



FOUNDATIONS

DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS

Foundations 2:

Introduction: Some things to know about Discipleship.

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Bible Quick Reference Guide To Key Verses

Introduction: Some things to know about discipleship

All Christians are called upon by God to not only make disciples, but disciple makers also. This type of relationship requires special attention. The goal is not to finish the lessons on a set schedule, but to become a disciple in the truest sense of the word. That means the person you disciple should become a disciple maker also. Jesus defined a disciple as one that continues in His Word. (John 8:31) The Bible defines disciple makers as those that take the things they have been taught and commit them to other faithful men that will then continue in it and teach it to others that will do the same. (II Timothy 2:1-6)

What have you learned already in your Christian life that you can pass on to others?

Passing on Bible truths, or teaching them to others, is only effective if you have become a person who practices the truths you have learned. In other words, discipleship is not a list of things you do, but a person you become. Jesus told us that we should let the light of Christ shine in us so that it brings glory unto God and draws men to Him. (Matthew 5:16) As people hear us speak about Jesus it should make them want to follow Him (John 1:37) and admire Him (II Thessalonians 1:10)

Read II Timothy 2:1-6 and notice the levels through which one truth (the same things that thou hast heard) passes. The things that we have heard from our teachers are the things we are to commit faithfully, to other faithful men that shall seek out and find other faithful men to teach. We are to endure the hardness that comes with investing in the life of another person. The soldier, athlete and farmer all endure hardness pursuing the fruits of their labor. The fruits of discipleship are people teaching others about Jesus. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Salvation is free but there is a cost to disciple (II Corinthians 12:15) and to be a disciple. (Luke 14:26, 33)

What barriers are there in my life that keeps me from becoming a disciple and a disciple maker?

To teach the same things that I heard, I have to become proficient in them. The book is a guide, and should support the lesson, but not necessarily be the lesson. The lesson time should be an outpouring of the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of truth working in your own heart. (John 7:38, Romans 5:5)

Preparation for teaching is critical. Ways to prepare for teaching or being taught.

1. Neither person should come together without first having prayed and asked the Lord for wisdom, guidance and understanding. (James 1:5, Psalm 119:18)
2. Reading the lesson and the Bible in advance of the meeting will allow the Holy Spirit to focus your mind on the topic. (John 16:13)
3. Regular daily and systematic reading of the Bible will allow God to speak to you in other Scriptures about what you are learning and teaching. You need all the Scriptures to help you understand and explain the truth.
4. Study – to mastery of the subject. Study requires an outlet for use or interest will wane in putting in the work. Teaching someone one on one is the best outlet.
5. Taking an interest in the other person's life and understanding what they face and what they struggle with.
6. Above all, to disciple you must become more like Christ each day. We need the Bible to be continually changing us. I must model the person I want my disciple to become. (John 13:17)
7. The development of Spiritual habits takes time, and therefore takes patience.
8. Things will have to be unlearned, and then new things learned. (Isaiah 1:16-17) righteous can go, and of judgment because sin and Satan will be judged by God.

This level of Foundations will teach you how to find the person that you will begin to disciple. In addition, it will continue to help you develop your Christian life to be an effective disciple maker. Jesus' method was training men and teaching them about Himself by spending a large quantity of time with them and in the Word. (Mark 3:14)

Read John 12:24-26 Notice that the corn of wheat doesn't live unless it first falls in the ground and dies. Then it not only lives, but brings forth fruit. This is a picture of a person that loves (holds on to and tries to control) his life, versus a person who turns his life over to Christ to be His servant. Verse 26 says that if a person wants to serve Christ, he must follow Him and be with Him. This level of Foundations is about being with Jesus.

What is between me and giving my life to Christ to use in any manner He sees fit?

Application #1

Developing habits of reading, study and prayer are essential to becoming a disciple of Christ and a disciple maker for Christ. Use the personal growth tools in this section, or develop your own system of accountability to help you develop good spiritual habits. (It is vital that you do these weekly and share the devotional thoughts and questions with your teacher.)

Bible Reading

Date	Passage	Prayer Time

Devotional thoughts or questions

Who We Are in Christ Jesus

Key verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Biblical truth: We are new creatures in Christ. He has made us righteous in Him.

In order to become who you ought to be as a Christian you must realize who you already are in Christ Jesus. What you will learn in this lesson is not something we hope for but something already true from the moment we accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

The moment you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and gave your life to Him some wonderful things took place in your life. Things that changed in you and about you that you need to understand. As you find out what His work of Grace did in your life you will be astonished not only about what He has done for you but what He has done in you as well.

Your relationship to God!

The moment you got saved, were born again, became a part of His family, or really became a Christian the following truths became real for you in your life.

1. You became a child of God. All are the creation of God but you must be made a child of God by an act of the will of God
 - a. To them gave he power to become the sons of God,(John 1:12-13)
 - b. For ye are all the children of God. (Galatians 3:26)
2. You became a friend of Jesus.
 - a. But I have called you friends; (John 15:15)
 - b. Although you will “fear” or have reverential respect for God you realize that He desires an intimate personal relationship with you not as a slave but as a friend. One who will voluntarily surrender and give all to Him.
3. You were sealed and made eternally secure
 - a. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
 - b. You have a salvation that is secure. There is no fear that you will lose your salvation or that it can be taken from you. You have been sealed and the earnest (security) payment has been made. He has given you His Holy Spirit. You are not going to get eternal life—you already have it. There need be no insecurity or fear on your part. You are His and you will never ever be separated from Him.
4. You can now truly say that you belong to Him
 - a. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:20)

- b. He wants you to realize that you belong to Him because He paid a great price to get you; this is not a cheap relationship or salvation. You didn't go looking for Him—He came to find you and paid the price for all men.
- 5. You became a member of His body
 - a. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (1 Corinthians 12:27)
 - b. In salvation you did not only get forgiveness but He made you a part of His body. "You are In Christ."
- 6. You are now His workmanship
 - a. For we are his workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
 - b. Do you realize that He is the one that made you what you are? He saved you. He gave you eternal life. He made you a new creature. You are His workmanship. You belong to him.

We were born to Adam's race and family but when we get saved, we are now "in Christ" and in the family of God. Look at hour your family lineage has changed when you got saved.

Adam ➡ (How I was born) _____ used to be in the family of Adam and destined for death. (Your name)

Christ ➡ (I am born anew) Now _____ is in Christ. A new family with a new heritage and life. (Your name here and crossed off the old family lineage)

1Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

My Position in Christ Jesus!

1. I am justified: This is a word that signifies that my status before the judge has been changed and I am no longer a sinner but have been declared righteous.
 - a. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (Romans 5:1)
 - b. The word justified or justification is a forensic term that describes the judicial act of God, by which he forgives all the sins of those who believe in Christ and accounts, accepts, and treats them as righteous in the eye of the law, as if all the law's demands had been fulfilled. In addition to the forgiveness of sin, justification declares that all the claims of the law are satisfied in respect of the justified. It is the act of a judge and not of a sovereign. The law is not relaxed or set aside, but is declared to be fulfilled in the strictest sense; and so the person justified is declared to be entitled to all the advantages and rewards arising from perfect obedience to the law.

- i. Justification is not the forgiveness of an unrighteous man through his own effort, but a declaration that he now possesses a righteousness (Christ's righteousness) which perfectly and forever satisfies the law. (2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 4:6-8) It proceeds on the imputing or crediting to the believer by God himself of the perfect righteousness, active and passive, of his Representative and Surety, Jesus Christ (Romans 10:3-9)
 - ii. The sole condition on which this righteousness is imputed or credited to the believer is faith in or on the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith is called a "condition," not because it possesses any merit, but only because it is the instrument, the only instrument by which the soul appropriates or apprehends Christ and his righteousness (Romans 1:17, 3:25-26, 4:20,22, Philippians 3:8-11, Galatians 2:16)
 - iii. The act of faith which thus secures our justification secures also at the same time our sanctification; and thus the doctrine of justification by faith does not lead to licentiousness (Romans 6:2-7). Good works, while not the ground, are the certain result of justification in the life of the believer. (Romans 6:14, 7:6).
- 2. No longer condemned
 - a. Before we were saved we were condemned already (John 3:18)
 - b. Now that we are in Christ, there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1)
- 3. A saint
 - a. God call us saints. Called to be saints: Jesus Christ. (Romans 1:7)
 - b. He makes intercession (prayers on our behalf) for the saints (Romans 8:27)
- 4. A new creature or a new creation.
 - a. We have been made and declared righteous by Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - b. I am accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6)
 - c. Made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (Ephesians 2:6)

Promises that I have in Christ

1. All things work together for good in my life (Romans 8:28)
2. I have direct access to God (Ephesians 2:18, 3:12)
3. I can have grace and mercy in my time of need (Hebrews 4:16)
4. I have been redeemed and my sins have been forgiven (Colossians 1:14)
5. All Spiritual blessings in Heaven are already mine (Ephesians 1:3)
6. He will do his work in me (Philippians 1:6)
7. Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13)

Accepting How God Made Me

Key verse: Psalm 139:14 “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”

Biblical truth: I am created by God in His image and through His workmanship. All the God creates is good and I know that God has designed a purpose for me and a specific way that He wants to use me to honor His name and His work.

