever said was, “You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). This word, spoken to the multitudes of His followers, was an amazing, identity-giving statement. As it should be! It is no small thing that Jesus viewed His church as the carriers of God’s revelation; pointing the way to His salvation. We are all commissioned to go with the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to make Him known in the world!

Jesus went on to say, “you don’t light a lamp and hide it out of sight. It is meant to shine, and when lights shine together, as they do in a city, you cannot hide it from the world.” He then commands us, like a lamp on a stand, or a city on a hill, to let our lights shine in the world so that other people will see our good works, and turn to glorify our Father in Heaven (paraphrase of Matthew 5:15-16).

WE REVEAL WHAT IS HIDDEN

When we understand that we are the shining lights of Jesus, we will reveal what is true and real. That is what light does. You can hide a dirty room in darkness, but when the light is switched on, everyone will see the mess for themselves. The Christian is meant to be a revealer of the truth – both God’s truth in light, and also those truths that men desire to keep hidden in darkness.

As we go throughout our daily lives, we should be such a reflection of God’s glory that people recognize Him in us and want to see more of His reality for themselves. At the same time, they should also be confronted by the sin inside of themselves, as the light of our lives brings those things into view. That is not to say we come with judgement on people, or live as self-righteous individuals by comparison. It is simply to say, in the words of Paul, that “we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life” (2 Corinthians 2:15-16).
When we show up, those who know God are drawn more to Him, and those who are not yet believers see the reality of their own sin in the light of His glory in us. It’s just the nature of His presence through His children.

If it isn’t obvious, the call to be light in the world, is definitely a call to do the work of evangelism, bringing God’s revelation to those who would be saved. What is interesting to me, however, is that before Jesus says we are agents of revelation (light), he first says we are salt.

**WE PRESERVE WHAT IS GOOD**

Before Jesus said, “you are the light of the world,” He said, “you are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13).

Salt does a few things. Not only does it taste good, but it is a necessary substance for sustaining life itself. Today, we mostly use salt to add flavor to our foods, but in the ancient world, salt had a different primary function. All throughout history, salt has been sought after and used as a preservative for food.

If you lived in a society before refrigerators, and you had extra meat that could not be smoked, dried, or cooked immediately, then you would pack it in salt in order to preserve it. If you didn’t, it would spoil.

Regarding this verse in Matthew 5, The Pillar New Testament Commentary says:

“We should take salt as a metaphor and the earth as referring to people. Jesus is apparently thinking of the function of salt as a preservative, as the enemy of decay, and as giving taste to food. What is good in society his followers keep wholesome. What is corrupt they oppose; they penetrate society for good and act as a kind of moral antiseptic…”

The enemy is at work in the world bringing corruption and seeking to spoil the work of the Lord. We are called to prevent his efforts! Just as salt does for food, we are to enter the world, seeking out what is good and godly, and act to preserve it for the good of humanity and to the glory of God. The devil cannot steal or destroy what the believer is preserving for the Lord (see Matthew 16:18-19).
To bring this back in the context of evangelism and discipleship, this means that before we go into the field preaching the gospel and seeing people saved (shining our light), we must have a mindset that sees our responsibility is not just to harvest the fruit, but also to preserve the harvest which God gives to us.

When the enemy comes, like a bacteria, seeking to corrupt the good fruit of the Lord (see Matthew 13:19), we have the responsibility to block his efforts and preserve the harvest of God.

**WE ENHANCE WHAT CAN BE BETTER**

Once we have made the commitment to preserve the fruit the Lord has given us, then we become like salt in other ways. As we mingle our lives together with other believers, we pull out what is good in them, and seek to make it even better. They do the same for us, and together, we enhance what is good in the world!

Just as salt enhances the flavor of food, we enhance the flavor of life through the gospel in personal discipleship and societal transformation.

We call people into the light through salvation, preserve them from the corruption of the enemy, and then press each other onward to become more like Christ. As more people are discipled into Christ-likeness, communities are transformed; entire nations are renewed, and the cycle continues again and again!

That is how we bring God's restoration into the world: by being salt and light!

The church can no longer simply preach the gospel in our megaphones, hoping people will somehow get saved and mature on their own. We must engage on a deeper, more personal level. We must bring the revelation of truth. We must see them saved. And then we must help them to mature and become who they are meant to be in Christ.

Light shines in the darkness to bring people to Christ, but our job is to do more than just see people saved. Our job is to preserve the harvest from the corruption of the enemy, and to enhance the lives of believers as they become more like Christ. As we do this, we will begin to tangibly see God’s Kingdom overcoming the kingdom of darkness in the world! We are the light of the world, and we are the salt of the earth. If that is who Jesus says we are, then let’s act like it!
Discussion Questions

- Do you see a connection between the need to “preserve God’s fruit” and the call to discipleship?
- In what ways does your church act as a “city set on a hill?”
- How do you see your church’s influence in your community “adding flavor” to life or “preserving what is good” in society?
CHAPTER 3: THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ…”

(Ephesians 4:11-13; English Standard Version)

If you examine global Christianity with a focus on finances, it is impressive how much the church spends every year doing outreach and events in the name of “soul-winning.” Millions, maybe billions, of dollars are spent every year on community outreaches, crusades, and various other evangelistic efforts. And it works. Millions of people, every year, pray a prayer of salvation, in hopes of having an eternity in paradise when they die. Yet all too often, that is where the church’s outreach ends.

As we have already discussed, the Great Commission calls us not just to make converts, but to make disciples. The sad reality is, however, that too many churches make big plans with big budgets for getting people saved, but have a much lower priority in helping the people become Christ-like. “Soul-winning” is much more important to them than actually doing discipleship.

Even worse, we now have multiple generations of believers in the church who are caught in a terrible cycle where, because they were not discipled themselves, they do not know how to make disciples of others. We have churches full of Christian converts who live in immaturity, making more converts who also continue to live in immaturity.

THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP IS THAT PEOPLE WOULD BECOME LIKE CHRIST.

Discipleship is the process of leaving who we were before salvation, and becoming who we are called to become in Christ (see Ephesians 2:10). It is the leaving behind of the old man and putting to death our sinful nature. It is the process of conforming ourselves to the image of Jesus, who is the perfect image of God and man (see Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5; and Romans 8:29).

If we have any plans in ministry, short of seeing people being transformed into Christlikeness, then we have completely missed the goal of discipleship, and need to
reanalyze our motives. To be sure, it is a great thing to want to see hundreds or thousands of people get saved, yet that is not the finish line. Maturity in Christ is.

To use a football analogy, when trying to get someone saved, it is like playing the game on defense. Your only desire is to get possession of the ball before the other team can score (or in this case, to get the person saved before they die and go to hell).

When a person gets converted to Christianity, that is like the ball being intercepted and now rather than playing defense, you switch to playing offense. The strategy changes when you get the ball, but you still haven’t scored. You still have work to do to get the ball to the goal, which in this case, means taking the new convert from the point of salvation and leading them to maturity in Christ. Salvation is taking possession of the “ball,” but getting to maturity in Christ is the actual goal line.

So how do we know when a believer reaches maturity in Christ?

THE CLEAREST MARK OF MATURITY IS THE ABILITY TO MAKE MORE DISCIPLES.

As with any living thing, the most recognizable mark of maturity is the ability to reproduce. When a human child grows up, they go through puberty and transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is a process, and takes time, and they undergo many changes along the way. They begin to look different. They begin to act different. They even begin to sound different. Yet the process isn’t complete until they can successfully reproduce. Before puberty, they could not reproduce even if they tried, but after the maturing of their bodies, it becomes a natural part of life.

The same is true spiritually. We are born again, then go through the process of transformation and spiritual growth, and then naturally, we will begin to lead others into the new birth and discipleship process as well!

Just as in the natural world, when we reproduce, we will replicate whatever is in our DNA. Cows give birth to cows. Chickens give birth to chickens. People give birth to people. So naturally, disciples should give birth to disciples. Disciple-making should be in the DNA of every believer.
MATURITY IN THE BODY MEANS EVERYONE IS A DISCIPLE-MAKER

The goal of discipleship is that as a believer grows in Christ, he or she will not only begin to live their lives by Christ’s example, but will begin reaching out and discipling others as well. As Ephesians 4 tells us: “we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” – that is maturity – and “when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” The body of Christ builds up the body of Christ.

Earlier in the same passage, Paul tells us that it is the job of spiritual leadership – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers – to equip every believer for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12).

It is time for us to understand that we must be equipping every believer to become disciple-makers, walking in maturity, and pulling other people out of darkness and up to the standard of Christ, as well. His image in mankind is the goal, and any target less than that, falls short of the high calling of God.

Discussion Questions

- In your own words, what is the goal of discipleship?
- Who are you currently helping on the journey toward maturity in Christ?
- If salvation is not the final goal of our outreach efforts, how do we need to shift our planning and programming?
SECTION II: PARTNERING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

In this section we will look at the active work of the Holy Spirit from salvation, through the entire discipleship process. In Chapter 4 we will see that He is the Chief Disciple-Maker, so we must understand His work before we add our own effort. Then, in Chapter 5 we will look at 4 key ways we can be praying to partner with the Holy Spirit in the disciple-making process.
In the last chapter we shared why discipleship matters, and must be a priority for us in order to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus. We must begin to feel the weight of Jesus' command, and change our priority from just “soul-winning” to “disciple-making.”

While we cannot remove the responsibility of discipleship from the church, who has received the Great Commission from the Lord, what I want to look at in this chapter is the fact that it is the Holy Spirit who is the chief disciple-maker, sent to guide us in this process. Without His direct involvement in both the life of the individual being discipled, and in us as the disciplers, we will never be able to effectively finish the work.

The Bible tells us,

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” — 1 Corinthians 2:12–14.

This means that from the moment a person gets saved in Christ, it is the Holy Spirit who leads them into maturity as a believer. All we can do is faithfully pass along what the Holy Spirit has empowered us to give to them. In the same way, the only things they will gain from us in their discipleship, are the things the Holy Spirit has prepared for them to receive. We must work in discipleship, but we are not the ones in control!

With that in mind, I want to look at just a few of the things the Holy Spirit does in the process of discipleship.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REGENERATES

We must understand that it is the Holy Spirit who brings new life in Jesus to a person. Not us, with our eloquent preaching. Without The Holy Spirit’s influence at the moment of hearing the Gospel, no one would accept to turn and follow Christ as Lord and
Savior. We are slaves to our sinful nature, and without His supernatural breakthrough to rescue us, we would never get saved.

Jesus said, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me” (John 6:44–45).

This does not mean that everyone hear’s a booming voice from heaven leading them to get saved. Yet, just as supernaturally, it is God the Father who draws people to Jesus, through the direct influence and leading of the Holy Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS OF SIN

From the initial decision to get saved, the Holy Spirit begins the process of redirecting a person’s life. He brings them out of the sinful activities of the old man through the conviction of sin.

Jesus said,

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” — John 16:7–8

As the Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin and righteousness on a person, the natural response is repentance – a changing of the mind, leading to a changing of actions.

The first conviction that comes in a new believer will be toward the “big” sins in their life. For me, this was my teenage alcohol addictions, experimenting with various drugs, and sexual promiscuity. However, once the big sins are removed, the Holy Spirit will continue to root out more and more of the old man from the believer, helping them conform to the image of Christ.

As Martin Luther said in his Ninety-Five Theses which he nailed to the doors of the church at Wittenburg: “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said ‘Repent,’ He intended that the entire life of believers should be repentance.”
Repentance is not just a one-time activity for new believers at the point of salvation. As a Christian stays tuned to the Holy Spirit, seeking to have a clean heart before the Lord, the Spirit will always open up new areas of false belief, negative attitudes, and unrighteous deeds.

THE HOLY SPIRIT SANCTIFIES

If I were to walk through all of the scriptures concerning the work of the Holy Spirit, it would be obvious that His role is to fully renew us according to the image of Christ in a process called sanctification, or “becoming holy”. He is the one who draws us to Christ in the beginning. He causes us to be born again (John 3:5-8); and He continues this work within us until we are fully perfected in Christ for eternity.

As we pursue the Holy Spirit’s help in sanctification, He becomes active in our lives. He works in us from the inside out, and He will inevitably seek to make us like He is: HOLY. As the Bible says,

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are… Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure… No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God…” — 1 John 1-3, 9-10

History records a great revival within the church, which awakened the world to this sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. The movement was called “The Holiness Revival” in Europe, and became known as the Second Great Awakening when it moved to the U.S.

Under leaders like John Wesley and George Whitfield, believers were encouraged to seek a personal encounter with the Holy Spirit and His power, which they called “full sanctification.” This was a tangible experience with the Spirit that inevitably led to a higher desire for holiness in the person, and a complete rejection of sin and self.

They discovered that when the Holy Spirit would come in power, there would be an impartation of holiness in which the believers would be empowered to walk free of sin. They would then have the choice to live surrendered to this transforming power and live
holy lives, or they could willfully refuse His power, continue in sin, and ultimately “grieve Him” (Ephesians 4:30), suppressing His sanctifying work in them.

This same pursuit should be active in every believer today! With the Holy Spirit's power at work in us, we should be walking free of sin and becoming more like Christ, until we enter eternity and gain our complete transformation into His image.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS**

The experience of the Holiness Revival was a predecessor to the Pentecostal Revival of the early 1900’s, which revived the power gifts of the Holy Spirit – such as prophecy, healing, and tongues – that had long been neglected by the church after the rationalist worldview took hold post middle ages.

We now refer to both of these experiences - for “full sanctification” and to be filled with power - as “being baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit.” When a person goes through this encounter with the Holy Spirit, they are empowered to live holy lives, and also given the tools necessary to be witnesses for Christ in the world.

These supernatural gifts given to the church are not for our own benefit. Rather, they enable us to continue the mission of making disciples of all nations. We need mature believers who walk in holiness, and have been empowered to heal the sick, cast out demons, share prophetic words from the Lord, and more!

In conclusion, it should be evident – and trusted! – that the process of discipleship depends on the Holy Spirit’s working in the life of every believer. It is not initiated, nor completed by man. It is wholly upon Him. He saves. He convicts. He transforms. He empowers. He even guides us to walk with others in the process. We simply must learn to partner with Him in making disciples. That is the subject of our next chapter.

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**Discussion Questions**

- How does the baptism of the Holy Spirit free us to live holy lives?
- How does the baptism of the Holy Spirit empower us to make disciples?
- Do you spend time daily listening to the Holy Spirit speaking to guide your ministry?
CHAPTER 5: FOUR VITAL PRAYERS FOR DISCIPLESHIP

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

(Ephesians 3:14-19, English Standard Version)

We saw in our last chapter that the Holy Spirit is the Chief Disciple-Maker. He calls, convict, saves and sanctifies the believer. With all of that resting on Him alone, it seems there is little left for human action in the process of discipleship. Biblically, however, that is not the case. God clearly puts the job of making disciples on the church, and that means on every believer, not just the leadership.

Since the Holy Spirit has the primary role in disciple-making, and we, too, are a vital part of the process, then it should become obvious that our first step in making disciples is to make sure we are doing so in partnership with the Spirit! For this reason, prayer is the first and most vital step in our disciple-making efforts.

With this in mind, here are four prayers we should all be praying for discipleship:

PRAY FOR FRUITFULNESS

In Matthew 9:3-38, Jesus said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” There should be no question, then, that the fruit is ready to be gathered in evangelism. We are to pray for Him to send more missionaries into the fields.

Once again, however, as we have already discussed in Section 1, the call to the harvest field goes beyond “soul-winning.” We cannot just pick the ripe fruit, and leave it laying in the field. We must obey the fullness of the great commission by making disciples of every person the Lord gives us. Therefore, the first thing we must be praying for is our own efforts to be fruitful: both in outreach AND discipleship.
We do this by asking the Lord for clear instructions on what He is already doing in the world around us. God is already working. Every person we meet has a divine encounter with Jesus waiting for them. As we pray for fruitfulness and give the Lord the opportunity to use us, it will be through us that the Holy Spirit releases those experiences to people.

We should be seeking to be the hands, feet, heart, and mouth of Jesus to those around us, most especially those whom the Holy Spirit reveals to us as being ready.

More so, we must realize that every interaction we have with the believers in our life is an opportunity for growth, both in us and in them. We must be praying that our fellowship will be a fruitful time for sanctification, “as iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17).

When we become intentional about praying for fruitfulness in every relationship, in every conversation, in every meal or cup of coffee, we will see our level of discipleship rising.

**PRAY FOR WISDOM**

Most of us fear “discipleship.” It is a big, scary word. It requires *something* of us, in order to build others up, yet we don’t know what it is, exactly, that we are supposed to do. Even the most experienced disciple-makers run into this challenge, as every person we try to disciple is different and has different life-experience and expectations. The good news is that the Holy Spirit knows exactly how to transform the lives of all men back to the image of Jesus, and wants to empower us to do so.

We have such a great promise in scripture that in our serving the Lord and others, we are not left to figure it out on our own. James writes: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him” (James 1:5).

Make it a priority to be praying for supernatural wisdom and divine revelation for every discipleship encounter. Even during the course of your discipleship conversations, make sure you are listening to the Holy Spirit and asking for wisdom relevant to the things being discussed and how they impact the person’s life. You do not need to be a professional counselor. You simply need to be in tune with the voice of your Father for guidance.
PRAY FOR RECEPTIVITY

Up to now, we have been praying for our own ability and effort in the discipleship process, but we also must be praying directly for the ones we are discipling. Most especially, we must pray that they will hear the truth God wants to reveal to them and make life-changing applications according to His will.