As a part of the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit has given each member a specific function that only they can do. It is part of the uniqueness that God has designed into each person. The body functions properly only when all of its members are together and working together in their role. If a person thinks they are insignificant in the body (church) they need only read I Corinthians 12:18-24 to see that God has given more honor to the seemingly small and feeble members of the body.

How God made me

Psalm 139:13-17

1. The basic life principle is to know that I am His creation and I should believe that what He does is good. Certain things about me are predestined by God and not within my power to change. I must accept them as the will of God for my life. Body structure, nationality, abilities, gender, birth order, age that I live in, parents and relatives, and talents (Matthew 6:27). He knows me and He leads me (Romans 8:28-29) Things that I must learn to accept are;
 - a. My past – That cannot be changed and is forever a part of history. I must recognize that God was at work in so many things and ways that may not be readily apparent. I must trust Him.
 - b. My present – This is the only moment that I can live in and the only opportunity to work for the Lord. I must learn to accept the things that God allows to be in my path as His will.
 - c. My future – Is in the hands of the Lord.
 - d. My weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9) – The Lord designed certain weaknesses into us not to hurt us but to glorify Him. (John 9:3)
2. The danger of not accepting that God made me like I am can become a great hindrance to the work of God in our lives, family and church
 - a. Using everything as an excuse (Mathew 25:24-25) All the things I do not want to do can be blamed on something.

- b. We can become as fatalists that denounce all things as a waste of time because of some deficiency or doom.
 - c. We don't live gratefully nor do we recognize all the blessings that God has place in front of us.
 - d. We carry around bitterness and anger constantly wishing that our situation was different.
3. Purpose of learning this lesson
- a. Make me trust God (Matthew 25:15, 1 Corinthians 12:11) and recognize that all the things He allows in my life are for my good and His glory.
 - b. Use all that I have to the max (Matthew 25:20-23) What I perceive as deficiencies or liabilities are actually advantages He gave me if I would merely focus on them as blessings and not as a curse.
 - c. Give honor and glory to God for all that He has done in my life
 - d. Accept my deficiencies and see them as opportunities or advantages.
 - e. Accept my spouse as he/she is and not live a life of hyper criticism.
 - f. Not make excuses, but do the work.
 - g. Thank God for how He formed me and His purposes for my life
 - h. Use everything that I have and am to help others (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Personal study time and application:

Reading: It is important to understand that who you are is not an accident or a cruel twist of fate. You are a child of God created in His image and designed to bring glory to Him. The sections below are for you to examine the areas of your life that you feel are liabilities, weaknesses or things you wish you could change but cannot (things mentioned in #1 above) and make a list of the ways God can or has used them.

My past has things in it that seem like weights but that can be used by God to glorify Him. Consider some things from your past that God can use.

Consider how some things in #1 above that describe who you are now, that you may have considered liabilities or things that keep you from achieving goals can actually become advantages that God can use to glorify Himself.

How has your attitude about yourself and how God made you affected your attitude about others and your spouse?

Personal Separation

Key verse: I Corinthians 6:14 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?.”

Biblical truth: We are new creatures in Christ Jesus, but are still in a body of flesh in a sinful world. God has separated us for Himself in salvation and desires that we separate ourselves from sin and sinful actions to God and holiness. It is a personal, spiritual discipline.

Our God is holy and desires that we be holy also. He wants us to resist the temptations of sin and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. (James 1:27) By that He means that though we live with sin all around us, we are to not participate in it. It will leave spots and scars on us and make it hard for us to serve the Lord and be a proper testimony of His power in our lives. Separation is not just the turning away from an old lifestyle but turning to a new one. One that walks with the Lord daily and lets Him guide and control our lives.

Separated to God, separated from sin

(II Corinthians 6:14-7:1) Being a Christian and trying to continue in our old lifestyle is like two different sized animals trying to plough together in a yoke. One is bigger and stronger than the other, so the partnership does not function well. These verses give comparisons of things that cannot work together. Jesus can make no partnership with the devil, light cannot share the same room with darkness neither can a temple to the one true God have any room for false gods or idols. Just as these things cannot go together, we cannot be a Christian and live like we did before we knew Christ. So we separate ourselves from that old lifestyle that Christ saved us from, to a new and wonderful life that He saved us for. **Separated to God from sin.**

1. Separation to God is the most important part of the process. Separation from the old life is only possible because of the new life we have in Christ. He gives us new desires, new ambitions and a new lifestyle. (2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1)
 - a. I have been forgiven for lot and so I love a lot (Luke 7:47)
 - b. Our desire to know God intimately is far greater now than our desire to do things that do not please Him (Philippians 3:4-8)
 - c. To love the world would be to commit spiritual adultery against a Holy God (James 4:4)
 - d. I do not want to grieve or quench the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has been given to me by God to help me live a holy life. I have the power to live a holy life (Ephesians 4:30, 1Thessalonians 5:19)
 - e. Living a sacrificial life is reasonable for me (Romans 12:1)

- f. I do not want to take advantage or abuse His great love for me or use the grace that He has given me as permission or license to sin (Romans 5:20-6:2)
 - g. I want to be a vessel fit for the Master's use (2 Timothy 2:20-21)
 - h. I want God to be glorified in and through my life (Matthew 5:16, 2 Thessalonians 1:10-12)
2. Separation from sin (Titus 2:11-12) this is a personal spiritual discipline that must be developed and made a lifelong habit.
- a. Separation starts with acknowledging your responsibility to confess and forsake sin in your life, not try to cover it up (Proverbs 28:13)
 - b. Protect your mind by not allowing sinful thoughts to control it (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)
 - i. Be discerning about what you watch, listen to, and participate in (Psalm 101:3)
 - ii. Don't make provision for the flesh, that is to say, don't indulge your flesh in the things it likes because it can never be satisfied but will constantly require more (Romans 13:14)
 - c. Always look for your way of escape from temptation because there will always be one (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - d. Be quick to judge your sins yourself (1 Corinthians 11:31-32)
 - i. Consider why it happened
 - ii. Make adjustments in your life to not fall again
 - iii. Renew your mind with the Word of God (Romans 12:2)
 - iv. Don't justify yourself or make excuses
 - e. Walk in the power of the Spirit of God
 - i. Learn to recognize the work of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit in your life (Galatians 5:16-25)
 - ii. Yield your life and allow the Holy Spirit of God to direct your life (Romans 6:13, 16, 12:1)
 - f. Fill your heart with the Word of God (Psalm 119:11)
 - g. Acknowledge your sin and His forgiveness and go on!
 - h. Practical application of separation (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)
 - i. You will not need a lot of instruction about what not to do if you listen to the Holy Spirit as He works in your life
 - ii. You want to develop a hatred for sin that caused you to be separated from God and condemned to Hell
 - iii. You want to develop a love for God that makes you hate whatever would pull you from Him or be an offense to Him

- iv. Your friendships should not pull you away from the things of God (2 Corinthians 6:14, Amos 3:3)
- v. Stay away from whatever is clearly a work of darkness (2 Corinthians 6:16)
- vi. Separate yourself from false teachers (1 Timothy 6:3-5, 1:3-4, 4:7, Galatians 3:1, 2 John 9-11)
- vii. Separate yourself from a love for this world (1 John 2:15-16, James 4:4)

Can you list any worldly things that would be more important than a close relationship with God?

Personal study time and application:

Reading: Separation is spiritual growth. Salvation happens in an instant, but separation and sanctification (setting yourself apart) happens over time. There will be an initial separating from many things that are not pleasing to God but there will be a lifetime of spiritual maturing that will continue the process. It will not be fully complete until we are in the presence of Jesus. (I John 3:1-3)

Read these passages about God and His holiness. How is holiness being like God?

1Peter 1:15 “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;” **1Peter 1:16** “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

Which of God’s attributes can we imitate?

In what ways can a separated life benefit a person outside of the purely spiritual aspects?

Methods of Bible Study

Key verse: II Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Biblical truth: God desires that we study His word so that we can be included in the work of disciple making and the great commission, and that we can teach truth effectively.

We have been given the Scriptures by the divine inspiration of God. (II Timothy 3:16-17) That means that the Bible is the Word of God. We have been given the Scriptures to make us wise unto salvation, then to teach us doctrine, to tell us where we have sinned, to correct us and to give us instruction on how to live a holy life. The Scriptures are able to make us mature Christians, furnished with the spiritual tools to do good works. We are to study those Scriptures so that we can teach the Bible confidently and rightly explain (divide) its truths for those we teach.

How to Study the Bible (II Timothy 2:15)

Remember from Foundations 1 that the Bible works effectually in those that believe, is profitable when mixed with faith and is understood by faith as it’s lived out in our lives. (I Thessalonians 2:13, Hebrews 4:2, Hebrews 11:2) This lesson is about how to develop personal study methods and habits to help you become a good workman with the Bible.

1. Develop the right attitude as you approach the Bible
 - a. You can’t effectively study the Bible unless you know what it is
 - viii. It is the very Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
 - ix. All of it is profitable (2 Timothy 3:16)
 - x. It will carry you on to maturity and service (2 Timothy 3:17)
 - xi. It is not open to private interpretation. That is to say that the verses are interpreted in light of the context of the whole Bible (2 Peter 1:20)
 - xii. The Bible is powerful and alive (Hebrews 4:12)
 - b. Your attitude must not be one of criticism toward the Bible, or the desire to disprove it, but with a desire for the Bible to correct you.
 - c. You should stand in awe knowing that it is impossible that men could have written this book
 - i. Some examples of the divine nature of the Bible are seen in the way it presents scientific facts even though it is a nonscientific book. Health and hygiene “discoveries” of science were in the Bible long before science found them.

- a. The Bible instructed them to bury human waste so it did not cause them disease. (Deuteronomy 23:13)
- b. Covering food for the same reason (Numbers 19:15)
- c. The Bible explains the water cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:7)
- d. The life of all flesh is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11)
- e. Contagious diseases could be prevented by washing and quarantine (Leviticus 15:13)
- ii. Prophecies that are being fulfilled before our eyes
 - a. The European Union (Daniel 7:7-8)
 - b. A world currency (Revelation 13:16) Nations lobby regularly for this.
 - c. One world government (Revelation 13, Daniel 7:8, 11, 23)
 - d. One world religion (Revelation 17)
- d. Do your absolute best to find out what the passage is talking about and make that your opinion. Don't come to the passage with a predetermined idea of what it means!
 - i. It is very dangerous in Bible teaching to start with an opinion and find Scripture
 - ii. True Bible study is finding out what the Bible says not what you want to say
- e. Never study without praying and asking for Holy Spirit guidance (Psalm 119:18)
- f. Make a habit to think over the passage until you get almost to the point of memorizing the passage. Think on it at night, in the early morning, when you are driving (Psalm 1:1-3, Joshua 1:8)

What are some questions you have about the Bible that you can discuss with your Foundations partner, Sunday school teacher or pastor?

- 2. The Bible should be interpreted literally or giving each word the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage.

- a. Bible interpretation must be grounded in fact, not in the feeling of what it seems to mean to you.
- b. Truth and context must control interpretation.
- c. Literal interpretation does not rule out figurative language
 - i. Figurative verses use the term “like” (Luke 13:18, Revelation 2:18)
 - ii. Figurative verses also use the term “as” (Revelation 19:6)
- d. Words have real meanings which don’t change, but sometimes the usage is different.
- e. Look for words that are repeated in the passage. (Hebrews 8:8-12), such as, “I will”
- f. The first time a word is used in Scripture, or “the first mention rule” is an important Bible study method to help you lock down the meaning. Find the words that seem to be central to your study and follow them through the Scripture (Genesis 9:25-27)
 - i. Servant (James 1:1)
 - ii. Usage of the word (Deuteronomy 15:17)
- g. Compare the use of the word in other passages to get a fuller range of meaning and usage.
- h. Be careful not to read how you understand a word into the meaning of a word. Make sure you do not accept the meaning of the word today without researching what the word meant in the time of the translation. For example;
 - i. Peculiar-- Etymology: Middle English peculier, from Latin peculiaris of private property, special, from peculium private property, from pecu cattle; akin to Latin pecus cattle — more at fee Date: 15th century (Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 2:9)
 - 1. Characteristic of only one person, group, or thing : distinctive
 - 2. Different from the usual or normal:
 - a. special, particular
 - b. odd, curious
 - c. eccentric, queer
 - d. synonyms see characteristic, strange
 - e. divers Function: adjective Etymology: Middle English divers, diverse Date: 14th century. Various
- i. Look up the word in the dictionary, find its synonyms, use a concordance or books such as; “Treasure of Scripture Knowledge”
- j. Look for action verbs to see what is happening in the passage—it may be telling us what to do or what they did.
- k. Look for connecting words

- i. Wherefore, therefore (1 Peter 1:13, 2:1, 6, 3:1, 7) (Likewise)
- ii. Then, if, and but (1 Peter 2:2, 3)
- iii. Look for prepositions. A preposition is a connecting word that links nouns to other words and describes their relationship. In II Timothy 2:15, the word “unto” is a preposition.

Questions – notes;

- 3. Interpretation should be based on the Scriptural context
 - a. Since we approach the Bible as God’s Holy Word we believe in the harmony (agreement together) of the Scriptures.
 - i. Scripture must be compared with Scripture to be properly understood. Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:13)
 - ii. If there is an apparent contradiction it means you have not studied enough, or have not read enough of the rest of the Bible for the explanation to make sense.
 - b. You cannot just connect passages of Scripture unless they agree
 - c. You must examine the words, verses, thoughts around what you are studying
 - d. Read the passage several times, include the verses from before and after to get the entire context. Make a list of all words you do not understand or could get a better understanding if you researched the word.
 - e. All through your reading and study be asking the regular questions, who, what, when, where, why, and how!
 - i. Take notes
 - ii. Circle words
 - iii. Ask yourself as you read it through—read it through at least once for every word
 - f. Look for parallel passages and make sure that they are the same story
 - g. How does the truth that you think you have found fit the harmony of Scriptures

Personal study time and application:

Reading: Knowing how to study the Word of God is an important step in being able to properly teach the Word of God. Teaching is our aim. We are to teach, baptize and teach them to observe all things. (Matthew 28:19-20) A proper understanding of how to interpret the Bible is essential to being able to properly apply the Bible.

Select a Scripture passage and begin to use the systematic process as described in the lesson.

Read the text several times then evaluate how it affects you. Look first at what it says, then what it means then how does it apply to me.

What is the literal and plain explanation of the meaning of the text?

What additional information does the context of the chapter provide?

What is the historical significance? Who is being spoken to and what is the time period?

Preparing for a Ministry of Disciple Making

Key verse: II Timothy 2:2 “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Biblical truth: We are to immerse ourselves in learning about the Word of God, then seek out faithful people and commit to them what we learned from those that taught us. The goal is that they will then do the same thing.

We are to seek out discipleship for our own lives, make disciples and make disciple-makers. Discipleship defines so much of our Christian life that we should diligently and intentionally prepare for a life ministry of disciple making. We are ministers of God for others (Colossians 1:25-29) to fulfill the word of God and to teach and warn every man of the things we have learned in Christ.

What it Means to Disciple

Commit the keeping of, to set before (one) in teaching; to set forth (from one's self), to explain, to place down (from one's self or for one's self) with any one, to deposit; to entrust, commit to one's charge. Discipleship carries a lot of responsibility with it so it is important to understand those responsibilities well.

1. Realize that discipleship will put you in a leadership relationship with the other person
 - a. We are to be an example (1 Timothy 4:12). To be an example means to fashion, manner, the mark of a stroke or blow, print, a figure formed by a blow or impression; hence a figure, an example; in the technical sense, the pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made; an example to be imitated: of men worthy of imitation; pattern, for imitation, of the thing to be imitated or, of a thing to be shunned."
 - b. In discipleship we will be asking people to follow us
 - i. Ye ought to follow us! (2 Thessalonians 3:7)
 - ii. Paul did things not because he had to but rather to make himself an ensample for them to follow (2 Thessalonians 3:9)
 - iii. Whose faith follow (Hebrews 13:7)
 - iv. They were to choose who to follow (3 John 11)
 - v. Paul begged them to follow him (1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1)
 - vi. They were to be followers of God (Ephesians 5:1)
 - vii. They followed Paul and the Lord (1 Thessalonians 1:6)
 - viii. They followed the example of other churches (1 Thessalonians 2:14)
 - ix. They should follow the right kind of people (Hebrews 6:12)