Now, this is not praying that they will listen to us and do what we say. It is praying that they will hear the voice of the Holy Spirit through our time together, and do what He says. Even when we are not perfect in getting the point across, the Holy Spirit is more than capable of filling in the gaps where we are lacking. Just as Paul writes:

"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual." (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)

We must pray for the person to have an open heart, sincerely desiring growth in the Lord, and their ability to receive the truth. We must pray for a willingness to be vulnerable to the process, and to repent where necessary. We must pray for them to take action and apply the life-giving truth the Holy Spirit is wanting to share with them. These things are their active participation with the discipleship process, and without it, growth will be stalled and our efforts useless.

PRAY FOR IMPARTATION

Finally, we must realize that for true discipleship to take place, we must be engaging more than just the mental life of the believer. We must pray for God to give an impartation to the person spiritually, which releases righteousness into them as their new identity in Christ, and enables them to stand as a new creature in this world.

Paul said, “For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5).
This means that the evidence of true discipleship does show up when it is demonstrated in the person’s mental understanding of a truth, but it is even more evident when there is a demonstrative experience of life-changing power that bears tangible fruit in their life.

The scripture is full of examples of impartation, where a mature, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led believer lays hands on and prays over the one being discipled, and in a release of God’s power, the one being discipled is supernaturally transformed in some way. This may be “baptized by fire” for cleansing and holiness. It may be the reception of new gifts of the Spirit or another kind of supernatural release. The point is, impartation is something beyond human ability. It comes directly from God.

Paul reminds us that the Kingdom of God is not only in talk, but in power (1 Corinthians 4:20). We, therefore, should pray for and expect the power of God to show up in our discipleship efforts. We are not only teachers, but we are the conduit through which the Holy Spirit can touch the person.

The truth is, without impartation we are simply filling the new believers with head-knowledge, instead of raising them up as supernatural Children of God, endowed with “every spiritual blessing” (Ephesians 1:3). We must pray for divine impartation to come.

Discussion Questions

- In your prayer for fruitfulness, do you only pray for fruit in evangelism, or also in disciple-making? How do you need to change in this area?

- How does praying for God’s wisdom in our discipleship efforts shape the way we minister to the ones we hope to raise up in Christ?

- Have you received an impartation through the laying on of hands? How did it advance your own growth in the Lord?
SECTION III: CREATING A DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY

In this section we turn our attention to the practical details of application. In Chapter 6 we will discuss six things necessary in creating a discipleship strategy for your church. In Chapter 7 we take a look at four levels of discipleship that people go through during the growth process. Then in Chapters 8 through 11, we look at how we disciple people, in a practical way, at each level.
CHAPTER 6: SIX IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF A DISCIPLESHIP STRATEGY

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom…”

(Colossians 3:16, English Standard Version)

So far, in this book, we have discussed the theology of discipleship: what it is, why it matters, how the Holy Spirit works, and how we can partner with Him. Now we will begin to shift our attention to the practical side of discipleship. I want to look at six important elements for building a successful discipleship strategy, which will enable your church to effectively lead people from “lost” to maturity in Christ.

1. THE MINDSET OF A DISCIPLE-MAKER

Hopefully you agree that we must begin with a conviction that we are called to make disciples and not just to make converts. Although this one should be obvious, it isn’t always followed through in the practical workings of ministry. This is why we have spent the first section of the book looking at the disciple-making mindset.

Nevertheless, at risk of overstatement, before you can practically begin a successful discipleship program in your ministry, you must be committed to seeing full maturity in Christ as the goal. You must build a culture within your church that is not content with just “soul-winning.” Our leadership teams cannot consider it the purpose of evangelism to just get people saved, or we will fall short of the Great Commission. Discipleship must be the goal.

If you and your ministry leadership do not make the commitment now, that discipleship is the priority, then it will be easy to let it slip to the side when it becomes difficult or inconvenient.

2. A MATURE DISCIPLE AS THE LEADER OR MENTOR

This one probably sounds so obvious; however, as I have seen over and over again in our ministry in Africa, one of the greatest challenges to seeing leaders making disciples is that the leaders, all-too-often, have never truly been discipled themselves.

As the leader of your ministry, it will be up to you to set the pattern for discipleship in how you disciple others. In time, you will raise up other leaders around you who are capable of carrying on in the same work you have begun (see Ephesians 4:11-12).
When the time comes for the church to call members to step out in discipling others, it should be clear in their Christian walk that they have been discipled themselves. The must demonstrate maturity as a believer in their Christian walk. At a bare minimum, they should be equipped in knowing the word of God, and hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit.

A point of consideration that may have practical value in your ministry is that as you add official discipleship leaders to the ministry, who are not the pastors or staff, then these people should clearly have the authority of the church leadership behind them to facilitate and teach.

We commission pastors. We commission evangelists. We commission deacons. We commission ushers. Yet I have never seen a church commission people to be disciple-makers. Maybe it is time to begin.

One other note here, while it is true that every believer should be making disciples, what we are talking about here is a strategy for your ministry as a whole. How your “official” team leads in life and in discipleship will set the pattern others in your church will follow.

### 3. A TIME AND PLACE TO MEET REGULARLY, OUTSIDE OF NORMAL CHURCH MEETINGS

Your Sunday morning church service or Wednesday night prayer meeting are important parts of your ministry, but keep in mind that these events are not the ideal setting for real life discipleship. While people need to hear the preaching of the word and be involved in other elements of church life, deep discipleship must take place in a more personal setting.

You may even want to consider a location outside of the church facilities. Meeting in homes or public coffee shops may be more preferable, as it is easier to relate to one another. If people are more comfortable, they are more willing to open up and share their lives.

There are other challenges that can be addressed by meeting outside of “church” as well. People coming from other religious backgrounds such as Islam, or people with families hostile to the church will have an easier time taking part in the discipleship process if they do not have to sneak into your church building for the meeting.
4. A BIBLE-BASED LESSON PLAN FOR TEACHING THE BASIC TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

The Bible is God’s Word given to guide us in life and Christ-likeness. Therefore, any discipleship strategy we employ must be grounded in the scriptures to be effective. We cannot simply press people to conform to our church culture, or a list of religious rules and expectations.

We will look at this topic more in depth in Chapters 10 and 13, but we must at least touch it here. The Bible reveals Jesus, and therefore it is in the Bible that we find out who we are supposed to become in Him. Any plan to make disciples must be grounded in the Word of God, and not simply the personal thoughts and teachings of the leadership.

5. OUTSIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REAL-LIFE APPLICATION.

New believers are often the most passionate to share their faith and teach others what they are learning. As such, our discipleship strategy must also include opportunities for the new disciples to step out and practice their new faith with real life applications.

In the now classic book, “The Purpose Driven Life”, Rick Warren says that Christians must be involved in five areas of spirituality: Discipleship, Worship, Fellowship, Service, and Mission. I would contend that if our discipleship programs do not offer the opportunity to step into the other four areas, then we miss the point.

As a disciple becomes more mature in the Lord, they will begin demonstrating and participating in these things on their own, outside of officially scheduled events and programs. Once again, however, I would remind you that the patterns you set in their early discipleship will be how they continue throughout their lives.

We must teach people to worship the Lord and to serve the church, as well as to give them opportunity to reach out to the lost and to share their faith with others.
6. ONGOING ACCOUNTABILITY AND COUNSELING FOR DISCIPLES, CONTINUING LONG INTO THEIR MATURITY IN CHRIST.

We must see that true discipleship is a lifelong journey toward Christ-likeness, and not something that can be finished with a 6-week course or a few Bible studies. We must take into account that as one “level” of maturity is reached, there is still a call for every believer to come up higher.

Even as people mature into the Lord, we must include the opportunity for continued growth through higher level discipleship meetings, biblical counseling, and personal accountability.

The greatest leaders in the church have not yet attained to the image of Christ, so continuing the discipleship process is necessary for us all. Therefore, do not limit your discipleship strategy to only new believers. Find a way to incorporate everyone in the plan.

The point I hope you take from this chapter, as we start getting more practical in the next, is that discipleship is not automatic. It requires leadership, and it requires a strategy.

Discussion Questions

- Consider your current discipleship program. What elements discussed in this chapter are you providing well?

- What elements discussed is your current program lacking?

- How can you make efforts to fulfill the necessary components we have discussed?
CHAPTER 7: FOUR LEVELS OF DISCIPLESHIP

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

(2 Corinthians 3:18, English Standard Version)

As we continue our discussion on creating a strategy for discipleship within your church or ministry, I want to look at four levels of growth people pass through in the discipleship journey.

These four levels will give us a grid for how to view our interactions with others, determined by where they are in their own journey with Christ. As we learn to keep disciple-making at the forefront of our minds in every interaction with others, this will help us to see where they are, and inform our efforts to help them draw closer to Christ and to maturity in Him.

Of course these four levels could be broken down even further into many sub-categories, but keeping it simple will enable us to grasp the challenges and opportunities we have with each group, and form a plan for raising them up.

LEVEL 1: THE NON-BELIEVER

While this may not technically be a level on the discipleship spectrum, I want to include it here because it is the place all of us start from. In our efforts to make disciples, it is necessary to view every person in relationship to where they are in Christ, and so we might simply say these people are pre-Christ. They haven’t met Him yet. Which tells us how we need to be interacting with them.

Jesus loves the world so much that He gave up His own life to redeem ours. In Him, all of humanity has been called back to the Father and has a divine opportunity to be conformed to the image of Christ. Our interactions with non-believers should be intentional to speak in love, offering the life-giving gospel to them as the Holy Spirit gives us the opportunity.

The desired outcome of our time with these people is that as they would encounter Jesus through us, will be drawn to Him, and receive salvation.

We will discuss this level more in the next chapter.
LEVEL 2: THE NEW BELIEVER

Once someone has been born-again by putting their faith in Christ, the next step is to help them understand the foundations of the Christian life. They are no longer lost sinners, but unless it was a life-altering, supernatural encounter which brought them into salvation, they will likely still struggle with what it means to be a Christian.

It is at this stage that we must impart to the new believer the foundation of their new identity in Christ. The old man has passed away, and the new man is breaking through. Yet, it is a process to see the new man come in maturity, so we must help them.

In developing a discipleship strategy for these men and women, it is usually a good idea to use a topical approach in your discipleship meetings. We can use their hunger to grow, and take them to the basics of the Christian life. These would be things like:

- What is salvation and repentance?
- How are we born again?
- What does it mean to pray?
- How do you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit?
- Why is Bible study important?
- Why new believers join in a church fellowship?

This list can be much longer, depending on how the Holy Spirit leads you in developing your own teaching. We will discuss this topic in more depth in Chapter 9, but for now, we simply need to understand that the goal at this stage of discipleship is that new believers would begin to leave the old life behind, and start taking steps to live as a follower of Christ.

"The old man has passed away, and the new man is breaking through. Yet it is a process to see the new man come in maturity, so we must help them."

LEVEL 3: THE GROWING DISCIPLE

Once a person has integrated into the Christian life and is operating as part of the local fellowship of believers, there will come a day that topical lessons have less of an impact on their walk with the Lord. That is not to say that believers at every level wouldn't benefit from specific teachings on certain points of the Christian life. Simply that there will come a hunger for “the meat of
the word,” and not the basic things – “the milk” – given to babes in Christ.

It is at this stage we must ensure that these men and women can begin to walk out their own discipleship and growth, through studying the word of God and in intimacy with the Holy Spirit.

One practical way you can teach people to study the Word of God is called the R.E.A.P. Method, (which is outlined in more detail in Chapter 13). While this approach is not my creation, I love it because it is simple enough to teach and remember. You simply teach people that with every passage of scripture you should (R)ead, (E)xamine what it means and the principles it teaches, (A)pply these lessons to your life and decide how you will live them out, and then (P)ray for the Holy Spirit to help you do so.

As they are learning to pray for the Holy Spirit's help, they must also be learning to hear His voice (see Chapter 12) and discern His leadership in their lives. While your church probably has its own beliefs and convictions about how involved the Holy Spirit is in our daily lives, we must make sure we are not limiting Him through willful unbelief.

The goal with believers at this stage is to let go of hand-holding Christianity, and enable believers to grow on their own. They will still need guidance along the way, but they cannot remain dependent on others for ongoing growth.

We will explore this level of discipleship more in Chapter 10.

LEVEL 4: THE MATURE LEADER

The final level of discipleship comes when a person has not only learned how to hear the voice of God and grow themselves in the Word of God, but they have a growing track record of practicing these things regularly.

When people reach the point of truly knowing who they are in Christ, and live out a respectable level of Christian maturity, then the discipleship process must turn to help them become disciple-makers themselves. We might call this a vision-centered discipleship.

What I mean by this is that not only are they learning to walk in Christ more every day, but as their relationship with Him matures, they will begin to have God-given visions of
gospel improvement to their family of faith, their neighborhoods and community, and even for national revival. They will no longer simply begin pursuing their own growth in the Lord, but naturally they will be leading others toward growth in Him as well.

For these people, stepping into leadership may not be automatic, but it should be encouraged.

As far as the discipleship strategy is concerned, it is at this level that a church should be seeking to impart the vision and values of the ministry into the person, as they begin to lead others down the line. These people should learn what the greater vision God has given to the ministry and how the leadership strives to live it out.

For example, in my own ministry we have 5 “cultural values” which should mark every pastor, missionary, or leader in our ministry, and should be trickling down to every church member and short-term team member. These are things like “bible-loving” and “prayer-led,” which are vital to any ministry and to every maturing disciple. We also have more distinct values such as “identity-driven” and “revival-longing.” Those things need pressed into people growing into maturity within our ministry.

Imparting things like their identity in Christ into the vision they have to serve others will prevent things like a spirit of competition or a poverty mindset. It is not simply a mental understanding of the new man that is necessary, but a practical outworking of their inheritance and authority as sons and daughters of God.

To teach them what it means to be revival-longing, is to impart the vision our ministry has for holiness, justice, community restoration, healing, deliverance, and mass salvations. These things drive how our ministry works from day-to-day, as well as how we pray and seek God as a team of ministers.

The point is that as a person begins to step up into spiritual maturity, our strategy must include a plan to help them become leaders within the church and community, and that means teaching not just the biblical theology and foundations of Christianity, but also imparting the specific callings and giftings that God has given to your ministry for your area of service. The goal is that they will continue the mission of making-disciples in the next generation of believers.
We will continue to discuss level 4 discipleship in Chapter 11.

**Discussion Questions**

- Have you ever considered discipleship being necessary at every level of a person’s life? Why or why not?
- Have you ever viewed your outreach programs as part of a lifelong-discipleship process? If not, how do you need to adjust your views?
- Which levels of discipleship do you feel your ministry is performing well? Which levels need to be adjusted?
In the last chapter we said there are four levels of interaction that take place when making disciples. In this chapter we will look at the first level. The starting point of discipleship is the offer of salvation, as we go into the world preaching the gospel to the lost.

While we will not spend much time on the practical aspects of running outreach, I feel it is necessary at this point to discuss how to present the gospel to the lost, as this is the place where their discipleship begins – the point of salvation.

Briefly, I want to share with you two methods of gospel presentation, that will enable you to keep the story of the gospel in mind in any opportunity to share with non-believers. Each of these methods will utilize four key words that will keep you on track for sharing the gospel. They did not originate with me, but have been effective for years in my own mission work.

After sharing these two methods, I also want to share with you the importance of incorporating your personal testimony in your outreach efforts.

METHOD 1: THE GROUND-LEVEL GOSPEL

I call this the Ground-level gospel because it keeps the story very personable to the people we are sharing with. Though using scripture is always necessary, this method doesn’t go as deep into the history of the bible as the second method will. It is very simple, and may have even been the method used by the person who led you to Christ.

The four keywords for this method are **GOD – MAN – CHRIST – RESPONSE**. As I have written in our ministry’s team training handbook:

“In this way of presenting the Gospel, you begin by explaining who **God** is; that He is perfect and holy, and that when He created everything in the universe He made it ‘very good.’ Because **God is perfect and holy**, **He cannot associate Himself with the unholy**. **This brings us to the second point.**
“Man, though he was created holy in the image of God, chose to disobey God’s command and eat of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. With this one action, sin entered the world and man lost his connection with God. The judgement came with the curses pronounced in Genesis 3, as well as eternal separation from God in this life and in the next.

“This is where Christ comes in. When you have a Holy God, and a sinful humanity, there has to be a major move on both sides in order to make reconciliation. So when Jesus was born, God actually took on flesh and became a man, and became the representative of both sides! He lived a sinless life according to the law of God, then died in our place, taking our punishment for sin, reconciling us to God, and offering us new life and righteousness through faith in Him.

“With these three things in mind, the person being ministered to is then called to a response. Will they accept Jesus as their Savior and be reconciled to God through faith in Christ, or will they reject Christ as Savior and continue in life separated from God?”

METHOD 2: THE HIGH-LEVEL GOSPEL

Though the first method is simpler, and can be used for a quick presentation of the gospel, the second method is, by far, my favorite. This method uses the full story of scripture to lay out God’s beautiful, original plan; the problem of sin in humanity, and the reason for which Christ came into the world. If the person is far from getting saved, it can also be shared conversationally when giving an explanation of your faith, without adding the immediate pressure of a response. Instead, it can act as the starting point to impart faith in God, that may lead to a later decision.