- c. The word follow literally means to mimic; follow, to imitate: any one, follower, an imitator"
 - d. Paul commanded them to follow or imitate him and not others (Philippians 3:17)
2. As a leader you must first work on your private walk with the Lord
- a. Psalms 15 is a psalm that talks about our personal character
 - i. Are you walking uprightly and working righteousness with your life?
 - ii. Do you speak the truth in your heart?
 - iii. Do you backbite or talk about people behind their backs in such a way as to do them harm?
 - iv. Do you treat your neighbor correctly?
 - v. Do you get involved in scandalous reports about your neighbor either hearing or spreading them?
 - vi. Have you chosen to look at wrong as something to condemn no matter who it is?
 - vii. Do you honor them that fear the Lord?
 - viii. Do you keep your word?
 - ix. Do you try and take advantage of innocent people?
 - b. Ephesians 4:20-32 talks about living our new life in Christ.
 - i. Have you put off the former way of living? (22)
 - ii. Are you renewing your mind?(23)
 - iii. Have you put away lying? (25)
 - iv. Do you have you anger under control? (26)
 - v. Do you take things that do not belong to you? (28)
 - vi. Are you using your words correctly? (29)
 - vii. Are you sensitive to the Holy Spirit's moving in your life? (30)
 - viii. Have you put away your bitterness, wrath, anger, loud complaining and griping, and evil speaking? (31)
 - ix. Have you become kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving? (32)
 - c. Colossians 3 is about setting our affections on the things of Christ.
 - i. Have you set your affection on things that are above? (1-2)
 - ii. Have you put to death fornication, impurity (uncleanness), wrong desires, etc.? (5)
 - iii. Have you put off anger, wrath, wickedness (malice), making light of spiritual things, and filthy communication (8)
 - iv. Have you quit lying? (9)
 - v. Have you become a person that loves, feels mercy, kindness, longsuffering? (12)

- vi. Have you learned to deal with your brethren and the odd things about them and to forgive them? (13)
- vii. Does the peace of God rule in your heart? (15)
- viii. Does the Word of God dwell in you richly? (16)
- d. James 1:21 we are to put off filthiness and receive the word with meekness.
 - i. Are you putting all your dirty wicked sin and thoughts away?
 - ii. Are you replacing your old thought structures with the Word of God?
- e. We are to confess and forsake sin (1 John 1:9)
- f. Forgiving others – no root of bitterness (Hebrews 12:15)
- g. Accepting the way God made you (Psalms 139:14-17)
 - i. Are you dealing with your insecurities so that they do not hinder you from being used of God?
 - ii. Do you really believe that God loves you and made you in a special way to be used of Him?
- h. Believing God to use you to help others
- 3. How faithful are you to your regular or everyday service to the Lord
 - a. Church attendance
 - b. Giving
 - c. Praying
 - d. Personal Bible reading
 - e. Witnessing
 - f. How is your personal relationship with your wife and children?
 - g. Do you pay your bills on time?
 - h. How do you manage your personal relationships with others?
 - i. How are you serving the Lord in the church and other ways?
 - j. Are you ready to make discipleship the priority ministry of your life?
 - k. Do you have a Bible conviction that the way to obey God, reach the world, and build a church is through personal discipleship?

Notes – questions:

Personal study time and application:

Reading: It starts by working on you. Are you the type of person that you want to re-produce? Your disciple will look just like you. So you have to determine if that is what you want. As you learned in the lessons, most of discipleship is about your own spiritual maturity. You have to model what you want your disciple to do or he will never understand how it's supposed to look in real life.

Before I can ask someone to follow me, I need to answer the question; where am I going?

How is my own personal thought life?

What is my testimony amongst the other members of the church?

What is my testimony outside of the church?

How do I rate in terms of faithfulness to my Bible reading, church attendance and giving?

What discipleship opportunities are right in front of me?

Is Christ really first in my life?

Finding the Person You can Disciple

Key verse: Mar 3:14 “And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,”

Biblical truth: Discipleship is about spending time with someone in the Word and as an example of a faithful Christian life. It involves praying, observing and acting when the opportunity to disciple someone arises. The object of the time with you is that they would learn to observe all the things that Jesus commanded us that they would go out and do the same thing.

One of the best ways to describe discipleship is the term “withness.” That is the state or quality of being with someone. Specifically, we are with them to study the Bible and to grow spiritually. This is a lifelong process that involves learning, doing and teaching. We learn by being taught. We then learn to apply these things by doing them. Finally, we can teach them to others as one experienced in doing.

How to find a person to disciple

Following the methods below will only work if you stay aware of what God is doing around you and act upon the opportunities He presents.

1. Pray that God will provide you with a person that you can train and disciple for the kingdom of Christ
 - a. Jesus prayed all night –God to God—before choosing His disciples (Luke 6:12)
 - b. Begin praying now and pray and watch at all times until God gives you a person to train
2. Watch for the person God wants you to train
 - a. Your first disciples will come from your family
 - b. Be actively trying to lead people to Christ and then you can take them on to maturity (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - c. Find people who are struggling in their personal lives to know what God would have them to do.
 - d. Watch for people in our church with whom you have a common interest, age, etc. that you can share your life with and disciple
 - e. You can be sure that God will lead you to the right person to disciple if you are seeking to put His plan into action
3. Remember that true discipleship is more than a lesson from a book
 - a. It is life on life. That means that you teach the Bible and live the Bible with them regularly and consistently.

- b. It means loving them as your family
- c. It means investing or pouring yourself into another person
- d. It is with-ness (Mark 3:14)

Have you sufficiently died to yourself so that you can disciple another person? Seeing others requires seeing yourself and your own situation less.

A discipleship attitude

There is a definite cost to discipleship so having a discipleship attitude is a must. If an attitude of resentment or avoidance develops, it is indicative of a lack of spiritual maturity. Wrong attitudes will be detectable by the person being disciplined and the relationship is headed for trouble.

1. Develop the right attitude towards your disciple
 - a. It is more caught than taught. They learn from watching us.
(1 Corinthians 16:10-11, 4:17)
 - b. You can't tell them to do what you are not already doing
 - c. Take them forward at the speed that they are able to go. Not too fast, and not expecting them to do things they are not able to do yet (Genesis 33:13-14)
 - d. Have double vision. See them as they are and then see them where God wants them to be. (Judges 6:13-18). - God saw Gideon as he was but also and God knew he could be
 - e. You cannot lead people where you have not already been nor to do what you have not already done or are doing.
 - f. Have compassion (Hebrews 5:1-4)
2. Use the right method
 - a. Allow your disciple to think for himself and to make mistakes
 - b. Consider what Jesus did with his disciples
 - i. Luke 10:1, 17 He trained them then sent them out to practice what they had learned. Afterwards, he talked to them about how it went and where they succeeded or failed
 - ii. Luke 8:22, 25 He trained them in how to deal with difficulties and disappointments
 - iii. John 6:6 He let them demonstrate their faith with different situations
3. What to do when you are teaching or spending time with your disciple

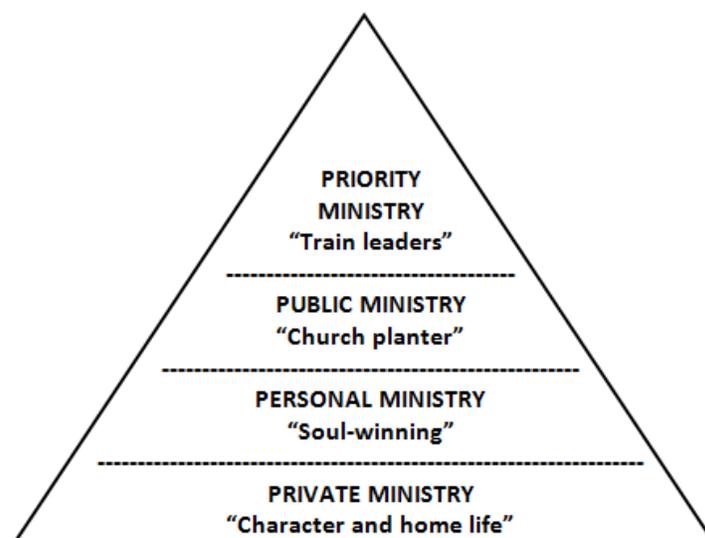
- a. Start with prayer
- b. Teach him to read his Bible each day
 - i. Don't forget that you can't ask him to do anything that you are not doing
 - ii. You will be accountable to him as he is to you
 - iii. He is to read a passage that is the same one that you are reading
 - iv. He is to keep a written record
 - 1. Date and passage
 - 2. What the passage says
 - 3. How he can apply it to his life
- c. Discuss what he has read each day the past week and motivate him to read to get something from the Word each day
- d. Have him take notes on all the Pastor's messages and Sunday School so that you can discuss what he doesn't understand (Matthew 13:10-17, 36)
- e. Go over the Bible verse for the week
- f. Each week have him memorize 5 books of the Bible until he has memorized all the books of the Bible and can successfully find Bible passages
- g. Ask him what he is dealing with or might have a question about so that you can help him from the Scriptures
- h. Take the lesson of the week and go over it for the remainder of your time
 - i. Do not progress until he understands and accepts the Bible lesson
 - j. You are not in a hurry to cover a certain amount of the lesson. Your goal is to love him and help him in his personal and family life
 - k. Give him some homework for next week and then have prayer
 - l. Be sure to work at developing your friendship
- m. It is your responsibility to spend time with him at church, before and after so that he can be assimilated into the church

What are your past experiences with trying to disciple someone and what went right or wrong?

Faithful men that shall be able to teach others also

Nothing spells success in the process of discipleship like the disciple going out and getting his own disciple. The goal is not only to disciple a person but to make them a disciple maker.

1. After about 8 lessons have him seek out his own disciple and begin teaching him.
 - a. You will coach him each week as you help him disciple others
 - b. Help him be a success and he will love you for the thrill he gets from helping others
2. Get him involved in the ministry of the church
 - a. Sit with him and his family
 - b. Get him to Sunday School and all the activities of the church
 - c. Teach him to tithe, get to church on time, listen etc., by your example
 - d. Ephesians 4:11-12 Help perfect him for the work of the ministry
3. Remember that the goal is not to teach a series of lessons but to develop a man who can train others also
 - a. Our Goal is to develop leaders of leaders and not just leaders
 - b. To truly develop a man you must take him from the very basic level to the priority God wants him to have of being reproductive
 - c. Prepare all to serve God full time and be shocked if they do not
 - d. Take them as far as they are willing to go
4. Discipleship starts at or before salvation and continues through the four stages below.
 - a. His base level or his “be” level will only be right when he has accepted Christ and is “in Christ.” On top of that, will be his “do” level which will be his personal ministry.
 - b. What he is, will define what he does and that will form the basis for his public ministry or his “serve” level.
 - c. Finally, at maturity, he will find that his priority ministry is to disciple others and train men to train others. This is typified in the following graphic example



Personal study time and application:

Reading: As you look at the “be, do, serve and train” levels on the previous page, you can see that each successive layer sits on the layer beneath it. Problems in the private level or the “Be” level will show up in the personal ministry level or the “do” level. Because a person will not do those things for very long that they really don’t possess in their “be” level. The same goes for each successive level. Problems in the foundation will show up in the level above.

Discipleship involves dying to self and serving others (John 12:24-25) What does it mean that a man that loves his life shall lose it?

What does the Bible mean when it says that if the corn of wheat first dies, then it brings forth much fruit?

What makes this type of dying so difficult?

Finding God's Will and Direction

Key verse: Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." **Romans 12:2** "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Biblical truth: It is the will of God that we submit ourselves as a living sacrifice for God to use as He pleases to glorify Himself. It is the will of God that we should be transformed daily by renewing of the Word of God and that we give ourselves to His will and not our own and that we judge the acceptability of all things from His perspective and not from our own lusts and desires.

Much of God's will is very plainly stated in the Bible. It is not His will that anyone should perish (or that they should die without Christ) but that all men should come to repentance. It is the will of God that all men be saved, that all men be sanctified and that we abstain from sin. It is the will of God that we give thanks in everything. These aspects of the will of God, and more are very plainly stated for us in the Bible. How do I find out more about His specific will for me?

Finding God's Will and Direction

Matthew 6:33 tells us that we should seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God first and all the other things we need will be added unto our lives. This is very plain, but how to do this requires instruction.

1. Understanding The Will of God
 - a. People are self-willed by nature. They do what they do because they want to. The Christian's actions however, are not to be driven by self, but by God. (Galatians 2:20).
 - b. God created you for His glory and pleasure (Revelation 4:11), and therefore, you are not for your own pleasure – (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)!
 - c. There are two kinds of wills God has for a person - His general, all-encompassing will for people everywhere; and His specific will for each individual.
 - i. God will not show you His specific plan until you are submitted to His authority over your life. Every person must want to not only find God's plan, but already be willing to do it no matter what it happens to be! Why try and tell someone specifically what to do with their life, when you know they won't do it?

- ii. The key rests in whether you are truly interested in not just knowing the will of God, but more importantly, interested in doing it (Romans 8:5, James 1:22)!
- d. There are always several stages to the will of God
 - i. Doing what you know that God says in the Bible – not the whole Bible, but a general set of clear instructions for every man, woman, boy, and girl! This is where the greatest hindrances are found because we want the big picture and refuse to be faithful in the little things (Luke 16:10)
 - ii. As you are doing those things, God will show you His perfect will for your life
 - iii. There may be a delay before you actually experience living in that big, perfect will of God for your life
 - iv. Finding God’s direction for your life—where specifically!
- 2. God’s general will for all mankind
 - a. His will is that all men be saved (1 Timothy 2:4)
 - b. His will is that all are filled with the Holy Spirit of God—that means to be totally controlled by Him (Ephesians 5:17-18)
 - c. Is that we are thankful in all things (Ephesians 5:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
 - d. Is that we would live a holy or sanctified life (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, 2 Timothy 2:21, 2 Corinthians 6:17-18)
 - e. His will is that we be conformed to the image of His son (Romans 8:28-29)
 - f. There are many others in the Bible but this gives you an idea of His will. Never look for a specific will until you are a surrendered and committed Christian—this is where it starts (Romans 12:1)
 - g. If you will not be faithful in the small that you know why should He give you the big that you do not know

What are some things that are unquestionably the will of God and are plainly stated in the Word of God to be His will?

Finding God's specific will

It is almost certain that you will not find God's specific will for your life if you are not living His general will. The specific will of God does not come in a Western Union telegram, but in doing the abundance of things that are plainly stated in His word, and doing them consistently.

1. Finding God's specific will and direction for your life
 - a. His specific will always builds on His general will—and is always in agreement with the Word of God
 - b. His specific will just like the general will of God requires that you sacrifice your own goals and plans to obey Him (Romans 12:1-2)
 - c. Steps to get God's direction in your life (Acts 16:1-10)
 - i. God's direction for your life is not always so clear—you might start doing one thing and find that God puts you to doing something else
 1. You should be attempting to serve God and to obey Him
 2. You should be busy in the Lord's work where you are
 3. Paul wanted Timothy to go with him (Acts 16:3)
 4. The team was busy doing what they knew to do (Acts 16:4-5)
 5. They were working in "church work" (Acts 16:5)
 6. They were forbidden to work where they thought they should (Acts 16:6)
 7. They tried to go into another area and were not allowed to (Acts 16:7)
 8. After many attempts God made it clear (Acts 16:9-10) but even then they only assuredly gathered
 - ii. Prayer—ask God to direct you, your thoughts, your heart to know His will (James 4:2)
 - d. Beg God to use you, somewhere, somehow for His honor and glory (Romans 12:1, 6:13, 16)
 - e. Look for chances to pray with others for the church and the world (Matthew 18:20)
 - f. Pray that God will send someone into His harvest (Matthew 9:38)
 - i. Bible reading—Spend time reading and seeking His will (1 Samuel 3:1)
 1. As you read ask Him to use the verses to show you what to think and how to apply them to your life
 2. Keep a journal of what you are learning and the thoughts that He is bringing into your mind
 - ii. Meditate on the Scriptures and your prayers

1. Focus your thoughts on Him, His word, His will and His glory (Philippians 2:5-11)
 2. Meditate on the Lord and what He wants done around the world (1 Chronicles 16:24, 31, 2 Chronicles 6:33)
 3. Consider your talents and abilities to see how He may have prepared you for this work (1 Corinthians 15:10, Luke 19:20)
 4. Dream—lay awake thinking and planning how your life could be used (Micah 2:1, Proverbs 4:16, Psalms 38:12)
- iii. Study the Bible and let God speak to you
 1. Listen without a critical or “know it all” attitude to those who are farther along (Proverbs 26:12, 16)
 2. Observe people—watch their faces, the way they deal with their family, put yourself in their place (Ezekiel 3:15)
 - iv. Believe that God desires to show you His will
 1. Decide to trust even if you do not know where you are going or how you are going to get there (Hebrews 11:8, 6)
 2. See the need. David asked “is there not a cause?” (1 Samuel 17:29)
 3. Be careful of your attitude—you are on holy ground (Exodus 3:5)
 - v. Be a servant, as Jesus humbled Himself and served His disciples
 1. Be very helpful to the pastor, missionary, church staff and other spiritual leaders (Luke 22:27)
 2. Remember that the way you act and talk may make an eternal difference in their lives one way or the other (2 Corinthians 3:2, Titus 2:5)
- g. What to expect if He is calling you
- i. He will give you the desire and ability to do it (Philippians 2:13)
 - ii. You will have inescapable thoughts
 - iii. You will feel the necessity and woe laid on you (1 Corinthians 9:16-17)
2. Specific areas that you will need God’s will and direction
 - a. Marriage (2 Corinthians 6:14)
 - i. Is the person saved?
 - ii. Are they faithful in seeking God's will, or only self-centered?
 - iii. Are they mature, or childish?
 - iv. Have you sought wisdom or counsel about your desires from your parents (God wants us to honor them, and seek their counsel)?
 - b. Job
 - c. Ministry

Personal study time and application:

Reading: Finding God’s specific will for your life is often the product of the life experiences you have accumulated, the resources, talents and skills you have and finally, what it is you enjoy doing. It is the Lord that puts it in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Often times you find that the specific will of God was right under your nose all along and that you have been wonderfully prepared for it in every step of life.