The four keywords for this method are CREATION – FALL – REDEMPTION – RESTORATION. Again, let me share from our ministry’s training manual:

“God created all things in the beginning and made them good. He put humanity in charge of His creation, giving him authority to rule as a steward of God’s universe. Again, this creation was perfect and holy, and man himself was righteous having been created in the image of God.
“When mankind first sinned against God, known as ‘the fall,’ not only was man affected with the curse, but the whole creation as well. This is why everything we see in the world is not as it was originally intended to be: war, famine, violence, natural disasters, etc.

“Another downside of the fall was that the authority over the earth which God had given to mankind was then delivered to the devil, who has become ‘the God of this world’ and ‘the prince of the power of the air…at work in the sons of disobedience (lost man).’

“Redemption is a theological word meaning that on the cross, not only did Jesus die for our sins, but that He also came to break the curse over creation and reclaim what was lost in the fall. According to Luke ‘…the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.’ This goes beyond just the salvation of souls, but also the redemption of righteousness and justice in the earth, and ultimately the authority over creation. This is why after the resurrection, Jesus tells the disciples that now, He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

“This is where personal salvation comes in. If Jesus is the Redeemer of all things, that means He also redeems us, and brings us back to our original intended relationship with God the Father. He also gives us new life and restores our ability to walk in holiness by faith in Him. Though we are not completely perfected in the moment of salvation, we now recognize Jesus as the Lord of our life and submit to Him. As we work to build our relationship with Him, we also begin to be conformed to His image once again, just as we were originally created to be in the beginning.

“This presentation of the gospel also looks forward to the day Jesus returns and we will see the final restoration of all things back to the way God intended them to be in the beginning. Sin and death and the devil will be dealt their final blow. Jesus will judge the world according to whether or not their faith was in Him, and then He, along with all those who believed in Him as Savior will see all things finally made right. There will be a new heaven and new earth, and all the promises from the Bible will finally be fulfilled. This should get us excited.”

One final note about this narrative: even if you do not use this method for reaching the person in salvation, it is an important story for them to understand once they are saved. Therefore, if the person gets saved using method 1, then method 2 should be discussed at the beginning of their Level 2 Discipleship.
No matter which method you use to preach the gospel, what must be made clear is that our goal in Level 1 Discipleship is to take a lost person and lead them to salvation in Christ. We must be bold to share the gospel, and we must give them the opportunity to accept Christ as their personal Savior.

USING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY IN SHARING THE GOSPEL

Let me once again share from Sozo Ministries’ training handbook:

“It is not enough to know the gospel story with your head. You must also know it to be true and effective with your experience for your words to carry any meaning to those you are sharing with.

“Your testimony is your personal connection to God’s story in human history and is a tool He will use for leading others to Himself.

“The Hebrew word for testimony, ‘edut,’ and the Hebrew word for witness, ‘ed,’ both come from a root word meaning ‘to duplicate or repeat.’ This means that in sharing our testimony, we are asking God to repeat the action in the lives of those we share with. This can be our salvation testimony as well as our testifying to other works of God in our life. It is a way of saying, ‘If God did it for me, He can do it for you.’ This honors God by giving Him credit and raises faith in the person making a way for God to do it again for them.

“If sharing a testimony is declaring ‘Do it again, Lord,’ then is it any wonder that all throughout the Old Testament God commands His people to share the testimonies of His faithfulness with the next generation? Psalm 119 continually talks about remembering God’s testimonies and delighting in them. It is also the privilege of the Christian that we get to be Jesus’ story-tellers as we are called to be His witnesses to the world. Remember, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Sharing your personal testimony requires you to know where you were before Christ found you, how the gospel came into your life, and the change God has brought in you now.

I am not the man I was before Christ saved me at 16 years old. I was a teenage slacker, alcoholic, trying drugs and experimenting sexually. Even in church, I was a hypocrite, drinking with my youth leader on Saturday nights. Thank God, He used a man bold
enough to preach the gospel to me, and though I knew the stories of Jesus my whole life, I finally put my faith in Christ to be saved. Today, I am free from all those addictions and perverse lifestyles. I am faithfully married, and have the privilege of sharing this gospel all around the world.

What is your Gospel story? It is not a shame to share what your lost self did before Christ saved you, as He will use it to bring others to Himself. We must know the gospel in our heads and with our lives. Then God will use us to reach others as well.

Discussion Questions

- In what situations do you think the “ground-level” version of sharing the gospel can be the most beneficial.

- In what situations do you think the “high-level” version of sharing the gospel can be the most beneficial.

- What are the key elements of your own salvation testimony? Include the parts before Christ saved you, and after He came into your life.
What are the marks of a mature believer in Christ?

This is a question that every leader in the Body of Christ should ask. We must find the answer in the Bible, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and apply it to the current setting in which we live. And then we must see this as the basis for our discipleship for new believers. Maturity is where we are taking them.

As I think through the question, there are many traits that come to mind. Things like knowing our new identity in Christ, as well as running to God rather than away from Him when we sin.

As we seek to answer this question, looking at believers around us who we view as strong men and women of God, we will begin to get a general picture of what a mature believer looks like.

When we turn our attention from leading people to Christ – Level 1 Discipleship – to helping them begin their new walk in Christ productively, we must keep these marks of maturity in mind, in order to impart them to new disciples.

Every church and leader may place different levels of importance on the different characteristics of a Christian we will discuss in this chapter, the goal is to get you thinking about your own discipleship teachings, and to help you form a plan for your own church or ministry. You should be asking, “What are the first steps we must lead new believers in, to get them started toward maturity?”

As I said before, one of the best ways to help a new believer start their walk in Christ is to lead them in some topical-based teachings. I call this Level 2 Discipleship.

These topical teachings should hit specific points of orthodox theology and practical Christian life, in order to help brand new believers gain a Christian worldview and begin to live in a manner worthy of the call on their lives (see Ephesians 4:1).

When you come to Part 2 of this book, you will find an in-depth, 6-week curriculum with topical-based teachings that you can use immediately in your church. For now, however,
I want to briefly share 9 topical-based discipleship themes to get you thinking about the process of developing new believers in their Christian walk toward maturity. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but is simply to set an example of things to be discussed to get new disciples moving in the Christian life.

**SALVATION AND REPENTANCE**

The fundamental need for all people is to understand that salvation is a gift of God, given through faith and by grace. It is not dependent on good works. It is only dependent on the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. When we come to Him seeking forgiveness, it is always given! We must ensure that new believers are trusting in Christ alone, and not in their own ability to gain favor with God.

Repentance, then, is the process of turning aside from our own striving and away from everything which offends the Lord, and come into our new identity in Him. It is a changing of mindsets wherein we begin to understand Jesus’ way of life and godliness as opposed to our old way of living, and then allowing our actions to come into alignment with His reality.

**HEARING GOD’S VOICE AND PRAYER**

New believers must be taught that God is not far away or that He ignores His people. Salvation is entering into renewed relationship with God, and He wants to have personal, intimate encounters with us as His children. Therefore, early on in the Christian life, believers must learn to pray to Him for guidance and to hear Him when He speaks. We must learn that God is not angry with us when we fail, but He will lead us every day of our lives, as we are conformed to His image, if we simply draw close to Him in prayer, listen and obey.

**BIBLE STUDY**

New believers must also be taught to value the Word of God — to read it, study it, and live by it. It is not a rule book to earn God’s favor, but a love letter to us revealing the destiny and favor He has already given to us in Christ. It must become the basis of our faith-walk, as the only source of reliable truth as God’s revelation to man. (We will discuss this topic more in our next chapter.)
WORSHIP

New believers must learn to worship the Lord with their lives, as well as in church services and songs. The Bible says that the Lord is enthroned on the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3), which means there is a greater spiritual reality that comes into our lives, releasing the power of God, when we humble ourselves to worship Him. The whole of the Christian life should be worship.

CHURCH INVOLVEMENT – BECOMING A PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

New believers must be taught the importance of the body of Christ and their role within the community of faith. They must not only be taught that church attendance is important, but must understand why they should be connected as part of the community of faith. This includes helping them understand the need to serve and love other believers in unity, as God empowers them.

BAPTISM AND COMMUNION

New believers must learn to walk in obedience to the Lord’s commands. The first of which is to be baptized, as a public testimony and prophetic declaration that they have died with Christ and risen to new life in Him.

They must also learn the value of the Lord’s supper. We must teach them what it means to come before the Lord with a clear conscience, and to realize our place in His story, somewhere between the first establishment of the passover meal and the future marriage supper of the Lamb.

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Just as Paul asked the Ephesian church, “have you received the Holy Spirit,” we must also ensure that new believers are empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in power and holiness. Without the baptism of the Holy Spirit, people will not be able to live a victorious Christian life. Of course, different parts of the body of Christ hold different beliefs about this baptism. Nevertheless, it must not be overlooked in our discipleship.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND DELIVERANCE

“We must learn that God is not angry with us when we fail, but He will lead us every day of our lives, as we are conformed to His image, if we simply draw close to Him in prayer, listen and obey.”
We must ensure new believers also understand that there is an enemy who hates them and wants to drag them back to every sinful way they have left behind. Some of them will need deliverance as they enter the Christian life, but more than that, all believers must be equipped to live a lifestyle of victorious spiritual warfare, ensuring the enemy will never be able to win them back or hold them down.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

As people grow in the Lord, we must teach them how to live as ambassadors in the Kingdom of God, seeking to see revival and awakening come into this world. We must teach them to pray that the Kingdom will come “on earth as it is in heaven;” to know what the Kingdom looks like, and how to live as representatives of that Kingdom in their communities.

We must show them their role in reaching others with the gospel early on, so that it will become a natural part of their Christian walk, throughout their lives.

In conclusion, please realize that this is just a general list of new discipleship topics to get you started. I hope you are now thinking about the marks of a mature believer, and beginning to see what it will take to lead people there.

Discussion Questions

๏ What are the characteristics or “marks” of a mature believer in Jesus Christ?

๏ Which of the topics discussed do you think are most important to teach a new believer?

๏ What other topics do you think are vital for new believers in their early discipleship?
CHAPTER 10: DISCIPLING MATURING BELIEVERS

“…Solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

(Hebrews 5:14, English Standard Version)

Once a person has been won to Christ (Level 1), and has begun their walk in the foundational truths and practices of Christianity (Level 2), the third level of discipleship — and the longest-lasting — becomes vital to their longevity in Christ. The believer must be taught not only to read the Bible as a matter of normal practice, but must also learn to interpret the meaning and apply it practically to their own life. This is what Paul calls “the solid food” for believers, rather than “the milk of the word” (see Hebrews 5:12-14).

In Chapter 13, I will show you one of the most effective ways to teach a young believer to study the Word of God through ‘The R.E.A.P. Method,’ which teaches you to Read, Examine, Apply, and Pray. In this chapter, however, I want to specifically look at some questions new believers should be taught to explore in every passage of scripture they read. These will help them to examine the passage and make a personal application.

For a church program of discipleship, these questions should also be used as the basis for your Bible study-centered discipleship meetings. This will further help the new believers learn to ask them for themselves.

TO BEGIN, READ THE PASSAGE

The obvious first step is to read the Bible. For deeper Bible study, the passage should not be too long. I would recommend a chapter at most, but more often than not, it should be a smaller section. A paragraph or even a single verse can be a good focus, especially in groups.

If you are doing a group discussion, it might be helpful to read the passage more than once. Allow the participants to summarize what the passage says, so that you can make sure they are grasping the story and context.

QUESTION 1: “WHAT DOES THIS TEACH US ABOUT GOD?”

The Bible is first and foremost God’s revelation of Himself to mankind. While scripture does give us important information about ourselves, that should not be the first focus of our study. Good theology is to understand the revealed truth about God!
If all scripture is primarily about Him, then we must understand what the passage we are reading says about Him first. Does it reveal a character trait, or speak about His love or His justice? Does it show us anything of His desires or His will? According to what we read, what do we learn about Him?

For private Bible study, a good practice to teach is to keep a journal and write these things down. Especially if something seems contradictory or confusing, then the person can bring the question up for discussion with a more mature believer or a church leader.

**QUESTION 2: “WHAT DOES THIS TEACH US ABOUT PEOPLE?”**

Once we have established what the Bible teaches about Him, we then begin to explore our role in His story. As we look at what the Bible says about us, we must remember that there are two versions of us in scripture: the old man, who is lost without God, and the new man, who is redeemed and renewed in Jesus.

We are not yet asking application questions here, so it isn’t about taking action yet. First of all, we want to establish our identity according to scripture. Who does it say we were? Who does it say we are in Christ, now? What promises does the scripture make to us, and what conditions are those promises hinged upon?

Another avenue to explore is, how does what the scripture says about us compare with what it says about God? Are they the same, or is there a contrast being made?

> “The believer must be taught not only to read the Bible as a matter of normal practice, but must also learn to interpret the meaning and apply it practically to their own life.”

Again, we should be teaching people to keep notes of these things, so that as God builds their knowledge through the Word, they will naturally begin to make connections and identify themes.

**QUESTION 3: “WHAT DOES THIS TEACH THAT YOU SHOULD DO?”**

Once we have examined the things the scripture is teaching us, then it is time to turn our attention to the practical application of the Word. It is at this point we want to take note of any commands in our passage. Is there anything explicitly stated that believers should do or stop doing? Is there anything hinted at in the passage that would require our personal lifestyle or actions to change? Are there commands for the broader church, rather than just us as individuals? Once again, write them down.
QUESTION 4: “HOW WILL YOU PUT THIS SCRIPTURE INTO PRACTICE?”

Having established the commands of scripture, we now make it personal. We must look at our own lives as believers and analyze how we are measuring up to the teachings of the Bible. With the Holy Spirit’s help in prayer, we should see where we fall short, and turn our attention to repentance. In areas that are not sinful, but in which we must grow, we should ask ourselves how we can intentionally seek to develop in this area. Combined with listening to God in prayer, this exercise should not take too much effort to see where we need to grow and mature.

Once we have decided how we will pursue personal growth (and written it down), then I would also recommend adding a timeframe to begin working on them. If it is a need to reach out to others, when will you make the time? If it is a need to stop doing something, then identify when that thing will come up and tempt you again, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you prepare to overcome.

If this is a group discussion that happens regularly, then encourage the participants to make an effort to apply these things before your next meeting, so that you can include a time for testimonies or follow-up discussion when you come together again.

QUESTION 5: “WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO NEEDS TO HEAR THIS MESSAGE?”

This final question is one to encourage reaching out to others with the Gospel and God’s truth. It reminds us that we are part of a community of faith, and that no matter what God is teaching us in His word, there will be someone else who needs to hear it. We are called to give away what we have received from the Lord (see Matthew 10:8)

Encourage your disciples to think about someone else who needs this truth, and to make time with them to share what God has taught them. If it is a message of salvation, who do they know who needs to be saved. If it’s a word of encouragement, who do they know who would benefit from that message. When will you meet with them? Make it a priority!

This, again, will lead to a follow-up discussion at your next meeting if the question is asked as part of a group meeting.
PERSONAL BIBLE-STUDY BECOMES SELF-GUIDED DISCIPLESHIP

As the people you are discipling at this level learn to ask these questions, and make Bible study a regular part of their Christian walk, their maturity in Christ will begin to come automatically. Though we never outgrow the need for church fellowship and one-on-one accountability and mentoring, nothing can compare to a life committed to the scriptures for growth. Level 3 discipleship will help them to mature themselves in the Lord, and have more to give away to others coming behind them in the faith.

Note: These five questions shared in this chapter did not originate with me, but I have found them to be very beneficial and wanted to share them with you! I originally learned them through a book called ‘Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery.’ I cannot more highly recommend that book if you seek to further develop your disciple-making skills and method.

Discussion Questions

๏ Why does Paul call the ability to study and interpret the Word of God, “solid food?”

๏ How does being able to study the word of God for oneself free people to follow Christ and grow on their own?

๏ How would your church ministry benefit from all members being committed to personal bible study?
CHAPTER 11: DISCIPLING LEADERS

“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

(2 Timothy 2:2, English Standard Version)

After a person gets saved (Level 1) and matures in the Lord, they will go through the process of being taught about Christianity by others (Level 2) as well as learning to grow themselves through the Word of God and prayer (Level 3), yet that is not the end of discipleship. Their personal maturity in the Lord must continue to develop until their focus makes a shift from themselves to others. This change is part of a life-long journey into Christian love and service.

CATCHING A VISION TO SERVE

While a person is growing in the Lord, they must come to know their new identity in Him, and also the inheritance they carry. This process can take a lot of time and revision – many years for most of us. However, this internal identity shift should naturally begin to manifest itself outwardly through service toward others.

As a believer discovers the extravagant ways Christ loves us, their hearts will begin to change, in love, toward other people. They will naturally begin to look for ways to share that love. As they do, God will begin to give them a vision for ministry (which simply means service) and to reveal their spiritual gifts to them, for His purposes.

Although there are obvious universal aspects to God’s ministry within the church, this developing vision for ministry will be personal to each believer. As people demonstrate the desire to serve and begin to step into various love-sharing opportunities, we must begin to disciple them in clarifying their vision for serving others.

Christ gave general commands to those He sent out in the New Testament. Those same commands still apply today. We must continue to “preach the gospel,” “heal the sick,” “cast out demons,” “encourage one another,” “care for widows and orphans,” etc. However, He has also uniquely designed each one of us to fulfill different aspects of service in His Kingdom. This will be shaped according to the individual personality and character He has given to each person. Each of us are equipped with different giftings and callings from the Lord.
As we disciple people to “become who they are in Christ,” we must never seek to force all Christians into the same areas of service, or expect the same abilities from everyone. Just as not all are apostles or pastors (see 1 Corinthians 12:29-31), it is also true that not all are choir leaders, children’s ministers, or ushers. As we continue to disciple people, personally getting to know them, we must give them opportunities to develop their own unique gifts and talents, and help them find their place within the Body of Christ. This will enable them to serve His people, and the world He wants to save, with passion and effectiveness.