What are some life experiences that you have had that God can use for a greater purpose?

List the talents and resources and skills you have that God can use for His specific purpose.

What is it that you really like doing that God could use to glorify Himself?

The Word of God

Key verse: Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Biblical truth: The Word of God (the Bible) is a living book that works like a sharp sword that can discern or shine light on all the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is the judge of all that is in the heart. The Word of God is the words that God said to us with His own breath (inspiration) that we have written down on paper.

What separates Bible-Christianity from all other types of Christianity is its claim to an absolute, written authority from God. Most “Christians” only use the Bible, but do not believe it completely. Having the word of God is essential to a Christian's growth because the basis by which a Christian is to govern his or her life is only found in the pages of the Holy Bible.

The Word of God is infallible

The word infallible means that all that the Bible says is true. Every subject it speaks about, it speaks about without error. The purpose of this lesson is to help the Christian to know what it is that they hold in their hands, and how they can trust it as the very words of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13)! We don't just “believe” the Bible is God's word, anybody can PROVE it just by checking out the accuracy of its prophecies.

1. Bible Facts

- a. The human authors wrote each portion of the Bible by the “inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16). This means God “breathed” (spoke) His very words into the human authors of the Bible as they wrote it - they were not invented by human imagination. They came directly from God (Matthew 4:4)!
- b. The Bible therefore came not by the will of man (2 Peter 1:21), and yet God chose to use over 40 human authors to pen the books of the Bible. So, no one just sat down and decided to write a book for the Bible. It was always directed, and controlled by God. Some of the writers that God, the author, used to pen this Book of books:
 - i. Deuteronomy 31:24-26 Moses
 - ii. Luke 20:42 David
 - iii. Proverbs 1:1 Solomon
 - iv. Isaiah 1:1 Isaiah
 - v. Romans 1:1,7 Paul

- vi. 1 Peter 1:1, Peter
 - c. According to Jesus Christ, heaven and earth will pass away, but God's word shall not pass away (Matthew 24:35).
 - d. The Bible is superior to all philosophy because it was not given by man's wisdom but by the teaching of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 2:13).
 - e. The Bible is ONE Book made up of 66 separate books.
 - f. The Bible is now completed. It was finished in about 95 AD, when the apostle John completed the book of Revelation. No one can add anything to it through personal revelations, visions, or prophecies, and no one can take away from it (Revelation 22:18, 19) - anyone that claims additional prophecies over those that are contained in the Bible is false.
 - g. Overall, the Bible is divided into two main sections. The second section is called the New Testament (2 Corinthians 3:6). The first section is called the Old Testament (2 Corinthians 3:14). A "testament" is a written testimony about God's will in the form of a covenant (agreement).
 - h. The Bible is holy, and perfect, having no error because it is both inspired, and preserve by God (Psalms 12:6, 7). God wrote the Scriptures through men (that is inspiration, 2 Timothy 3:16), and then bound Himself to keep His word from error (that is preservation, Matthew 24:35) That means that God's word is still here on earth today as He promised. Though men have tried to corrupt the Bible and change it (even in Paul's day – II Corinthians 2:17) God has preserved it for all generations.
2. What the Bible is
- a. God's revelation of the origin and destiny of all things (Isaiah 46:9, 10).
 - b. God's will or testament to people of all ages, revealing the plan of God for mankind here and now, and in the next life.
 - c. A record of how God dealt with man in the past, present and future.
 - d. The message of eternal salvation for all who believe in Christ, and eternal wrath for all who reject that Gospel (John 3:36).
 - e. The most remarkable Book ever! Of its divine library of 66 books, there is history, biography, poetry, proverbial sayings (true sayings), hymns (songs), laws, parables (stories that teach truth), riddles, allegories (symbolic language), prophecies, records of birth, and death, mysteries, adventure, recipes, blessings, cursing, and all other forms of human expression!
 - f. Psalm 119 deals particularly with the subject of the Scriptures in great detail. Of the 176 verses, all but three specifically mention the Scriptures and their importance in the life of the believer. The Bible refers to itself in Psalm 119 using eight different words:

- i. The Law - God's definition of right and wrong (1)
 - ii. The testimonies- a record of what God thinks (2)
 - iii. God's ways- a record of how God works (3)
 - iv. Precepts- Truths that apply to life - principles (4)
 - v. Statutes- fixed truths of God (5)
 - vi. Commandments- clear commands and instructions (6)
 - vii. Judgments- God's conclusions about various subjects (7)
 - viii. The words - the very words of God (9)
- g. Psalm 119 teaches that the Bible is eight things to every believer:
- i. It provides spiritual cleansing (Psalm 119:9; Ephesians 5:25, 26). The word of God cleanses the life of the believer as we obey it!
 - ii. It is like having wealth and riches to the one who has it (119:14)!
 - iii. A companion and friend to the one who lives in it (119:24)!
 - iv. A song to sing (119:54) - it fills the heart with such joy!
 - v. Words as sweet_ (119:103) as honey.
 - vi. A light (119:105,130)
 - vii. A heritage - something passed on like an heirloom (119:111).
 - viii. Great spoil and treasure (119:162)

How does the Bible differ from every other book? What major ways?

Our responsibility

Since we have the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God, we naturally have responsibilities attached to that.

1. Your responsibility concerning the Scriptures
 - a. To love them (119:97,159) - How much do YOU love them?
 - b. Prize them (119:72,127) as you would treasure!
 - c. Memorize them (119:11) - learn God's words as He wrote them.
 - d. Meditate on them (119:15, 23, 48, 78) - understand each word!
 - e. Study them (119:12, 18, 26, 27, 2 Timothy 2:15!
 - f. Trust them (119:42) Faith comes by hearing this Bible (Romans 10:17)
 - g. Obey them (119:8, James 1:22) Live this Bible every day!
 - h. Declare them (119:13) - tell others of God's word on life!

2. The four basic things God wants you to learn from the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16, 17):
 - a. Doctrine - learn what is right and true, and actual
 - b. Reproof - learn what is not right in our life, and in the world
 - c. Correction - learn how to get right - most important
 - d. Instruction in righteousness - learn how to stay right
 - e. These four foundations prepare you so that "...the man of God (the mature Christian) may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
3. What the Bible is not
 - a. It is NOT a charm or good luck piece.
 - b. It is NOT a book of "heavenly utterances" in a supernatural language. It is God's revelation in the simplest human language possible.
 - c. It is NOT a book of mysteries. It is self-interpreting, explaining all the mysteries of life, so that no mysteries remain.
 - d. It is NOT a book that says one thing and means another.
 - e. It is NOT a book that should be constantly criticized and attacked simply because you don't like what it says, or how it says it! It is God's words!

In what way does II Timothy 3:16-17 affect the believing reader of the Bible?

Proofs of inspiration

How we know the Bible was given by God?

1. It's Unity. Over 40 authors wrote the 66 books of the Bible in different lands (Job in Mesopotamia, Moses in Jordan, Paul in Rome and Greece, John in Turkey, Peter in Babylon), and at different times, covering a period of over 2,100 years (from 2000 B.C. to 95 A.D.), and yet never contradicting each other! Try to duplicate that! No matter what you have been told, none of the writings were "sanctioned" by some church council, or commanded to be written by some church leader. They were all written by the direct inspirational hand of God (2 Timothy 3:16), and preserved from any human error, in spite of the fact that myriads of religious efforts were made to destroy both the prophets and their message!
2. It's Influence on the World. No other book has so influenced the course of human events like the Bible - it has never been imposed upon a people. No matter what culture

a person lives in, one thing has always been true - Religion has always been forced upon people on a collective basis, while Biblical Christianity has always been chosen on an individual basis. This one piece of "literature" has brought about the greatest nations, and greatest freedoms no sword or any other means could! Notice the effect the word of God had upon the people of first century A.D. (Acts 17:6), the people of the Reformation, the Renaissance, and compare those people's lives with the effects of the Dark Ages (when the Bible was banned from being read or believed), and the effects of Humanism, Stalinism, Marxism, and all other forms of tyrannical dictatorship (all banned the Bible)! Since the Bible's truths are individual in nature, no dictator, pope or prince can allow it to turn their subjects away from complete devotion to THEM, so they ban it! Don't let someone take away your access to God's written word!