**CATCHING A VISION TO LEAD**

Once a person has found their own place in the Body and is using their gifts with excellence and with joy, the next step is to go beyond simply serving, and begin leading. As we have discussed before, we replicate in others what God has formed within us. We said that at the most basic level, disciples make disciples. In the same way, ministers will make ministers out of others.

As we have also previously discussed, Ephesians 4:11-12 makes clear that the role of ministry leaders is not “doing” the ministry, but “equipping” others to serve. All believers, without exception, must discover how to minister to the body of Christ and to share the gospel with the lost. However, in the continuing growth process, we must all move from being ‘learners’ to being ‘leaders’ in our service.

Part of a person’s vision to lead will develop naturally, as others begin to notice and follow their passion for service. However, for most Christians, there comes a time when they must be pushed out of their comfort zone, and into the place of leading and guiding others.

We, as disciple makers, must make every effort to identify the giftings and fruit in a person’s life, and move them toward opportunities to teach others what they have learned from the Lord.

Let me share a personal example. I once served as a missionary to the island nation of Haiti. I was in an area of heavy witchcraft, yet the present reality of evil also built an expectation of supernatural activity from God within the church. Every Sunday after I
closed our church services I was approached by many people for prayers for their physical healing, and I would pray for them as best as I knew how.

Up to this point in my life, I had seen people healed through the prayer of others, and I had a very high personal desire to see healing in the ministry, but I had never had the opportunity to pursue healing very much. I had no idea what I was doing. I knew that the “effectual, fervent prayers of a righteous man” had power to heal (see James 5:13-15), but I did not know how to pray that prayer for myself. My passion was still greater than my inability; however, and so I prayed (ineffectively) for every person who came to me for months.

As I continued this pursuit, God led me to the ministry of a man named Randy Clark, whom God has used to both heal the sick, and to impart the healing gift into thousands of regular Christians all around the world. I was personally touched very powerfully by the Lord while attending the Voice of the Apostles conference and receiving prayer from Randy. I went out with a new boldness to pray and a new gift inside me, through the laying on of hands. The very next week, on a short trip to Southern Sudan, I had the chance to lay hands on a blind man, watch his grey eyes regain their color, and his sight be restored. Many other incredible healings followed over the next few days.

Being emboldened by this experience, I signed up for Randy’s training course for healing ministry, to learn from him and his team how to pray more effectively. That was in 2012. Since then, God has used me to heal hundreds, maybe thousands, around the world in my own ministry.

As I have grown in this area over the years, I have also taken up the responsibility of teaching those I lead how to pray for the sick. I cannot be the only one doing so in my ministry. I want my fellow ministers to have strong faith for healing breakthroughs, too. Though I have not attained to the level of Randy Clark or other heroes of the faith, it does not release me from the responsibility of sharing what I have learned with others.

**IMPARTING GOD’S VISION FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION**

The last thing I want to touch on, as we finish discussing a discipleship strategy for your ministry, is moving people from “lay minister” to joining the official ministry leadership within your church or ministry. It is at this point you must add to your mentoring
processes what I call, Values-Based Discipleship. This is how you will begin to shape them with the vision God has given for your organization.

If I were to ask you, “what are your highest personal values as a ministry,” you would likely have an answer. Most founders and senior leaders of organizations have received a clear vision for the ministry. However, as I have found throughout my own ministry experience, that vision is seldom passed on to other leaders clearly or effectively.

We must personalize our leader-making discipleship strategies to fit our church or ministry. This will begin the process of turning new disciples into long-term, mature leaders within our organizations.

To give an example, in my ministry, Sozo Ministries, we have set 5 “cultural values” that the Lord called us to live out when we founded the ministry. They are Bible-loving, Intimacy (prayer)-led, Identity-driven, Revival-longing, Empowerment-focused.

The goal is that these values would mark every leader, missionary, pastor, church, and church member in our ministry. In order to make that goal a reality, we cannot simply post the values on the wall and hope they are being received by people passing by. We have to teach, train, and demonstrate these things in order to impart them into every leader and member of our churches. These things, then, become a vital focus in our disciple-making process.

In your ministry, too, I am sure you have a vision from the Lord and a set of values you attempt to live out. The question that must be asked is, “How well are you imparting those things into your next generation of leaders?”

It is true that not every person who comes through your ministry will end up carrying the same vision. That is perfectly fine! You will eventually release those individuals to go serve another ministry or begin something new. Praise God that He used you to touch their lives as you did.

Despite this fact, there are those whom God has called to come behind you, to carry your vision on long into the future. That is a high honor for both you and to them, but it only happens when you fully share with them all that the Lord has placed on you.

We must realize that everything the Lord has done in our lives is intended to be passed on to others. We are
to take the things God has given to us, and to give them away to others. If we have been taught from the word, we must share the truth with others. If we have been set free of demonic powers, we are given authority to set others free as well. If we have been called into leadership, we must raise up other leaders around us. This is not optional!

If we seek to protect what is “ours” — our ministry, our church, our blessing, our...whatever — we will end up losing it. Instead, when we learn to pour out what God has given to us for others, we will be refilled again and again as faithful stewards of the things of God.

Discussion Questions

- What are the personal values God has placed in you as a Christian and a leader in the church?
- What are the vision and values of your ministry? How were these values developed? Can you clearly articulate them to others?
- Are you effectively discipling others to become leaders in your ministry, according to the values you have just shared?
Section IV: Practical Resources

In this final section we will share some practical resources for raising up disciples. In Chapter 12 we will discuss how to hear the voice of God; a skill necessary for both the disciple-maker and the disciple. In Chapter 13 we will look at a practical method for studying the Bible. Finally, in Chapter 14, we will point you toward other resources you can explore for continued growth as a disciple-maker.
CHAPTER 12: HEARING GOD’S VOICE

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

(John 10:27, English Standard Version)

Throughout this book, we have repeatedly discussed listening to the Holy Spirit and hearing God speak. In my experience there are three general ways people view how the Holy Spirit actively speaks to His people.

The first viewpoint is to deny that He still speaks. This is a form of theology called cessationism, which argues that the gifts and supernatural activities of the Holy Spirit were only performed until the completion of the Bible. As that is the full revelation of the word of God, cessationists do not believe that the Holy Spirit can add any more supernatural revelation beyond what the scriptures reveal. They do not believe He speaks, so they do not listen.

I will not make time in the book to argue against this view. It will suffice to say that the main problem with this view is that the Bible itself is where we learn that the Holy Spirit speaks to His people, and how we are to hear and interpret His words.

The second view is that the Holy Spirit is still active and speaking to His people. In some form, this is the view of most modern Christians and ministries. Although the level at which God speaks is viewed differently - some believing that He speaks daily to all, others that He only gives special revelation at certain times - there is a value for His leading, and it is encouraged to listen and obey. These people believe that He speaks, so they actively listen to Him.

The third view, and the one we will focus on in this chapter, is those who affirm with their mouths that the Holy Spirit speaks to His people, but their practice does not involve listening to Him. They functionally live and do ministry the same as the cessationists, even though they have better theology. They believe that He speaks, but do not listen.

Often, this is simply a lack of understanding of how to hear Him speaking, which is what we will address here. Sometimes, however, it is not a lack of understanding. Rather, it is a lack of priority for His direct leading and guiding. This cannot be corrected with a book. It must be corrected in the heart.

What I want to look at in this chapter is how the Bible says we can expect the Holy Spirit to speak to all believers. Then we will look at how all of us can actively grow in hearing
and obeying His voice. The rest of this chapter is taken from the Sozo Ministries Ministry Team Training Handbook.

THE REVELATION GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There are three “revelatory” gifts listed in the New Testament, meaning that they are gifts given for personal ministry within the church. Though all of these gifts are hearing God’s voice, and may function in some of the same ways, they have different purposes for which they are used.

Prophecy

While the Bible tells us that all believers should be hearing God’s voice for their own life and personal direction, the gift of prophecy is when you are hearing the voice of God on behalf of other people. This may be a revelation or insight into their life. It may give direction in a decision making process. It may be speaking to their destiny and calling in life.

At minimum, prophecy will always lead people toward Jesus and His ways. It will agree with scripture, and will leave them feeling encouraged.

Words of Wisdom

A word of wisdom is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit Paul talks about in his letter to the Corinthians. It is not natural wisdom, rather, it is when the Holy Spirit speaks to you with specific instruction pertaining to a specific time and place.

This gift may come into use, for instance, whenever you are ministering to someone under deep stress due to some personal situation, and they are seeking guidance on how to handle things. Rather than just giving good advice, this gift would be when the Holy Spirit tells the person exactly how to handle the situation, leading to peace and a good outcome.

A word of wisdom may also be simply instructing you what to do in a situation with another person, rather than telling them what to do. For instance, you could be ministering to someone who has many needs, and the Holy Spirit leads you to pray for them or speak to them in a different way than human reason would naturally lead you to.
Words of Knowledge

If words of wisdom tend toward God giving instructions, words of knowledge would simply be God revealing information. Perhaps you are ministering to someone who has not been forthcoming with the root cause of their issues out of shame or fear. In love, the Holy Spirit uses this gift to reveal the underlying problem to you so you can minister to them appropriately.

Not only do words of knowledge help you minister effectively, but they also build faith in the person receiving ministry because it lets them know with certainty that God sees them in their situation and cares what is happening in their life.

Remember, God will never reveal knowledge to us about something that He does not intend on working on. This is one of the ways we can “see what the Father is doing” and then follow His lead.

Other instances of words of knowledge might be when God leads you to a certain place, or reveals a certain person to you that you need to minister to. It may also be God revealing things about someone such as a physical illness that He intends to heal.

Any time we receive a word of knowledge or word of wisdom, it should embolden us to speak, being confident that God wants to use us in those situations.

WAYS WE CAN HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD

To begin this section, let’s first discuss discernment. We must recognize that for all believers there are three voices you can hear in your head at any given times, and all of them will sound like your own thoughts. You can hear your own imagination speaking to you. This is key to human existence. It lets you reason, as well as determine your thoughts, wants, and needs. This voice was corrupted in the fall. It is influenced by your emotions, and as such cannot always be trusted to make the best decisions, though as you follow Christ closer, it will become more and more conformed to God’s mind.

The second voice we hear all-too-often is that of the enemy. He wants to flood our head with sinful desires and discouraging, condemning thoughts. He is always speaking lies...
to us to see if we will accept what He is telling us as truth. “You are not good enough.” “You are all alone.” “No one loves you.” “You’ll never stop sinning in that way. Why try?”

These are the thoughts that lead many Christians to withdraw from community and live in self-loathing solitude, believing they can never be used by God in a meaningful way. In reality, though, these are not your own thoughts. They are lies that we must reject, and instead believe the things God says is true about us.

The third voice is the Holy Spirit speaking to you. While I’ve heard many people say, “I don’t think God is speaking to me like that,” the truth is, most of them just don’t know how to tune in to what he’s saying. I’ve heard Kris Vallotton, one of the pastors at Bethel Church in Redding, California, compare it to a radio where God is speaking on the FM channel, but we are searching the entire AM dial wondering why we can’t tune in.

The key, then, is discerning how God speaks to you, and then making the effort to tune in as often as possible to hear what He’s speaking and leading us in on a daily basis. The good news is, we can learn from history how God has spoken in generations past, and have a pretty reliable idea of how He will still speak to us today. So, whether is is for your own intimacy with God, or in receiving one of the revelatory gifts mentioned before, here are some of the biblical and historical ways Christians have heard the voice of God.

**Reading Scripture**

“All Scripture is breathed out by God…” — 2 Timothy 3:16

Even from the early days of the church, it was recognized that the Bible is a collection of books that was authored by men as they were directed by the Holy Spirit. That means that as we engaged with the Bible, we are reading a letter to mankind, written by the Holy Spirit Himself. As we trust in this fact, it becomes clear that the Bible is the foundational means for hearing God’s voice because it is in the Bible that we learn all about God’s character and His ways.

Since the Bible is true and written by the Holy Spirit, we can also trust that the Holy Spirit will never speak anything to us which is contrary to the scriptures. Therefore, not only does the Bible help you learn to hear God’s voice, but it also builds discernment for whether it is God’s voice you are hearing at all.
Intuitive “Hearing”

Often times you will hear Christians say, “I feel like God is saying…” What they are usually talking about is hearing God with an intuitive hearing, rather than hearing God’s audible voice. These come more as impressions or as outside thoughts, not originating in your own mind. In the Old Testament, it is the Hebrew word, “nabi” meaning “to bubble up.” The thought you have is a Holy Spirit-given thought that seems to bubble up from the soul, rather than from the mind. In my experience, this is one of the primary ways they hear God speak in the busyness of daily life for most Christians. It certainly is for me.

Growing in discernment between the three voices in your head is key in learning to hear God speak this way.

Hearing the Audible Voice of God

The audible voice of God seems to be rare among Christians, but it does still happen. There are a few people who hear it regularly; however, the majority of people who do experience the audible voice of God only do so once or twice in a lifetime.

One biblical example is when Jesus blinds the Apostle Paul at his conversion, and speaks to him audibly with a loud voice, “Why are you persecuting me?” The Lord then spoke to him of his destiny and gave him instructions on what to do immediately.

Dreams

Dreams are another very prominent way that God speaks to people. Some believe it is because that is the time our rational minds are at rest, and He can speak to us without us reasoning it away.

Deuteronomy refers to one type of prophet as a “dreamer of dreams.”

This is not to say that all dreams come from God. (Though it is likely that many dreams are from God, though we haven’t realized it.) You still need discernment in determining where the dream comes from and if it has meaning to reality.

Visions and Trances

Visions are often broken down into two categories:
Visions (Internal) - In general, a vision is similar to a day dream, though it does not come from your human mind. Instead, you see something play out in your head in the same way an intuitive word from God “bubbles up” from the soul.

Open Visions - Open visions are external. They play out in front of you like you are watching a tv screen. Rather than just being a daydream, it overlays reality so that you can see with spiritual eyes what is going on. This would be like Elisha’s servant’s eyes being opened to see all of the angel armies on the mountaintops around them.

Similar to visions is a trance. According to Jamie Galloway of Global Awakening:

“A trance is when you completely lose consciousness of your physical surrounding because you are overcome by the Spirit of God. It seems you lose your logic and are overcome with what God is presenting to you as if it always was.”

We might say that a trance is when an open vision does not just play out in front of you, but you are actually pulled into the vision completely, and therefore lost to reality around you. A person in a trance may seem fully awake and conscious, but in reality their mind is somewhere else. Again, this can be from the Spirit of God, or can also just be a fleshly preoccupation with some thought that has consumed the person.

Peter finds himself in a trance on his rooftop while praying in Acts 10:10.

Physical Sensations

Physical sensations often occur in relation to words of knowledge for healing. You might call it a God-given sympathy pain. It would be where you experience a sudden pain in your knee, where you should not be feeling pain. This could be God prompting you to ask the person you are ministering to if they have knee pain. Sometimes these words of knowledge may also be called out to the whole audience if the person God is pointing you toward is not readily obvious.

Sometimes God can give you physical sensations leading to other things, like perhaps feeling something in your ring finger could be pointing you to ask questions about the persons marriage or if they are married.
Physical sensations can often go along with intuitive hearing as they may just be a very direct way for God to initially get your attention.

**Visitations**

Visitations are when a heavenly being, whether an angel or even Jesus Himself shows up to you in person. Sometimes the visitor will have a message to speak to you. Other times they may use non-verbal communication to tell you what they were sent to say.

Angels are all around us. It shouldn’t be a surprise that sometimes they come just to see us. It is also worth noting that you won’t always know they are angels. Sometimes they will come to you in the form of a person and give you a word from God, or simply converse for a while or ask for charity, then leave without you knowing their true identity.

**Inspired Speech**

Inspired speech happens often in the public presentation of the gospel. It is simply when you open your mouth to say one thing, and something completely different than you planned comes out. Yet what does come out is more profound than what you meant to say or reveals some deep hidden truth. Inspired speech will always be helpful to the person or group of people you are ministering to, rather than condemning or judgmental.

**DEVELOPING HEARING**

Before you can hear God’s voice on behalf of others, you must develop a personal, intimate relationship with Him, in which you have learned to hear His voice for yourself. We do this by studying scripture, praying and asking the Lord for revelation, and taking time to wait on Him to speak to us.

As He speaks, it will take time for you to learn discernment between what is His voice, and what are your own thoughts and imaginations, as well as attempted distractions and lies from the enemy.

For the Christian, learning to hear the voice of God in your life is absolutely the most important and beneficial thing you can do.

“Angels are all around us. It shouldn’t be a surprise that sometimes they come just to see us. It is also worth noting that you won’t always know they are angels.”
Discussion Questions

๏ Which of the three views do you currently hold about hearing God’s voice: do not believe, believe and practice, or believe but do not practice? Why?

๏ If possible, name a time in your life when you heard the Holy Spirit speaking to you and your obedience led to a breakthrough or victory in your life or ministry.

๏ If you hear God speaking regularly, which of the ways we mention in this chapter does He use to speak to you?

๏ Are there any ways you would like to hear Him speak to you? Pray for that gift, now.
Do you struggle with daily Bible study? You know you should go beyond just reading a passage, or relying on a personal devotional, yet real Bible study seems like a lot of work; not to mention the need of time and resources to get it done. How can anyone make it a daily practice?

In my ministry experience I have served in different capacity, from cell group leader, to youth pastor, to pastor, to my current role in training up ministry leadership. No matter which role I am taking on, the thing I cannot get past, in every case, is the need for Christians to be in the Word of God, daily, and applying the truths of scripture to their lives. It does not matter how mature we become, the Bible must function as the guide.

I want to share with you a simple method of Bible study that can be applied to your daily reading, no matter how much time you have to give, whether ten minutes or two hours. It can also be a great benefit if you don’t have access to a library of Bible commentaries or Bible encyclopedias.

I want to help make the scriptures accessible to you, and it is called the “R.E.A.P. Method.” It is not a method I developed, but is one I was taught a few years ago in my home church in Texas, who also learned it elsewhere. Despite not knowing its source, I will tell you that it is one of the simplest and most beneficial methods you can learn to start studying the Bible on your own.

R – READ

The obvious first step in Bible study is to read a passage of scripture. It is completely up to you and the Holy Spirit where you need to focus your attention each day, but in general you cannot go wrong by beginning with one of the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Also, you can find thousands of Bible readings plans available online, or possibly even in the back of the Bible you use each day. Don’t hesitate to find a reading plan that makes sense for you. Just don’t fall into the trap of shame and condemnation if you miss a day or two.
E – EXAMINE

Anyone can read a passage of scripture. Only those committed to grow from it go further into Bible study! Once you have read the passage of scripture, the real work begins. You must now seek to understand what this scripture is trying to teach. Obviously, the world is full of resources that can help you go deeper and deeper into your understanding of any passage; however, if you are new to Bible study, that is not necessary.

The beauty of the Bible is that it was written by God to men, and is therefore fairly straightforward in what it says. Still, God did not expect us, with the lingering presence of our sin nature drawing us back to untruths, to navigate the Bible alone. He has given us the Holy Spirit to “teach you all things…” (John 14:26). As you seek to understand the scripture, ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your mind to understanding, and to reveal any hidden wisdom within the passage.

Now, as you examine the passage, you should learn to ask these questions about what you have read:

- What does this passage teach about God?
- What does this passage teach about mankind?
- What does this passage teach about sin and salvation?
- What does this passage teach about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- What does this passage teach about new life in Christ?

In the beginning, you may only ask the first two questions about each passage, which will definitely grow your knowledge of truth. Still, as you grow in Bible study, always take your examination deeper with these kinds of probing questions.

A – APPLY

Once you have spent time understanding the text, it is time to apply what you have learned to your own life. Remember, Bible study is not just a practice to gain knowledge. It should be connected to your discipleship and your growth into the image of Christ!
The simplest way to apply what you have learned is to ask yourself, “Based on what I have read, what do I need to do or change in my own life?” Don’t forget to ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance in answering. Once you have finished wrestling with this question, you have taken the first step in application. You now must commit to doing whatever the Holy Spirit and the scriptures are leading you to do. This is how the Word of God transforms you.

**P – PRAY**

The final part of the process is to go back to God in prayer. Even though you have sought the Holy Spirit’s help in each step up to now, this step should pull everything you have done together and bring it back to Him for help living it out.

Begin by thanking God for what He has taught you. Walk through the process of repentance if there is an area of need. Ask for grace and strength to make the necessary changes in your life, as you begin to walk out what you have learned. Finally, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone in your own life who needs to hear what you have just learned. Seek an opportunity to give to someone else, what you have just been given.

That’s it. You have just successfully completed a real, authentic, personal Bible study! Not too bad, right? Now make it a part of your daily walk with the Lord. New levels of glory await (2 Corinthians 3:18).

**Discussion Questions**

- What is the benefit to a person’s discipleship to go beyond simply reading the Bible?
- Why does our examination and application depend on the Holy Spirit’s guidance?
- What would happen in your church if every believer began to live out what is revealed to them through personal time in the scriptures?
I pray the information I have laid out in this book has convinced you that “soul-winning” is not enough. I hope you are ready to become a “disciple-maker” to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord. I also pray that the strategies I have shared will help you to equip your church and ministry for effective discipleship, long into the future.

To close, I want to leave you with a few more resources to help you continue in this journey. These are things that have guided me along the way in my own ministry, and I am happy to point them out to you, for yours.


The book you hold in your hands began as a series of blog posts on my website. I write and share weekly about growing in the Christian life as a disciple and also share Christian leadership principles the Lord is teaching me. I would be honored to have you subscribe.

**“ReadScripture” App for Smartphones - [www.readscripture.org](http://www.readscripture.org)**

Created by Pastor Francis Chan, this app for smartphones gives a bible reading plan that is embedded with daily videos which explain the basics of the Bible and the scriptures for that day. Many pastors have said they learn more from this app than they did in Bible college. I highly recommend you share it with every person you know who has a smartphone.

**Contagious Disciple Making - [https://www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com](https://www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com)**

Contagious Disciple Making, by David L. Watson and Paul D. Watson, is a bestselling book which gives the best discipleship method I have ever seen. Although you may not have access to the book, there are other resources you can download, read, or watch on their website, that will help build on the “Bible-Centered Discipleship” questions we discuss in this book.

**The Verge Network (free resources) - [https://www.vergenetwork.org](https://www.vergenetwork.org)**

This is a network of evangelical pastors in the U.S. who make mission and discipleship central to their ministry. It is free to register as a member of the network, which then
gives you access to dozens of free ebooks, blogs and other resources to help you plan and execute your own ministry’s discipleship process.

**The Alpha Course - [https://alpha.org](https://alpha.org)**

The Alpha Course is possibly the best discipleship curriculum on the market, and it is completely free. If you have the technology, you can use their video teachings, some of which have been specifically designed for use in East Africa. If you do not, you can download the teaching notes and teach (or take) the course yourself.

**Discipleship Tools - [http://www.discipleshiptools.org](http://www.discipleshiptools.org)**

This is another website with free resources and discipleship curriculum which can help you put together your own plan as a church or ministry for discipling your new believers.
PART TWO:

A 6-WEEK DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM FOR NEW BELIEVERS
INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM

While this curriculum is designed to inform and teach new disciples, it is important to understand that the discipleship process is relationship-based, as is our whole salvation; first with God Himself, but then with our mentors, pastors, teachers, and the rest of the body of Christ. It is, therefore, necessary to encourage new disciples to seek fellowship with other believers; and, also, for the discipler to ‘walk through the process’ with the one being discipled.

This is why it is important for those involved in following up with new disciples after their salvation to maintain good contact with them and to attend classes with them, whenever possible.

TEACHING THE CLASS

We do not believe that it takes a specially anointed Bible teacher to disciple a new Christian. The great Commission included teaching new Christians alongside bringing people to salvation and baptizing them, (Matthew 28:18-20). This curriculum has been put together so that anyone can use it to teach new disciples. There are, however, some guidelines set out below to help you to use these notes to their fullest effect.

Before looking at these guidelines, it is necessary to point out that this curriculum is just one part of a greater work of discipling a new believer, and should be used in conjunction with relationship-based ways of bringing disciples to maturity.

10 STEPS TO USING THE 6-WEEK CURRICULUM:

Prepare Yourself:

1. Pray: The Holy Spirit is the Teacher, (John 14 v 26;1John 2 v 27; Eph 1 v 17). Pray for understanding and revelation as you study the Teachers’ Notes.

2. Use the Teachers’ Notes to prayerfully study the topic. Look up the quoted scriptures in your Bible. Meditate on them. Learn and understand the key verses.

3. Make your own notes in your journal, if you keep one, or a note book.

4. Look at the New Disciples’ handouts. Write comments and notes to expand and explain in simple terms what is in the handout. Use what you have learned from studying the Teachers’ Notes. Don’t go too deep!
**During The Session:**

5. Start on time

6. Pray for the Holy Spirit to open everyone’s understanding and reveal the truth that He wants to teach.

7. Keep the session moving, and finish in time.

8. Give each person a handout, and use the handouts as the framework for your session, working through the teaching given in the handout. If you have time, look up some of the verses quoted in the handout. Supplement the teaching with anything the Holy Spirit impressed upon you when you were studying the topic. Use your comments and notes which you made on the handouts to explain and expand points. *Stay simple!*

9. Allow time for questions and discussion. Always try to answer questions from Scripture. If you don’t know the answer, admit it, and promise to find out in time for the next session.

10. Close in prayer and arrange the next session.

**LEARNING FROM THE MASTER**

Different people learn in different ways according to their personalities and upbringing. For this reason, most teachers use a ‘multi-sensory’ approach to teaching, using a variety of approaches and media to reach the maximum number of people.

The 6-week curriculum is a very traditional approach to teaching, which involves a basic transfer of information. Used alone, this is not enough to fulfill the needs of new converts. It must therefore be used as one part of the complete discipling process.

Remember, **Jesus** was the best Discipler who ever lived. We would do well to follow his example in our discipling process:

- **Jesus Demonstrated:** First, the disciples watched Jesus in action.

- **Jesus Explained:** Jesus taught about what they had seen him do or say, and answered their questions.

- **The disciples practiced under Jesus’ supervision:** The disciples began to try it for themselves while Jesus ‘supervised’ them. This gave them a safe environment to make mistakes and sort out problems.
• **Jesus sent them out**: Once they had learned, the disciples were sent out in pairs to minister without Jesus’s oversight.

• **Jesus followed them up**: After their unsupervised ministry times, there was a time of ‘debriefing’, and further teaching by Jesus.

• **Jesus commissioned them**: Once they were ready, Jesus commissioned them to go out on their own, under the direction of the Holy Spirit and teach and disciple others. *(Matthew 28:18-20)*

### HOW DISCIPLES LEARN

1. Some people learn by hearing, while others need to write things down.

2. Some learn by reading and studying.

3. Others must see an action, or have a picture or diagram to understand something.

4. Some can only learn something by actually doing it for themselves. There is a saying that, ‘Practice makes perfect’.

5. Others have to memorize what they learn by verbal repetition. This is often used in formal education; but there is a danger that a person can memorize without understanding. However, there is value in meditating on the Word of God, as the Holy Spirit reveals truths to the meditator.

6. Some people, especially small children and those of a ‘scientific mind’ learn by asking questions. Jesus’ disciples asked him many questions during their walk with him; and the Bible is full of people who asked questions, (David, the prophets, Abraham, even God Himself!)

7. In response to questions, explanations given are a form of teaching; and it would be a poor student who did not learn from another person’s explanation.

8. Finally, a very good way of learning is to teach others. Obviously, we cannot teach what we have not learnt; but by teaching others, we develop and expand our knowledge of a familiar subject as we have to look at it from a different perspective in order to teach someone who may not think in the same way that we do.

*In all of this, always remember that the **Holy Spirit is the Supreme Teacher**, and we must always rely on Him when teaching spiritual truths.*
LESSON 1: SALVATION AND WATER BAPTISM

TEACHERS NOTES

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

INTRODUCTION

Many people perish because of lack of knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6), either because they have not been exposed to the gospel or have heard and chosen to disobey. Others have heard the gospel and made a decision to follow Christ. Such people need to understand the precious prize they got and, by God's grace, preserve it to the end (Mt 10:22, Phil 2:12-13, Rev 2:25). The truth about salvation will set you free indeed (John 8:32).

1. THE NEED FOR SALVATION

Man was created in God's image and given control over the world – Genesis 1:26-28. He was not subject to the law of death. God gave strict instructions for man to keep in order to remain in this position. Man gave in to Satan’s demands and disobeyed God. Communion with God was thus cut off.

Death became the ultimate penalty. The Savior in this sorry state had to be in a better state or circumstance than the saved – can the blind lead the blind (Luke 6:39)? God had to become flesh, be subjected to all the worldly pain, but remain sinless (Hebrews 4:15) and die to restore us. He lost His life to rescue mankind.

We had lost God’s glory (Romans 3:23); Christ died to restore it. He lost His righteousness to make us righteous. He became the bridge between God and man (John 14:6).
2. FUNDAMENTALS OF SALVATION

1. Confession of Christ (*Romans 10:9-10*)
2. Regeneration (which means being born-again) (*John 3:3*)
3. Perseverance (which means enduring to the end) (*Matthew 10:22*)

3. HOW DO WE GET SAVED?

**Reference:** *Romans 10:9-10:* “…if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

**Step 1: Hearing:** Jesus knocks on the door of your heart as you receive messages of salvation (*Revelation 3:20*).

**Step 2: Believing** Eventually you believe and open the door of your heart/life to Him (*Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31*).

You believe in:
- God’s resurrection of the Lord, Jesus Christ
- The power of the Holy Spirit.
- The sovereignty of the Almighty God.
- Salvation through Christ by grace through faith (*Ephesians 2:8-9*)

**Step 3: Confessing:**
- It is by the influence of the Holy Spirit (*1 John 4:2*)
- It is a declaration.
- It carries power and bears a binding effect
- It is an evidence of union with God (*1 John 4:15*)
- It is an outward manifestation of an inward change.
- It is the confession of the unseen and unheard inner man (spirit) and manifests outwardly in speech.
4. WHAT IS SALVATION?

Differences between salvation and religion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALVATION</th>
<th>RELIGION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God seeking man (Luke 19:10)</td>
<td>Man seeking God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on God’s grace (Ephesians2:8-9)</td>
<td>Traditions, norms and customs (Acts 17:22-23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal decision (Romans 10:9-10)</td>
<td>Born into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation is life (John 10:10)</td>
<td>Religious acts without knowledge is death</td>
</tr>
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Salvation is NOT:

- A new religion
- Loss of mind: you actually come to your senses and make conscious decisions (Luke 15:17)
- Escape from reality and responsibility.
- Brain washing or being forced into something you did not want.
- Church registration: you must first commit yourself to Christ and that makes you a member of the Body of Christ, then decide to belong to a local church
- An emotional hype (excitement): as you enjoy salvation, you are also making sure to be self-controlled all the time (1 Cor. 14: 33-34; 1 Peter 1:13)

Definition of salvation:

The act of saving things that have been or are likely to be damaged or lost, especially in a disaster or accident, to manage to rescue things from a difficult situation to stop a bad situation from being a complete failure. In theology: Redemption of man from the bondage of sin and liability to eternal death and conferring on him everlasting happiness.

Salvation IS:

- God’s gracious gift to the one who believes.
- A restoration to God into a new and intimate relationship
- It is a translation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and a transformation of the whole man – being children and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15-17; Colossians 1:13-14)
Salvation according to the BIBLE:

It is viewed as deliverance from:

- Sin (Matt. 1:21; John 3:5)
- Uncleaness (Ezekiel 36:25-29)
- The devil (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15)
- The wrath of God (Romans 5:9; 1 Thess 1:1-10)
- This present evil world (Galatians 1:4)
- Enemies (Luke 1:71-74)
- Eternal death (John 3:16-17)

5. FINDING ASSURANCE OF FAITH

Having confidence in our relationship with Christ:

- You have been completely forgiven and accepted by God.
- Only Christ’s death on the cross is sufficient to provide this proper relationship with God.

Understanding Ephesians 2:8-9:

- **GRACE**- Unmerited favor, an undeserved gift. You cannot earn salvation by good works (church attendance, good deeds, giving money, etc.).
- **SAVED**- Rescued, saved from disaster—the penalty of death.
- **FAITH**- To believe in, trust, rely upon. Faith is not a feeling or an intellectual agreement with certain beliefs. It is an act of the will to trust in and rely on God and His Word. You stop relying on your own ability to get to heaven (Philippians 4:13; 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24) You choose to trust in Jesus’ death to pay for your sins.
- **Trust In God; Do Not Depend On Your Feelings (Prov. 3:5-6)** Your relationship with Christ is based on unchanging facts not on feelings that can change daily. The Christian lives by faith, relying upon God and His Word.
- **God’s Word is truth; if it says it in God’s Word it is true**
- Faith is trusting in God and His Word
• Exercise faith; Believe in God’s Word

• Feelings will follow

WATER BAPTISM

WHAT IS WATER BAPTISM?
The word Baptism comes from the Greek ‘baptizo’:

• Meaning implies immersion, dipping or submerging

• Interpreted as going under water

• Hebrews 6:2: Foundation for Christian living

Biblical basis:

• Mark 1:4-5 — Used by John Baptist for repentance

• Luke 3:7-6: — Sign of conviction and observance of the teachings of a teacher

• Mark 1:5; Luke 3:8 — John only baptized those who confessed their sins and bore fruits of repentance.

• Matthew 28:18-20 — Jesus commanded that we should “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

• John 14:23 — our obedience is a sign of our love for Him.

Therefore:

• It is a sign of repentance

• It is a sign of our decision to follow Jesus’ teachings

• It is a command of Jesus Himself

• It is an act of obedience that shows we love him

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38 — Water baptism is for the one who has repented of his or her sins, and believes in Jesus Christ with all of his or her heart. (Example: The Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:34-38.)
Acts 16:31-32; Acts 8:34-35 — Repentance, faith, and understanding are required prior to being baptized

Significance of Water Baptism

• It is an expression of commitment to Jesus Christ.
• It is a declaration to the world and other believers that one has left the kingdom of darkness and has chosen to enter the Kingdom of God.
• It is identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection:
  • Romans 6:3-6 — Sign of death of our old nature
  • Romans 6:3 — Identification with the death of Christ
  • Romans 6:4 — Sign of our new birth
  • Romans 6:5 — Identification with the resurrection of Christ
  • Colossians 2:11-12 — Sign of being set apart for Jesus

Examples of water baptism in the Bible

• Matthew 3:12-15 — Jesus baptized by John Baptist in River Jordan
• Acts 2:41 — 3000 people on day of Pentecost
• Acts 8:9-13 — Many people, including Simon the Magician
• Acts 8:38 — Ethiopian eunuch
• Acts 9:18 — Paul after conversion on road to Damascus
• Acts 16:14-15 — Lydia and her household

When should one be baptized?