3. Its Supernatural Preservation. As it has already been said, whole kingdoms and religions have sought in vain to destroy the influence of the Scriptures, and yet it still reigns victorious, and indestructible (Matthew 24:35). It has, and always will out-last all religions and kingdoms of this world, simply because, it is God's pure word (Psalms 12:6, 7)!
4. Fulfilled Prophecy. One of the most important areas of proof that God wrote the Bible involves the fact that almost 3,300 verses of prophecy have been fulfilled to the letter. These prophecies were predictions made hundreds and even thousands of years before their fulfillment (i.e., the prediction in Micah 5:2 of the birthplace of Christ was made 750 years before the event - see Matthew 2:1-6). Not one detail has failed, and there are some 3,000 more verses yet to be fulfilled! See Deuteronomy 18:20-22, where God promises that everything that His prophets speak will be fulfilled, and if not, then the prophets were false prophets, and should die. No human authored book would dare to make so many predictions, so far in advance, and therefore subject its authenticity to such chance - yet God did.
5. Scientific Accuracy. The Bible describes the earth as a circle (like a sphere, Isaiah 40:22), suspended in space (Job 26:7) hanging upon nothing. And it told us this without the aid of an orbiting satellite. The Bible expressed this as FACT and not conjecture over 2,200 years before Columbus discovered it was right! The Bible also explains the division of the languages into confusion at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). It reveals that there are "paths," or currents in the seas (Psalm 8:8). Again, Columbus "discovered" that this was true when he sailed to the New World on one ocean current, and then back to Spain on another. The Scriptures in (Psalm 102:24-27, and Hebrews 1:10-12) declare the Second Law of Thermodynamics (which states that everything wears out)! It also reveals the process by which all of life occurred on this planet (Genesis 1 and 2), and much, much more! You can't beat the Bible, no matter how much education you obtain - it's always years ahead of science!

Personal study time and application:

Reading: The systematic reading of the Bible daily begins with a belief that the Bible is what it says it is. The Bible describes itself with many different labels all of which give us a glimpse of how it works on both the saved and the lost. Review these verses and write the descriptive word for the Bible and what effect it has.

Jeremiah 23:29 (two words that describe it)

Ephesians 5:26

Psalms 119:105

Luke 8:11

Giving

Key verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7 “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Biblical truth: Giving is a part of our worship and it recognizes that all we have comes from God and all that we give Him is a portion of what He first gave to us. It recognizes that the work and mission of God in this world is worthy of our offerings, and most of all, God is worthy to receive offerings of valuable things from us.

Though God does not need money, His work on this earth is supported by His children. Whether that means we give of time or things or money, His work is supported by His children. God owns all the earth and all the silver and gold is His. (Haggai 2:8) We are creatures full of lust and selfishness and so giving is also a part of our spiritual growth. We are to give generously and cheerfully to the Lord

God is the owner of all things

The purpose of this lesson is to help the Christian to see the blessings in giving, but also to take on their personal responsibility to give to the work of the Lord. God has designed the ministry such that the offerings of the people can support the local church and also the work of foreign missions. It requires trust in God and faithfulness on our part. (I Corinthians 4:2)

1. God is the creator and owner of all things. (I Corinthians 10:26)
 - a. We don't own anything (Haggai 2:8)
 - b. We come into the world with nothing and that is how we leave (I Timothy 6:7)
 - c. All things were created by Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16)
2. God gives us the power to get wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18)
 - a. He does it so that He can establish His work and His church in this world.
 - b. God warns us that we tend to forget Him after He gives us wealth (Deuteronomy 8:12-14)
 - c. Sometimes we go through times of loss or setback in our financial lives as a way of reminding us who gave us the power to get wealth (Psalm 66:10-14)
3. All that we give back to God is just a portion of what He has already given us.
 - a. All good and perfect gifts come from the Lord (James 1:17)
 - b. He already owns the things we give Him back (I Chronicles 29:14)
 - c. As we give to God He sends it back to us in many ways (Luke 6:38)
4. With or without money, God has promised to take care of us. (Matthew 6:6-34) Giving is about trusting God. In these verses;

- a. He compares us to birds, and we are of greater importance.
 - b. He tells us to trust Him daily for our provision
 - c. He tells us that He knows what we need even before we ask for it
 - d. We are to lay up treasures in heaven, not on the earth
 - e. Our hearts are connected to our treasures
 - f. We are warned about trying to serve two masters (money and God)
 - g. We are told to take no thought three times
 - i. Too much thought about money can make it a God
 - ii. Too much thought about what we will eat, drink or wear can make us whiny and forget that God has provided everything we need
 - iii. Too much thought about the problems we face will cost us our joy
 - h. God wants us to seek Him first and let Him add all the basic necessities that we need to us.
5. Giving involves learning contentment. (I Timothy 6:6-19) We are taught in this chapter about how contentment will give us peace, versus living a greedy and covetous life which will drown us.
- a. Godliness with contentment is great gain
 - b. We brought nothing into this world and will take nothing out
 - c. The measure of contentment is food and clothing, not even a house
 - d. Those that desire to be rich will find that pursuit of riches brings a painful life void of peace
 - e. Loving money and making it lord in your life is at the root of all things that are evil. It makes a man pursue riches at any cost. The cost is always much greater and much more painful than he expects.
 - f. We are allowed to enjoy the things we have been given without guilt, but should be generous with them.

How does my personal economy change if I acknowledge that God owns everything?

The Process of Giving in the Bible

1. Giving begins with tithing. Tithing is not a law we are under or a requirement for acceptance with God. It is a system that God gave us to help us learn to give regularly and systematically, recognizing the things that God has placed in our hands.
 - a. Tithing is easy to understand. It is simply ten percent of your income or the goods that come into your possession (Genesis 28:22, Nehemiah 13:12)
 - b. Tithing is regular and systematic. We receive our incomes usually weekly, sometimes daily and it is at that instant that we should recognize that it was God that gave it to us and we should give back to Him in thanks (I Corinthians 16:1-2)
 - c. Tithing was instituted willfully before the law in the Old Testament by men like Abraham and Jacob as they recognized the work of God in their lives. (Genesis 28:22, Genesis 14:14-20)
 - d. Tithing was given under the law as the method that God used to support His priesthood and His house of worship and atonement (Numbers 18:21-24)
 - e. The priesthood also was to give tithes of what they received (the tithes of the people (Numbers 18:26-27)
 - f. Tithing was preached by the prophets as a way for the people to see the goodness of God. (Malachi 3:10)
 - g. Tithing in the New Testament is talked about primarily as it refers to the care of the work of God, but it is not as prominent as the radical giving that they did in the book of acts because of their excitement about what God was doing.
 - i. They shared all their goods (Acts 4:32)
 - ii. Sold land and brought the price (Acts 4:34-37)
2. Giving advances past tithing to sacrificial giving (II Corinthians 8-9)
 - a. Tithing is a good start and acts as a way to help us recognize the goodness of God in our lives. (I Corinthians 16:1-2)
 - b. As we grow spiritually, we move past tithing and begin to give sacrificially. Sacrificial giving means that we sacrifice comforts or possessions in this life in order to give more to God (II Corinthians 8:1-5) they first gave themselves.
 - c. Like the widow that gave all her living (Luke 2:14)
 - d. Christians gave offerings to help another church while they themselves were in deep poverty (II Corinthians 8:2)
 - e. Others were joyful even through the spoiling of their goods for the ministry (Acts 2:45)
 - f. Some gave up businesses to follow Jesus (Matthew 4:20)
 - g. Others sold their land and houses and put all into the work (Acts 4:34-37)

- h. Tithing is a great way to get started, but as we grow spiritually, it will become sacrificial giving.
- 3. Giving also includes special gifts we make to God to advance His work in other countries. To reach the remote parts of the world where the Gospel is not available or readily available. This type of giving we call faith promise (Ezra 1:6)
 - a. The term faith promise is not in the Bible but it embodies the promise we make with God about the gift to missions.
 - b. We promise that we will trust God to provide for our needs while we give above our tithes and offerings, an amount specifically for preaching the Gospel and planting churches around the world. (Matthew 6 – the whole chapter)
 - c. Typically there is a mission conference held yearly at the church in which missionaries present their work and the services focus on missions.
 - d. At the end of the conference, those that want to be involved in supporting the mission work of the church make a promise on a card and turn it in. The church adds up the amounts promised so it has an idea of how much it will have that year for the support of missions. The people then give according to their promise, trusting that God will bless His work and care for them.
 - e. Faith promise giving is not a Bible doctrine, but the great commission is. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8) We can go or we can send, but we are all responsible.

Can you list the ways that God has blessed you and taken care of you?

What impact has the giving of others had on you and your life?

If you were involved in regular giving in the past, what thing or things made you stop?

What are the biggest barriers to regular and faithful giving in your life?

Personal study time and application:

Getting started or started back in your personal giving to God and His work is not difficult. It involves meeting with God in prayer and reading about His plan of giving and the way He cares for us and blesses us while we trust Him.

Make a list of the income God has given you (Deuteronomy 8:18) and multiply it by 10% - This is the starting point.

Remember that this is not a payment to God to make Him like you or so that you will be accepted. This is a recognition that all things come from God and we are giving back to Him a small portion of what He gave to us.