1. All biblical salvations happen after salvation; not before.
2. At Pentecost they were baptized the same day that salvation was confessed.
3. Paul was baptized 3 days after his conversion on the road to Damascus.

HOW SHOULD BAPTISM BE DONE?

• Matthew 28:19 — “In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”
• The full significance of baptism, (ie identification with the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ), can only be complete by total immersion.
LESSON 1: SALVATION HANDOUT

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Many people perish because of lack of knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6), either because they have not been exposed to the gospel or have heard and chosen to disobey. Others have heard the gospel and made a decision to follow Christ. Such people need to understand the precious prize they got and, by God's grace, preserve it to the end (Mt 10:22, Phil 2:12-13, Rev 2:25). The truth about salvation will set you free indeed (John 8:32).

THE NEED FOR SALVATION: Man was created in God's image and given control over the world. He was not subject to the law of death. God set boundaries for man, but man gave in to Satan and disobeyed God. Relationship with God was spoiled.

Death became the ultimate penalty. In this sorry state, man needed a Saviour who had not broken the relationship by sinning. God had to become flesh, be subjected to all the worldly pain, but remain sinless (Heb 4:15) and die to restore us. He lost His life to rescue man.

We had lost God's glory (Rom 3:23); Christ died to restore it. He lost His righteousness to make us righteous. He became the bridge between God and man (John 14:6).

HOW DO WE GET SAVED? (Romans 10:9-10)
Step 1: Hearing: Jesus knocks on the door of your heart as you receive messages of salvation (Revelation 3:20)
Step 2: Believing Eventually you believe and open the door of your heart/life to Him (Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31).
You believe in:
- God's resurrection of the Lord, Jesus Christ
- The power of the Holy Spirit.
- The sovereignty of the Almighty God.
- Salvation through Christ by grace through faith (Eph 2:8,9)
Step 3: Confessing:
- It is by the influence of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:2)
- It is a declaration.
- It carries power and bears a binding effect
- It is an outward manifestation of an inward change.
- It is the confession of the unseen and unheard inner man (spirit) and manifests outwardly in speech.

WHAT IS SALVATION? The act of saving things that have been or are likely to be damaged or lost, to stop a bad situation from being a complete failure. In theology: Redemption of man from the bondage of sin and liability to eternal death and conferring on him everlasting happiness.

What salvation is NOT:
- A new religion
- Loss of mind: you actually come to your senses and make conscious decisions (Luke 15:17)
- Escape from reality and responsibility.
- Brain washing or being forced into something you did not want.
- Church registration: committing to Christ makes you a member of the Body of Christ, then you can join a local church
- An emotional hype (excitement): as you enjoy salvation, you are also making sure to be self-controlled all the time

What salvation IS:
- God's gracious gift to the one who believes, and restoration to God into a new and intimate relationship as children of God, and joint heirs with Christ (Rom 8:15-17; Col 1:13-14)
- It is a translation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and a transformation of the whole man

Salvation according to the BIBLE is deliverance from:
- Sin (Matt. 1:21; John 3:5) and Uncleanliness (Ezekiel 36:25-29)
- The devil (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15) and this present evil world (Galatians 1:4)
- The wrath of God (Romans 5:9; 1 Thes 1:1-10) and eternal death (John 3:16-17)

ASSURANCE OF FAITH: Having confidence in our relationship with Christ
- You have been completely forgiven and accepted by God
- Only Christ's death on the cross is sufficient to provide this proper relationship with God.
LESSON 1: BAPTISM HANDOUT

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  • The full significance of baptism, (ie identification with the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ), can only be complete by total immersion.
LESSON 2: GROWING UP IN CHRIST

TEACHERS NOTES

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

Every living thing goes through various stages of growth. Growth is depends upon many factors. If all the necessary factors are in place, there is rapid growth. If nothing is supplied, the living thing will starve and die. As Christians, we are living spiritual beings that need spiritual food to grow. This growth should be evident first to God (bearing fruit Jn 15:1-16) and then other people around us (1 Timothy 4:15). No-one can grow on your behalf. They can only support your growth (1 Corinthians 14:20; Hebrews 5:11-14, Hebrews 6:1-3)

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW BIRTH

The new birth (regeneration) is a spontaneous spiritual experience that restores an individual to the right living relationship with his Maker, the Holy One and only God through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15) Membership to God’s family is by grace alone but one must willingly accept it.

Before a person experiences the new birth, he is dead in his/her transgressions (Ephesians 2:1). As a result, he cannot grow spiritually or respond to God’s love. When a person experiences the new birth, he becomes alive through the operation of faith in Christ Jesus (John 3:3-5; Ephesians 2:2-6). As a result, he can grow in spirit and respond to God’s love. The new birth, therefore, is the passing out of death into life, the impartation of life to men dead through trespasses and sins (1John 3:14).

The new birth also means the renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2) and the impartation of a Godly nature upon the new Christian (2 Peter1:4). The new birth is totally a work of God (John 1:13; Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13; James 1:17-18; 1 Peter 1:3)

RESULTS OF THE NEW BIRTH

• The regenerated (born again) person is a temple of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God dwells in him (1Corinthians 3:16, 6:19)

• He is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit (Romans 8:5-9)

• He is free from the law sin and death (Romans 8:2)
• He is being made anew into the likeness of his Creator in knowledge (Colossians 3:10)
• He believes that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 5:1)
• He overcomes sin and the world (1 John 3:9, 5:4)
• He practices righteousness (1 John 2:29)
• He loves the brethren (1 John 4:7, 3:14)
• Through regeneration and renewing of the mind, the regenerated person is already saved (Titus 3:5)

THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH
No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again (John 3:3) in the spirit

THE MANNER OF THE NEW BIRTH
• It is God’s work, having its origin entirely in God’s will (1 John 1:13)
• God begets people anew through the cleansing, quickening and renewing work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-5)
• The word of truth is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in regeneration (James 1:18; Colossians 1:5; 1 Peter 1:23-25)
• Christians, by the preaching of the gospel are used by God for the regeneration of believers (1 Corinthians 4:15)
• We become children of God through believing in or receiving Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; Galatians 3:26)

As the gospel comes to us; God speaks through it to summon us to Himself (effective calling) and to give us a new spiritual life (regeneration) so that we are able to respond in faith. Effective calling therefore means God, the Fathers, speaking powerfully to us and regeneration is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit working powerfully in us to make us alive.

THE NATURE OF MAN
To understand the new birth, it is necessary to understand the Biblical concepts of man (1 Thes 5:23; Heb 4:12; Eccl 12:7)

Man is three-fold being with:

• Spirit:
  • Intuition-supernatural knowledge and perception
• Conscience-knowledge of good and evil
• Devotion- willful surrender to an object of worship.

• Soul:
  • Will-decision making capacity
  • Mind-capacity to think or reason
  • Emotions-feelings and affections

• Body:
  • Flesh
  • Blood
  • Bones

The new birth takes place in the spirit, which influences the soul and the body.

WHAT IS GROWTH IN CHRIST?

• It is the process of establishing the influence of the new spirit man over the soul and body (1 Peter 2: 2-3)

• It also means to increase in one’s knowledge of Christ, love for Him and obedience to Him. This is the reason He emphasized this in the Greatest Commandment. This is also the essence of eternal life (John 17:3)

• Growing in Christ means building a loving relationship with Him, and this journey is a life-long process to maturity.

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HOW CAN YOU GROW IN CHRIST?

Growth in Christ depends on developing both your vertical relationship with God and your horizontal relationship with people.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD:

For any relationship to grow, communication is very important. A Christian communicates with God through prayer and God communicates to the Christian using His Word, the Bible. A consistent devotional life is important for growth in Christ.
This is the practice of meeting God through **Bible-study** and **prayer**. Set aside time and a place for daily, personal Bible study and prayer.

**• Bible study:** A good book to begin with is the book of John.

**• Prayer:** You can talk to God in prayer- sharing your thoughts, needs and desires and those of others. This is a solution to worry *(Philippians 4:6-7).* As you share your heart with God, give thanks and see answers to prayer, your faith and love will grow.

**• Hearing God’s voice:**

- Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice and they follow me” *(John 10:27)*
- In obedience to His voice, we find peace, protection and provision for abundant life.
- It requires an intimate relationship to hear His voice.

**RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS:**

Growth in Christ also depends on your relationship with people. This involves communication with Christians through fellowship and communicating your faith in Christ with non-Christians through witnessing.

**• Fellowship:** God created us to belong to the fellowship of a big Christian family. To grow to maturity, you need to share your Christian experience with others who love God and walk with Him and likewise allow them to share with you. God has designed the local church to be the principal means of providing Christian fellowship and teaching from God’s Word.

**• Witnessing:** This is the way of life that proclaims to others what one has experienced. Witnessing involves sharing faith in Christ with the aim of proving the claims of our Lord and leading the hearers to saving faith in Jesus. Witnessing facilitates growth in that the witness is challenged to have a solid faith in Jesus and live a life that qualifies him/her to be a witness.

**• Discipleship:** The impartation of teachings, truth or beliefs of a leader to a follower over a period of time. It is being transformed into Christ-likeness. One learns by hearing and practicing what is being passed on. Discipleship is the only process through which a believer will grow in faith. The discipler must show Christ’s life to his/her discipler *(1 Corinthians 11:1)*.
To be Jesus’ disciple, one should:

• Belong to a local church.
• Live by the standards of God's Word.
• Surrender to the Lordship of Christ.
• Love the community.
• Be committed to fulfilling the Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:34-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).
• Go through the hands of mature Christians to grow.

Definition of Character: That part of a person that distinguishes him/her from other people. Usually this is displayed when one is under pressure. Character has to do with one’s thoughts, values, motivations, attitudes, feelings and actions.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR GROWTH IN CHRIST?

Some people think that they are totally responsible for their spiritual growth. Others believe that God causes them to grow no matter what they do.

• Both God and you have a part to play in your growth process.

• Fully obey Him so that your growth is not hindered (John 15:1-17, Philippians 2:12-13, 1 Timothy 4:7-8)

• Be like the good loam soil that received the sower’s seed and yielded a great harvest for Him (Matthew 13:1-23)

• God helps you in your weaknesses as you co-operate with Him (Isaiah 64:8, 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, Hebrews 4:15-16)

• You need the input of responsible or spiritually mature people in your growth process e.g. pastors, parents, counselors, good friends, etc. Their help should only be additional to your determination to consistently do the things that have been mentioned and others you know and/or will learn.

God’s love is unconditional; it does not depend on your level of spiritual maturity (Jeremiah 31:3). However, your progress towards maturity will help you live as God intended you to (John 10:10) and also help others to grow.
LESSON 2: GROWING UP IN CHRIST HANDOUT

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Understanding the new birth: The new birth is a spiritual experience that restores a person to the right living relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15) Membership to God’s family is by grace alone but we must be willing accept it. Before we are born again, we are dead in our transgressions (Ephesians 2:1). As a result, we cannot grow spiritually or respond to God’s love. When we are born again, we become alive through faith in Christ Jesus (John 3:3-5; Ephesians 2:2-6). As a result, we can grow in spirit and respond to God’s love. The new birth, therefore, is the passing out of death into life, the giving of life to men dead through trespasses and sins (1 John 3:14). The new birth also means the renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2) and the giving of a Godly nature upon the new Christian (2 Peter 1:4). The new birth is totally a work of God (John 1:13; Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13; James 1:17-18; 1 Peter 1:3)

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The necessity of the new birth: No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again (John 3:3). People must be born again because all that they get by natural birth is flesh (John 3:5-6).

The manner of the new birth: It is God’s work, having its origin entirely in God’s will (1 John 1:13). God gives new birth through the cleansing, quickening, and renewing work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-5). We become children of God through believing in or receiving Jesus Christ (1 John 1:12-13; Galatians 3:26). As the gospel comes to us; God speaks through it to bring us to Himself and to give us a new spiritual life so that we are able to respond in faith.

GROWING UP IN CHRIST: All new-born babies need to grow until they become mature adults. This is also true of everyone who receives new birth in Jesus. Growth in Christ means building a loving relationship with Him, and this journey to maturity is a lifelong process. Trusting God over time leads to spiritual maturity. It depends on developing both your relationship with God and your relationship with people.

Relationship with God: For any relationship to grow, communication is very important. A Christian communicates with God through prayer and God communicates to the Christian using His Word, the Bible. A consistent devotional life is important for growth in Christ. This is the practice of meeting God through Bible study and prayer. Set aside time and a place for daily, personal Bible study and prayer.
- **Bible study**: A good book to begin with is the book of John.
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God’s love is unconditional; it does not depend on your level of spiritual maturity (Jeremiah 31:3). However, your progress towards maturity will help you live as God intended you to (John 10:10) and also help others to grow.
LESSON 3: CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

TEACHERS NOTES

THEME VERSE: Hebrews 10:24-25: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

BIBLICAL MEANING OF ‘CHURCH’:

Comes from Greek word ‘ekklesia’; means ‘the called out’:

- Colossians 1:12-13 — it is a group of people called out from the world into the Kingdom of God

- Hebrews 5:8-9; Acts 2:47 — it is made up of those who have believed on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and chosen to follow him in obedience

- 1 Corinthians 12:27 — those who believe in Jesus then become the Body of Christ also referred to as the Church

The church is not:

- A building
- A social organization
- A political organization

WORLD-WIDE AND LOCAL CHURCH

The Bible talks about the church in 2 ways: worldwide and local.

- Matthew 16:18 — Jesus said, “I will build my church …” – the worldwide church

- Romans 16:16 — Paul referred to local congregations as part of the church. Believers who gather into congregations in a locality are a local church which is part of the world-wide church of Jesus Christ

THE CHURCH IS:

- The Body of Christ with Christ as the Head. (Ephesians 5:23,30; Ephesians 1:22-23)
- Household of God: (1 Timothy 3:15; Galatians 3:26 – 27; 1 John 5:19)
  - House of God is the church
  - We are children of God
God is our Father and we are His children

Vineyard of God: (John 15:1-8)
- He is the vine and we are the branches
- The branches, (Christians) must bear fruit

BIBLICAL MEANING OF FELLOWSHIP:

Comes from the Greek word ‘koinonia,’ which means ‘to hold something in common’

(1 Corinthians 1:9; Philippians 2:1).

Biblical fellowship is:
- Rooted in the relationship between believer and Jesus Christ
- Extends to relationship with one another
- Being together and doing God’s will together

Hebrews 10:25 — Believers should be part of a local church where they meet regularly for:
- Worship
- Fellowship
- Teaching
- Prayer/ministry for themselves and others
- Service to God
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LESSON 4: COMMUNION WITH GOD: BIBLE AND PRAYER

TEACHERS NOTES

Man was created to fellowship with God. However, our fellowship with Him was marred by the Fall in *Genesis* 3. Through Jesus Christ’s finished work, however, we are able to speak to God and He speaks back to us. This lesson is about how we can enrich our fellowship with God so that we can be His friends and be all that He created us to be.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is the Word of God. It is a record of how God has related with man and how He intends to relate with man. The Bible is divinely inspired (God-breathed) (*2 Timothy* 3:16). It is a collection of books recognized and received by the church.

THE COMPILATION OF THE BIBLE:

The Bible was compiled from a wide range of writings that already existed. The selection of the books was on the basic test of inspiration known as the CANON which means “measuring rod.” The selected books are known as the canonical books. The writings that did not meet the test are known as the Apocrypha, meaning hidden or concealed books.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE:

The authority of the Bible is God Himself. All that the Bible could ever be or accomplish is based on who the Lord was and is and is to be (*Colossians* 1:15-18).

GROWING IN THE WORD

- God’s word can change your life and the world’s history
- The word transforms our thinking (*Romans* 12:2)
- The word of God is His will. He will not say anything contrary to it. Read and you will discover His will.

WHAT MUST I DO WITH THE WORD?

- Read it daily, research, commit scriptures to memory and meditate about the Word (*Joshua* 1:8)
- Change your confession, confess the Word (*Mark* 11:24; *Job* 22:28; *Proverbs* 10:20-21; *Proverbs* 18:20-21; *James* 3)
• Act out what God says in His Word (*James 1:22-25*)

**HOW TO READ THE BIBLE**

• Use a prayer guide, Bible guide, etc.

• You can have a plan to read through the Bible, but you should always let the Holy Spirit lead you on how to begin.

• Consistency and regularity in reading the Bible are of great importance.

• Pick the portion of scripture you are going to read and ask yourself the following questions:
  - To whom was this portion addressed?
  - Who is the author?
  - Why was it written to them?
  - What is the message in this portion communicating to the people in that period and for us today?
  - What event led to this message? (You will have to read some portion before the passage you are reading to find out.)
  - What is the message? (You will have to read a bit further than the present portion to understand this passage in its totality.)
  - How can I apply this word in my life and that of others?

**PRAYER**

Prayer is defined as talking to, communicating with, hearing and receiving from God. It is yielding to God that He might accomplish His will on earth (*1 John 5:14-15*). Since we are spiritual beings, our communication with God takes place in the spiritual realm.

**WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?**

• We were commanded to do so.

• Jesus Himself prayed (*Luke 5:16; Hebrews 5:7*) and continues to do so (*Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25*)

• To find out God’s will (*Rom. 8:27*)

• To stand in the gap for others, especially when they cannot effectively pray for themselves (*Psalm 35:13-14; Ezekiel 22:30*)
• Prayer is fellowship and communion between God and His children (*Proverbs 15:8*)

• To overcome temptations (*Luke 22:41-46*)

• Protection in service (*Romans 15:31*)

• Prayer brings results (*James 5:16-18*)

• Prayer brings glory to God (*John 14:13*)

• Prayer is spiritual nurture for the growing soul.

**TO WHOM DO WE PRAY?**

• To the Father in the name of Jesus through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?**

• Without ceasing (all the time and everywhere) (*1Thessalonians 5:17*)

• Time alone with God (*Matthew 6:5-15*)

• Group/corporate prayer (*Acts 4:23-31*)

**HOW DO WE PRAY?**

• The Lord enjoys listening to us as we pray.

• He also loves to talk back to us. This is what maintains our fellowship with Him

**CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER**

• Abiding in God (*John 15:7*): in other words, be totally yielded to God and His word. Ask specifically and with good motives (*Nehemiah 2:1-9; James 4:2-3*)

• Believing (faith): (*Matthew 17:20; 21:22; James 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:1-6*) Faith comes from God by His grace and Word (*Romans 10:17*)

• Persistence in expectation (*Romans 5:5; Psalm 37:3-5; Luke 11:1-13; Isaiah 62:6-7*)

**FACETS OF PRAYER**

• Waiting on the Lord

• Petitions

• Spiritual warfare

• Thanksgiving

• Praise and worship

• Confession and repentance
DAILY DEVOTIONS QUIET-TIMES

• This is the tender and reverent **listening** at the feet of wisdom or true and acceptable idleness. It is an idleness that results in renewed activity.

• It is best to have your quiet time in the morning, to wash your thinking and begin the day with Christ. You can choose any hour of your convenience, but make sure you have time with God daily.

• The quiet-time produces a quiet heart which becomes a quiet confidence and quiet power.

• Only as our tap root goes deep down into God and draws sustenance from Him do we truly live.

ESTABLISHING A DEVOTION AND QUIET-TIME

• Choose a place (Mark 1:35). It should be quiet enough without distractions for you to have quality quiet time.

• Choose a definite time of day to do this daily (Daniel 6:10)

• Discipline yourself (endeavor to maintain the quiet time).

• Guard it. Take it to be of paramount importance.

HOW TO CONDUCT QUIET TIME

• Read the Bible – ask the Holy Spirit to guide you through the process.

• Praise and worship—enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise (Psalm 100).

• Prayers—talk to God and expect Him to talk to you.

• Have a note book to note down impressions/insights the Lord brings to you.

HINDRANCES TO A DEVOTIONAL LIFE

• Disorderly lives

• Pressure of work

• Sin

• Laziness and procrastination

HEARING GOD SPEAK

Types of voices we may hear:

• The voice of our consciences
• The devil’s voice
• God’s voice
• Voice of the world

HOW TO TUNE IN TO GOD’S VOICE:

• Deal with sin and every attitude of sin (Romans 12:1-2)

• Desire and be ready to hear from Him all the time (Psalm 63:1-7; Ephesians 5:17)
  He desires to speak to you (Amos 3:7; John 10:27)

• Abide in His presence (Psalm 91:1-4; John 15:7): learning to listen is not a one day experience. It is a journey we walk with God. Cultivate friendship with God. Abraham was God’s friend and so He revealed to him future events (Genesis 18:17; Isaiah 41:8)

• Ask him to speak/reveal to you what you don’t know (Deuteronomy 29:29; 1 Samuel 3:10; Daniel 2:22; Jeremiah 33:3; Luke 24:30-32; Ephesians 1:1-18)

• Use your measure of faith to believe that the Lord has spoken to you. Act on His word (Romans 12:3; James 2:18-19)

• Get a quiet place and purpose to hear Him (Psalm 27:14; 46:10) Moses went to the mountain. Jesus used to withdraw to lonely places to commune with God (Luke 5:16)

• Don’t subject the Lord to a method. He speaks in many ways (1Kings 19:11-13; Job 33:14-15)

• Purpose to obey Him when He speaks (Psalm 95:8-11)

WAYS GOD SPEAKS:

• His Word (2Timothy 3:16)

• Circumstances (Isaiah 30:20-21)

• Vision and dreams (Genesis 37; Job 33:14-15; Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 2:12-13)

• Other believers (Isaiah 50:4)

• Through anything e.g. Balaam’s donkey (Numbers 22:24-31) He can use Christian literature, radios, TV’s sermons, etc.

• An audible voice (Exodus 19:20-21; 1Samuel 3; Luke 3:22)

• The Holy Spirit guiding us into all truth (John 16:13-15)
LESSON 4: COMMUNION WITH GOD: BIBLE AND PRAYER HANDOUT

Man was created to fellowship with God. However, our fellowship with Him was marred by the Fall in Genesis 3. Through Jesus Christ’s finished work, however, we are able to speak to God and He speaks back to us.

THE BIBLE is the Word of God. It is a record of how God has related with man and how He intends to relate with man. It is divinely inspired (God–breathed) (2 Tim. 3:16). It is a collection of books recognized and received by the church.

• Compilation of the Bible: It was compiled from a wide range of writings that already existed. The selection of the books was on the basic test of inspiration known as the CANON which means “measuring rod.”

• The authority of the Bible: The authority of the Bible is the Lord. (Colossians 1:15-18)

• Growing in the Word
  • God’s word can change your life and the word’s history. It transforms our thinking (Romans 12:2). The word of God is His will. He will not say anything contrary to it. Read and you will discover His will.

• What must I do with the Word?
  • Read it daily, research, commit scriptures to memory and meditate about the Word (Joshua 1:8)
  • Change your confession, confess the Word (Mark 11:24)
  • Act out what God says in His Word (James 1:22-25)

• How to read the Bible
  • Use a prayer guide, Bible guide, etc.; or you can have a plan to read through the Bible. Let the Spirit lead you on how to begin. Consistency and regularity in reading the Bible are of paramount importance.

PRAYER is defined as talking to, communicating with, hearing and receiving from God. It is yielding to God that He might accomplish His will on earth (1 John 5:14-15). Since we are spiritual beings, our communication with God takes place in the spiritual realm.

• Why should we pray?
  • We were commanded to do so.
  • Jesus Himself prayed (Luke 5:16; Hebrews 5:7) and continues to do so (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25)
  • To find out God’s will (Rom. 8:27)
  • Prayer is fellowship and communion between God and His children (Proverbs 15:8)
  • To overcome temptations (Luke 22:41-46)
  • Prayer brings results (James 5:16-18)
  • Prayer is spiritual nurture for the growing soul.

• How should we pray?
  • Always pray to the Father in the name of Jesus through the ministry of the Holy Spirit
  • We should pray without ceasing -all the time and everywhere (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
  • The Lord enjoys listening to us as we pray. He also loves to talk back to us. This is what maintains our fellowship with Him

• Confidence in prayer
  • Be totally yielded to God and His word. Ask specifically and with good motives (Nehemiah 2:1-9; James 4:2-3)
  • Believing (faith): (Matthew 17:20; 21:22; James 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:1-6) Faith comes from God by His grace and Word (Romans 10:17)
  • Persistence in expectation (Romans 5:5; Psalm 37:3-5; Luke 11:1-13; Isaiah 62:6-7)

• Establishing a devotion/quiet-time
  • Choose a place (Mark 1:35). It should be quiet enough without distractions for you to have quality quiet time.
  • Choose a definite time of day to do this daily (Daniel 6:10)
  • Discipline yourself (endeavor to maintain the quiet time).

• How to conduct quiet time
  • Read the Bible – ask the Holy Spirit to guide you through the process.
  • Praise and worship—enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise (Psalm 100).
  • Prayers—talk to God and expect Him to talk to you.

Ways God speaks: His Word (2 Timothy 3:16); Circumstances; Vision and dreams (Genesis 37; Matthew 2:12-13); Other believers; Christian literature, radios, TV’s sermons, etc.; An audible voice (Exodus 19:20-21; Luke 3:22); The Holy Spirit guiding us into all truth (John 16:13-15)

How to tune in to God’s voice:
• Get a quiet place and purpose to hear Him (Psalm 27:14; 46:10), and obey Him when He speaks (Psalm 95:8-11)
• Deal with sin and every attitude of sin (Romans 12:1-2)
• Desire and be ready to hear from Him all the time (Psalm 63:1-7; Ephesians 5:17) He desires to speak to you (Amos 3:7; John 10:27)
• Live in His presence (Psalm 91:1-4; John 15:7): learning to listen is a journey we walk with God. Cultivate friendship with God.
• Ask him to speak/reveal to you what you don’t know (Luke 24:30-32; Ephesians 1:1-18)
• Use your faith to believe that the Lord has spoken to you. Act on His word (Rom 12:3; James 2:18-19)
LEsson 5: LIVING a HOLy LiFE

TEACHERs NOTES

THEME VERSE: 1 Peter 1:14-15: “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct”

Our God is holy. He cannot tolerate sin (1 Peter 1:15). In the Old Testament, Aaron had a label on his turban (garment covering the head) labeled HOLY TO THE LORD (Exodus 28: 36-38).

In the New Testament, every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:9) and needs to be holy. Without holiness, no-one shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). We are called to surrender our struggles with sin to God (Micah 7:8-10; Romans 7:14-25).

In order to understand holiness, we need to understand God’s work in our lives and our appropriate response to this divine work.

GOD’S WORKS

**SALVATION** *(Ephesians 2:8-9)*: God has made it possible for man to be fully restored to Him through the sacrificial death of Jesus. By this salvation, a new and living relationship is established between God and the believer. This salvation is accompanied by the following works:

**RIGHTEOUSNESS** *(Romans 4:18-25, 2 Corinthians 5:21)*: Because of man’s faith, God declares him righteous and man is given a right standing before God. This is a new position before the Lord God.

**PURIFICATION** *(Luke 22:54-62, 2 Corinthians 5:14, Galatians 5:19-23)*: The Lord, through His Word and blood, cleanses man from all unrighteousness. Man is cleansed from all that defiles spirit, soul and body. This work rebuilds the foundations and checks what is in man’s life i.e. spirit, motivation and attitude. The Lord replaces the corrupt spirit with an excellent spirit, selfish motives with love for God and evil desires/attitudes with Godly ones.

**ADOPTION (Membership in God’s family)** *(Galatians 4:6-7)*: The Lord declares those who believe in Him to be His Sons. Those who are not adopted are children of wrath and sons of disobedience *(Ephesians 2:2-3)*. This adoption is purely a work of faith on the part of the believer *(Galatians 3:23-26)*. Because they are His sons, He places His
Spirit on them as a seal of sonship (Ephesians 1:13-14). His presence in the believer makes him holy, unique and distinct from others. The Lord calls and chooses a believer for a divine purpose.

Benefits of adoption:

- We get a Father who loves and cares for us more than even human fathers, and an inheritance in heaven (Romans 8:17, 1 Peter 1:4)
- As children, our Father forgives us just like humans parents forgive their children (Matthew 6:9-12; 1 John 1:8-10; 3:19-22).
- We are led by the Spirit (Rom 8:14) and the Lord disciplines us for our own good (Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:7-10).
- We get a wonderful family to relate with (Ephesians 2:19; 1 Timothy 5:1-2)
- We imitate our Father (Ephesians 5:1; 1 Peter 1:14-16)

SANCTIFICATION (1Peter 5:10, John 15:2): The Lord sets a believer apart and trains him to become the right channel for God’s blessings. This involves allowing the believer to go through fiery situations and pressures that build the character of God in him/her.

JUSTIFICATION (right legal standing before God) (Ephesians 1:13-14): The Lord declares the believer free from the penalty of offences committed and this is on the basis of Jesus’ death on the cross. The Lord sets His seal of approval upon those who believe in Him. The believer is released from the guilt and fear due to transgressions (sins) and enters into the love and divine protection of God. If the justified believer is determined to walk in the Spirit, he has no fear of any condemnation from God (Romans 8:1). Whereas regeneration is an act of God in us, justification is a judgment of God in respect to us. The analogy here is of a surgeon and of a judge, respectively.

Defining justification and sanctification

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MAN’S RESPONSE

Because of what the Lord has done and is doing in the life of the believer as indicated above, the believer responds to this work of grace. It is in response to this work of God that the believer lives a holy life. Living a holy life involves:

- Adopting a lifestyle of doing what is right before God based on the new relationship with Him.
- Surrendering one’s selfish ambitions and vain-glory and living in accordance to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Respecting the presence and call of God on one’s life and in such a way that proves the presence of a Holy God in him/her, leading to bearing the image of Jesus in every aspect of life.
- Accepting the freedom from fear and using that freedom to demonstrate the power and love of God.
- Submitting to the authority of Jesus and therefore carrying the name of the Lord in such a way as exalts Him. (Philippians 2: 10-11).

STAGES OF HOLINESS: It is important to note that living a holy life is a journey of faith with the following phases:

- Instant Phase (Romans 10:9-10): The moment we put our faith in Jesus, we are made holy by the miracle of salvation.
- Continuous Phase (Philippians 2:12-13): The holiness attained through salvation is daily demonstrated by a life that is acceptable before God because of faith in Jesus.
- Completion Phase (Matthew 10:22): The Lord is coming back for those whose lives are holy in His sight. He will take them away from the presence of sin and set them in His holy presence. In His presence, the work of salvation is completed.

WHY LIVE A HOLY LIFE?

- We are the Lord’s temples and He is holy – 1Cor. 3:16, 6:19.
- To reflect the heavenly nature – 1John 2: 15-17.
- To set a good example for non-believers – Matt. 5: 13-16.
- To give the devil no chance to overcome us – 1 Peter 5:8-9.
• Holiness and obedience makes it possible for God to work in our lives – Isaiah 1:18-20 and 59:1-2, Heb 12:14.
• The Lord chooses us and calls us to holiness (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:14-16).

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLINESS
• Hear, understand and respond to the call to holiness through repentance.

HOLINESS BEGINS WITH GOD:
• God is holy – it is His nature and character.
• He doesn’t conform to standards; He is the standard.
• He calls us to God-centered living.

UNDERSTANDING THE THREE TYPES OF PEOPLE:

THE NATURAL MAN (1 Corinthians 2:14): This is the person who has never committed his/her life to the Lord, and cannot understand the things of the Spirit because the Spirit cannot in-dwell him/her. He/she is separated from God and cannot be holy. The Lord reaches out to him through messages about salvation, and when conviction occurs and the person commits his/her life to the Lord, then he/she can cross over to the second category.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN (1 Corinthians 2:15): This person is born again and walks in holiness and a surrendered life. This does not mean that he does not fall into sin, but is quick to repent and not repeat sins. The Holy Spirit is fully at work in his life because his heart is fully surrendered to God.

CARNAL/FLESHLY MAN (1 Corinthians 3:1-3): This person is born again but leads a double life (neither cold nor hot; Revelation 3:15-20). He lives to satisfy the desires of the flesh and often does not feel conviction about what he is doing because of persistent disobedience. He is stagnant – not progressing in the spiritual things.

When we accept Christ, we become children of God and so have a relationship with Him. However, this does not guarantee constant fellowship, unless we purpose to live in holiness.
WHAT IS SIN?

Sin means rebellion against God, i.e., doing what we want instead of what God wants both in actions and attitudes. Actions like stealing, lying, immoral behavior are only the results of an attitude of sin.

CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

• Answers to our prayers will be hindered – Psalm 66:18
• For non-believers, it prevents them from having a relationship with God

REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

WHAT IS REPENTANCE: Repentance is turning away from the way of wickedness and turning to the way of righteousness in the Lord Jesus. True repentance involves the following:

• Change of mind i.e. changing one’s way of thinking in regard to sin, the world and God.
• Submitting to the will of God i.e. yielding one’s will to obey the Lord God.
• Conviction and contrition of heart; feeling guilty and truly sorry for sins; Desire to be delivered immediately (Isaiah 57:15)


THE BASIS FOR GOD’S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS: Forgiveness means pardoning someone or excusing them for a fault or an offense. All believers sin and break fellowship with God; therefore, there is need to know how to experience God’s love and forgiveness.

• 1 Peter 3:18 – Christ’s death is the basis for our forgiveness that brings us into a proper relationship and fellowship with God.
• Colossians 2:13-14 — All our sins were paid for in full and so the whole list is completely erased.

THE PROCESS OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE:

INDIVIDUAL SIN: Every Christian needs to deal with sin on a moment by moment basis in order to maintain fellowship with God. When the Lord points out any sin in your life,
confess it immediately. Prayerfully ask the Lord to reveal any sins in your life. Write these down. Be completely honest about yourself. Write “1 John 1:9” over the list. Declare victory over the list in Jesus’ name. Thank the Lord for the forgiveness He has provided for you through Christ.

Tear up the list and throw it away – it is a prophetic action.

**CORPORATE SIN:** Sin is not merely a personal issue; it is a social matter. All sin is against God and the social community in which we live. Sin as a social act is committed by more than individuals. It is committed by social groups and becomes part of the culture and societal structure of individual social groups and nations. In the New Testament, the Lord deals more specifically with individuals to bring them to repentance, although He does rebuke some places for rejecting Him (e.g. Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum – Luke 10:13-15; Jerusalem – Luke 19:41-44).
LESSON 5: LIVING A HOLY LIFE HANDOUT

THEME VERSE: 1 Peter 1:14-15: “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.”

INTRODUCTION: Our God is holy. He cannot tolerate sin. Every believer needs to be holy. Without holiness, no-one shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). Surrender your struggles with sin to God. In order to understand holiness, we need to understand God's work in our lives and our appropriate response to this divine work.

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Sanctification (1 Peter 5:10, John 15:2): The Lord sets a believer apart and trains him to become the right channel for God's blessings.

Justification (right legal standing before God) (Ephesians 1:13-14): The Lord declares the believer free from the penalty of offenses committed and this is on the basis of Jesus’ death on the cross. The believer is released from the guilt and fear due to sins and enters into the love and divine protection of God. If the justified believer is determined to walk in the Spirit, he has no fear of any condemnation from God (Rom 8:1). It is in response to this work of God that the believer lives a holy life.

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Consequences of sin: Loss of peace and fellowship with God (Psalm 32, Isaiah 48:22 & 59:20-21). Answers to our prayers will be hindered (Psalm 66:18). For non-believers, it prevents them from having a relationship with God.

REPENTANCE is turning away from the way of wickedness and turning to the way of righteousness in the Lord Jesus. True repentance involves: Change of one’s thinking in regard to sin, the world and God, submitting to the will of God, and conviction and contrition of heart.

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THE PROCESS OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE: Every Christian needs to deal with sin on a moment by moment basis in order to maintain fellowship with God. When the Lord points out any sin in your life, confess it immediately.
LESSON 6: LIVING A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

TEACHERS NOTES

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 5:18: “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”

INTRODUCTION:
The life of Christians is a life of Christ led by the Holy Spirit. All involvement inclusive of all levels of ministry has to be with the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is the will of God that every body receives the Spirit (Joel 2:28) and the church is empowered for ministry (Acts 1:8). The Lord fulfilled the promise of Joel 2:28 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). We are also commanded not to be drunk on wine, but to be filled by the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) and this is a continuous process.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?
- He is a part of the triune Godhead promised and sent by the Father to equip and lead the church for ministry till the coming of Jesus.
- He is God (Genesis 1:1-2, 26, Acts 5:3-4)
- He is part of the Trinity (1 John 5:7)
- He is a person (2 Corinthians 3:6)

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
- We use personal pronouns to address Him (John 15:26, 16:7-8 &13-14), and there are personal characteristics ascribed to Him.
- He has emotions and feelings (Isaiah 63:10, Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19).
- Knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10-11), intelligence and goodness (Nehemiah 9:20).
- Mind (Romans 8:27) and will (1 Corinthians 12:11).
- Love (Romans 15:30).

OTHER ATTRIBUTES:
- He searches the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10).
- He speaks (Matthew 10:20; Acts 13:2, 1 Timothy 4:1, Revelation 2:7), intercedes (Romans 8:26) and gives testimony (John 15:26)
• He teaches all truth (John 14:26).
• He leads, directs (Romans 8:14), and commands men (Acts 16:6-7).
• He calls and appoints men to work (Acts 20:28).
• He comforts and encourages (John 16:7).
• Can be grieved (Acts 5:3, Hebrews 10:29), lied to (Acts 5:3) or blasphemed against (Matthew 12:31-32).

PROOF THAT HE IS GOD
• He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14).
• He is omnipresent – everywhere (Psalm 139: 7-10).
• He is omnipotent – all powerful (Luke 1:35-37).
• He is omniscient – all knowing (John 14:26, 16:12-13, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

HIS WORKS:
• Creation (Job 33:4, Psalm 104:30)
• Impartation of life (Genesis 2:7, John 6:63, 2 Peter 1:21).
• Authorship of divine prophesies (2 Samuel 23:2-3, 2 Peter 1:21).
• Peter called the Holy Spirit God (Acts 5:3-4).

DISTINCTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON

The three are separate personalities, having mutual relation to one another, acting upon one another speaking of or to one another, applying the second and third pronouns to one another.

THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK IN BELIEVERS
• Gives new birth (John 3:5-6).
• Assures the believers of salvation (Romans 8:16-17).
• Sets the believer free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).
• Strengthens believers with power in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16).
• Leads believers into a holy life (Romans 8:14)
• Bears witness that we are God’s children (Romans 8:16).
• Bears witness to the truth regarding Jesus Christ (John 15:26, Acts 5:30-32).
• Convicts us in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11).

• Brings forth fruit in a believer (Galatians 5:22-23).

• Guides the believer into all truth (John 16:13).

• Brings to remembrance the words of Jesus (John 14:26).

• He reveals the deep things of God and imparts power to discern, know and appreciate what He has taught (1 Corinthians 2:9-16).

• Enables the believer to communicate to others in power the truth he/she has been taught (Acts 1:8, 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

• Empowers the believer for prayer (Ephesians 6:18, Romans 8:26-27, Jude 20).

• Inspires the believers for praise, worship and thanksgiving (1 Corinthians 14:15, Ephesians 5:18-20, Philippians 3:3).

• Calls men and sends them for specific work (Acts 13:2-4)

• Provides everyday guidance on all details (Acts 8:27-29, Acts 16:6-7). The believer should ask God for wisdom and guidance (Psalm 32:8-9, James 1:5-6).

• Quicks the believer’s mortal body (Romans 8:11).

• Equips for ministry (Acts 4:33, 6:8, 5:12,8:5, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Romans 12:4-9, Ephesians 4:6-11).

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (Galatians 5:22): We need to bear fruit (Matthew 21:18-19, John 15:16):

• It is a manifestation of Christ’s character, the expression of the transforming power of the Spirit, the true measure of a genuine believer.

• The distinction between the servant of the Lord and those of the enemy is by the fruit they bear.

• The fruit of the Spirit covers all dimensions of relationships with God, our selves and others.

The fruit of the Spirit is the character of God.

Whereas the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us cease when we die, the fruit of the Spirit is eternal. (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).
If a believer has the fruit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit operating in him/her, he/she will be able to have a Godly lifestyle and also serve God’s purposes in the world.

Sadly, many ministers operate powerfully using their giftings that are irrevocable (Romans 11:29), but because of lack of fruit, may end up not making it to heaven, unless they repent (Matthew 7:21-23).

Many believers admire gifted people because they can “deliver” miracles and great manifestations. It’s true that miracles glorify God and we believe Him for them (John 14:11, Acts 4:29), but Godly character is paramount because we were primarily called to eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12, Hebrews 3:1).

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Reference: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11: “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

A believer who maintains a Spirit-filled life manifests the character of Christ and demonstrates the power of the Spirit. The power grants the believer divine enablement for service in God’s Kingdom. These divine ‘enablements’ are known as the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SPIRIT BAPTISM

Just as we have our biological and spiritual birth days, Spirit baptism is a definite experience that one needs to know they have gone through (Acts 19:2).

WHAT IT MEANS

- The coming (falling) of the Holy Spirit upon the believer (Acts 8: 14–17).
- An entrance into deeper fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13: 14).
- In –filling to the point of flowing with rivers of living water (John 7:37- 39).
- Refreshment and replenishment of soul and spirit of man (Acts 3:19).
- Receiving God’s power to be witnesses (Acts 1:8).

REASONS FOR THE BAPTISM

- It was commanded by God (Acts 1:6-8).
- Jesus did not enter ministry without this (Luke 4:1, 14 -18, Acts 10:38).
- It is a gift promised by the Father for all (Joel 2:28).
- It is the essence of the New Testament (2 Corinthians 3:7-18, Hebrews 8:10).
- There are tremendous results that we all need (Acts 4:31:33).

WHO QUALIFIES (ACTS 2:28)?

- Those called of God (Romans 8:30).
- Those that ask for the gift of God (Luke 11:11-13)
- Those that believe in God (John 7:37-39).
- Those that obey the Lord’s commands (Acts 5:32).

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

This baptism is the work of God in the heart of man. Jesus is the baptizer and the believer is the candidate. It is observed in the Bible that the baptism happens:

- By way of God’s choice and will Galatians 3:2, Acts 10:44).
• Through the laying on of hands.
• By asking in prayer (Luke 11:11-13).
• By earnestly desiring e.g. Elisha (2 Kings 2:9-10).
• By faith in God (Galatians 3:2).

ASSURANCE OF SPIRIT BAPTISM

To those who desire the experience, the Bible indicates that the following signs shall prove the experience

• In the Spirit: speaking in tongues or other supernatural gifts of the Spirit.
• In the soul: calmness, joy, peace confidence, etc.
• In the body: varied, but include: warmth, tears, laughing, clapping, dancing, etc.

There is an inward witness of the Lord’s presence in the receiver and the outward expression of the inward work of God. As the receiver continues on in faith, various gifts become evident. The experience is both instant and continuous. There has to be a continuous flow, operation of the Holy Spirit and continuous in-filling of the believer in order to enjoy the full benefits of the baptism.

Relationship between baptism and speaking in tongues

• The day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1, 1:5-8)
• Paul got baptized and we learn that he used to speak in tongues (Acts 9:17-19, 1 Corinthians 14:18).
• In Caesarea in Cornelius’ house (Acts 10:44-48)
• In Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7).

NOTE: Those who don’t speak in tongues shouldn’t feel as if they are not Christians. In fact, Paul says to pursue the higher gifts, and says it is more beneficial to prophesy than to pray in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:1). The point is that we must be pursuing the Holy Spirit to receive the gifts that he has for us.

As a person continues to desire to speak in tongues and pray, they might receive a prayer language, or discover other gifts. People can experience this as time goes on if they don’t get it the first time. If we walk in obedience, we can experience a measure of all the gifts, though our God-given gifts will be more pronounced (1 Corinthians 12:6).
HOW TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM

You can baptized in the Holy Spirit right now if you take the following steps:


**Ask** Jesus to baptize you. Come to Him through prayer, praise and devotion. Don’t hurry about this. Enjoy His presence. **Wait** patiently (Psalm 27:14, Psalm 40:1). Drink: **relax** in His presence, let His Spirit flow in you like a river or waterfall. **Yield** yourself totally to Him because you are His temple.

**Believe** (Galatians 3:2). As you keep receiving, you will come to the awareness that He actually filled you.

**Thank** Him by faith for the good work He has done in your life. As you express your thanksgiving in words, songs, etc., rivers of living water will flow out of you. Once a language of praise comes up, don’t resist it. Keep speaking it, and don’t analyze it. Just enjoy the Lord. Don’t lose this at any time.

RESULTS OF THE BAPTISM

Manifestations are not the same for every person (1Corinthians 12:4-10). There will be a gift for anyone baptized (1 Corinthians 12:7). The gifts are distributed as the Spirit wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). There is an impartation of power and boldness in testimony and service (Acts 4:29-31), and one becomes pre-occupied with God and spiritual things (Acts 4:31, 33, 8-10, Acts 9:17, 20, Acts 10:44, 46).

BEING SPIRIT-FILLED AND LED

The Lord baptizes us with His Spirit (Luke 3:16). However, because of our sinful nature, we limit His work in our lives. Therefore, every believer needs to keep going back to God to be filled again and again. It’s only then that we can overflow with His abundant life and power as we keep ourselves holy and ready for Him (Matthew 25:1-13). We are commanded not to be drunk on wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). This command indicates that it is a continuous process.
The believer's relationship with the Holy Spirit:

It is important to note that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the God-head. He is the one at work among the believers since the Ascension of Jesus. The Bible recommends that the believer must relate with the Spirit of God in the following ways:

- Rejoicing in the Spirit (2 Samuel 6:12-14, Philippians 3:1 & 4:4);
- Singing in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:19);
- Praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18);
- Listening to the Spirit (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 19 and 3:6, 13, 22);
- Desiring Him earnestly (Psalm 42:1);
- Following Him (Galatians 5:16-18);
- Honoring Him (Psalm 115:1.);
- Not grieving, quenching or resisting Him (Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19);
- Not lying to Him (Acts 5:3-4).

Being Spirit-filled and led therefore:

- Is an act of the will (John 4:15).
- Needs a life of faith (Mark 11:24, Colossians 2:6, James 1:6-7)
- Is a command (Ephesians 5:18).
- Requires a yielded life-style of repentance (exhaling sin) and inhaling /drinking of the Spirit all the time (1John 1:8-10).
- Is possible because the Lord is near us and willing to fill us all the time.

INDICATORS OF A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

The believer has been Spirit baptized and has submitted to the Spirit to control his/her life, having a daily relationship with the Holy Spirit.

PURPOSE OF THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE:

- Encouragement(Acts 7:31);
- Exhortation (Acts 9:31);
- Empowerment (Luke 24:49);
- Comfort (John 16:7, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4).
LESSON 6: LIVING A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE HANDOUT

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 5:18: “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”

The life of Christians is a life of Christ led by the Holy Spirit. It is the will of God that everybody receives the Spirit (Joel 2:28) and the church is empowered for ministry (Acts 1:8). The Lord fulfilled the promise of Joel 2:28 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). We are also commanded not to be drunk on wine, but to be filled by the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) and this is a continuous process.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is a member of the triune Godhead promised and sent by the Father to equip and lead the church for ministry till the coming of Jesus. He is God (Genesis 1:1-2) He is a person, not an “it” (John 15:26), and there are personal characteristics ascribed to Him. He has emotions and feelings (Ephesians 4:30), and is the Spirit of love (Romans 5:5). He also has a mind (Romans 8:27) and will (1 Corinthians 12:11), knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10), intercedes (Romans 8:26), comforts and encourages (John 16:7) He teaches all truth (John 14:26). He leads, directs (Romans 8:14), and commands men (Acts 16:6-7). He calls and appoints men to work (Acts 20:28), and He can be grieved (Acts 5:3), lied to (Acts 5:3) or blasphemed against (Matthew 12:31-32). He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14). He is omnipresent – everywhere (Psalm 139:7-10). He is omnipotent – all powerful (Luke 1:35-37), and omniscient – all knowing (John 14:26, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11). He was involved in Creation and imparts life. He inspired the writers of the Bible (2 Peter 1:21).

The Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son are separate personalities, relating to one another and working together.

THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK IN BELIEVERS:

He convicts (John 16:8-11), gives new birth (John 3:5-6) and assures the believers of salvation (Romans 8:16-17). He sets the believer free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2), and leads believers into a holy life (Romans 8:14). He bears witness that we are God’s children (Romans 8:16) and brings forth fruit in a believer (Galatians 5:22-23). He guides the believer into all truth (John 16:13) and helps us understand the Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:9-16). He brings to remembrance the words of Jesus (John 14:26), strengthens believers with power in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16) and empowers the believer for prayer (Ephesians 6:18, Romans 8:26-27). He inspires believers for praise, worship and thanksgiving (1 Corinthians 14:15, Ephesians 5:18-20, Philippians 3:3). He calls men and sends them for specific work (Acts 13:2-4) and provides everyday guidance on all details (Acts 8:27-29, 16:6-7). The believer should ask God for wisdom and guidance.

THE FRUIT AND GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT (Gal 5:22; 1 Cor 12:7-11) We need to bear fruit (Matthew 21:18-19, John 15:16):

It is a manifestation of Christ’s character, the expression of the transforming power of the Spirit, the true measure of a genuine believer. The distinction between the servant of the Lord and those of the enemy is by the fruit they bear. The fruit of the Spirit is the character of God and covers all dimensions of relationships with God, ourselves and others. If a believer has the fruit of the Holy Spirit operating in him, he will be able to have a Godly lifestyle. Godly character is paramount because we were primarily called to eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12, Hebrews 3:1). A believer who maintains a Spirit-filled life shows the character of Christ and demonstrates the power of the Spirit. The power grants the believer divine enablement for service in God’s Kingdom. These divine ‘enablements’ are known as the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

BEING SPIRIT BAPTIZED, FILLED AND LED

When we get saved, we receive the Holy Spirit to live inside us; but the experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit brings us the power to live and witness supernaturally. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believer (Acts 8:14-17) leads to deeper fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14), and is an endowment with God’s power (Luke 24:29) for witnessing and doing God’s work. The Holy Spirit fills a person to the point of overflowing, bringing refreshment and replenishment of the soul and spirit. (Acts 3:19). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a gift promised by the Father to all who belong to Jesus (Joel 2:28), and is for purposes of service to the Kingdom. This baptism is the work of God in the heart of man. Jesus is the baptizer and the believer is the candidate. The Lord baptizes us with His Spirit (Luke 3:16). However, because of our sinful nature, we limit His work in our lives. Therefore, every believer needs to keep going back to God to be filled again and again. It’s only then that we can overflow with His abundant life and power as we keep ourselves holy and ready for Him (Matthew 25:1-13). We are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) as a continuous process.

The believer - Holy Spirit relationship: The Bible shows that the believer can relate with the Spirit of God in the following ways: Rejoicing in the Spirit (Phil 3:1 & 4:4); Singing in the Spirit (Eph. 5:19); Praying in the Spirit (Eph6:18); Listening to the Spirit (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 19 and 3:6, 13, 22); Desiring Him earnestly (Ps 42:1); Following Him (Gal. 5:16-18); Honoring Him (Ps 115:1); Not grieving, quenching or resisting Him (Eph. 4:30, 1 Thes. 5:19); Not lying to Him (Acts 5:3-4).

Being Spirit-filled and led is therefore: a continuous experience (Acts 2:4, 4:8, 31, Eph5:18), and an act of the will (John 4:15). It needs a life of faith (Mark 11:24, Col. 2:6, Jas1:6-7), is a command (Eph 5:18), and requires a yielded life-style of repentance. This is possible because the Lord is near us and willing to fill us all the time.

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Sozo Ministries International and Isaiah 61 Mission are both official ministry partners with Living Water Ministries’ Global Outreach.