Then consider how blessed we are by God in so many ways that we take for granted. Our health, our family, opportunity and most of all, our salvation. What is that worth to us if we could even buy it? That is the basis for the offering that I will add on top of my tithe.

Finally, consider how wonderful it is to be saved and to know that my sins have all been forgiven. I have a home in heaven that I will go to when I die and will be with Jesus for all of eternity. But not all people are saved and for the majority of the world, they have never even heard. How important is it that I sacrifice so that the Gospel can get to the world. This is my (faith promise) mission offering.

Start with a tithe and learn to trust God more each day until you start adding an offering and then faith promise. Avoid starting with an amount smaller than 10% because it is the plan of God to grow your trust and faithfulness by tithing. Use the tithe as a starting point and learn to trust Him.

List some things God has done in your life since you started tithing.

Forgiveness

Key verse: Ephesians 4:32 “and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Biblical truth: The simple truth of forgiveness for us is that we should forgive because the Lord commands us to. The basis of His commandment is that we were forgiven by God for Christ’s sake.

Forgiveness is a release from debt or obligation. It is the promise to never bring the matter up again or try to collect a payment for some offence that has been committed (or perceived) against you or to hold a grudge against the offender. We offended God with our sin and He would have been justified in not forgiving us. He chose to forgive us, even though we did not deserve forgiveness based on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. How could we withhold forgiveness from anyone after being forgiven so much? (Matthew 18:21-35)

God has forgiven us

We learn forgiveness by understanding the pattern that God modeled for us. We were created by Him and in His image to glorify Him. Mankind chose to disobey God and not to glorify Him. We became enemies with our creator (Romans 5:10) and offended Him greatly. He was not obligated to forgive us for He is holy and to remain holy, He must pronounce judgment on sin. He did pronounce that judgment, but sent His Son Jesus to be the object of His judgment for sin so that by faith in Jesus, we can receive the full forgiveness of our offences against God. We received forgiveness for a debt we could never pay, and so we are called to forgive others for all their lesser debts and offences incurred against us.

1. We forgive because we have been forgiven (Ephesians 4:32)
 - a. Mankind was the original offender against God (Romans 4:25, 5:12)
 - b. God was justified in not forgiving us (Isaiah 59:2)
 - c. He chose instead to send Jesus as the object of His wrath toward our sin (Romans 3:25, I John 2:2, 4:10)
 - d. Only Jesus could pay that debt.
 - e. Jesus, of course, is God therefore God paid our debt off Himself (Hebrews 9:14)
 - f. He is our model of forgiveness (Colossians 3:13)
2. Forgiveness must begin with accepting God’s forgiveness of our sin and not living under fear of judgment any longer.
 - a. It is difficult to forgive without understanding God’s forgiveness of our sins.

- b. Continuing to carry the burden of debt in our minds is the same as unforgiveness of ourselves.
- c. It is critical that we understand and accept the fact and the reason behind our forgiveness.
 - i. We are forgiven in Christ (Colossians 3:13)
 - ii. We are forgiven because of Christ (Ephesians 4:32)
 - iii. We forgive others because God, for Christ's sake, forgave us. (I John 2:12)
 - iv. We did not deserve the forgiveness we received, and those we forgive will not always deserve it. (Isaiah 43:25)
- 3. God made the first move toward forgiveness (Romans 5:6-8)
 - a. We are not told to wait for apologies or for the other person to make a move. If they have offended us we are to go to them (Mark 11:25)
 - b. If we have offended them we are to go to them (Matthew 5:23-24)
 - c. We are to allow ourselves to suffer hurt or financial loss in order to forgive if necessary (I Corinthians 6:7)
 - d. God did not qualify His forgiveness of us by the number of times we sinned, and has forgiven us in full for all of our sin. We are not to count the number of times we forgive others (Matthew 18:21-22,

Make a list of all the things for which you have received forgiveness from God. (Of course there is no way to make that list, so summarize how much forgiveness you have to give to others based on how much you have received from God.)

Forgiving others

Forgiveness is not easy. It can be very painful at times because it involves us giving up our right to some pay back for the offense that was inflicted upon us. It starts with a brokenness that is a pride smashing experience that is not enjoyable at all. It yields a peaceable fruit and relief that you no longer have to carry the load of unforgiveness. Holding on to unforgiveness is like carrying a large rock around. As long as you determine in your heart to keep the debt alive, waiting on some payment, you must carry the rock. It gets heavier and harder to carry all the time and it torments you inside. Each time you see the person, the rock gets heavier until it becomes unbearable. People will leave church, jobs, separate from family and withdraw from friends in order to continue carrying the rock. It is a prison of torments, and often the offender doesn't even know it happened. Forgiveness is the only relief, but its not easy.

1. Jesus taught us that offences would come, but that they should not come from us. (Luke 17:1)
 - a. Jesus expected that Christians would be ready and quick to forgive. We, after all, understand the grace and forgiveness of God and should readily acknowledge our offence against another and ask their forgiveness (Luke 17:2-4, I Corinthians 6:6-8) After hearing this lesson, the apostles asked the Lord to increase their faith. (Luke 17:5)
 - b. We should expect to be offended and to forgive for it. We should also understand that godly living is not protection against offences (Titus 3:10-14)
 - c. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin (I John 1:9) therefore we are to forgive all men their trespasses against us after the pattern of Jesus (Luke 23:34, Acts 7:60)
2. Jesus taught that unforgiveness puts a man in prison and turns him over to torments (Matthew 18:23-35)
 - a. The king forgave the servant who owed the larger debt (Christ forgiving us) but the servant then would not forgive his fellow servant that owed him a much smaller debt (Matthew 18:28-30)
 - b. The wicked servant held his fellow servant responsible for payment after the king had just forgiven him (Matthew 18:28)
 - c. Our friends and co-workers can see the effects of unforgiveness on us (Matthew 18:31) He lived in torments and took his old debt back on (Matthew 18:32-35)
3. Instructions on forgiveness
 - a. The model prayer tells us to model forgiveness and to ask for forgiveness according to how we forgive (Matthew 6:12) It also tells us to expect to carry the weight of unforgiveness if we do not forgive others (Matthew 6:13-15)
 - b. Forgiving others should be part of our prayers (Mark 11:25)
 - c. We forgive those that we love, so practicing love for others will make forgiveness much easier (I Corinthians 13:4-7)
 - d. Forgiveness requires humbling ourselves and esteeming others better and worthy of forgiveness for Christ's sake. (Romans 12:3, Philippians 2:3)
 - e. Forgiving involves the promise to never bring the matter up again. The debt is fully forgiven. (Psalm 103:12, Hebrews 10:7)
 - f. Forgiveness requires brokenness and the realization that we gave up all our rights to collect on the debts owed us for offences by others when we accepted the grace of God as the payment for all of our debts. We are obligated to forgive.

Personal study time and application:

Reading: Forgiveness is a painful thing. The humility and brokenness can cause tremendous hurt and even agony. This feeling is there to help us understand a little of what our Lord endured to be humiliated and hung on a cross even though He was totally innocent. Forgiveness not only models Christ and gives us the chance to win others to Him with our testimony of mercy and grace, but it also lets us fellowship with His sufferings as we experience the pain and hurt of forgiveness. The peace that comes afterwards will remove all memory of the pain. (Genesis 41:51)

Read and meditate on these passages dealing with brokenness.

Luke 22:42 _____

John 12:23-25 _____

Mark 8:34-36 _____

I Corinthians 6:7 _____

I Peter 4:8 _____

It is easy to lose sight of the fact that we are to be servants to others and not to be served. Servants have no rights and deserve nothing. This is the attitude that Jesus modeled for us and that we are to follow. Forgiveness is easier when our hearts are filled with love for others (which covers a multitude of sins I Peter 4:8)

Reasons for which all those that have offended me should be forgiven.

What Happens at Death?

Key verse: Philippians 1:21 “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

Biblical truth: Death is not a tragic thing for a Christian. It can have circumstances around it that are tragic and it can cause a lot of sorrow for those that are left behind, but for the Christian, it is gain. He or she will immediately be in the presence of the Savior and will experience instant healing from all disease or pain and will no longer be in want of anything.

Death is a separation of the soul and spirit from the body. The body will go back to the dust (grave) from which it came and the soul and spirit will go instantly into the presence of God. (II Corinthians 5:8) The Bible uses the word “sleep” for death with respect to the body because it lies in the dust waiting for its transformation, or resurrection. The soul will be in the presence of God and the spirit will be conscious in heaven immediately after death.

Death of the body

The body is really the only thing that “dies” at death. Because of the resurrection, it is not even a permanent situation because the body will be transformed at the resurrection into a new body like the one that Jesus has.

1. The body was originally formed out of dust (Genesis 3:19)
 - a. It is destined to return there, or be changed.
 - b. It cannot enter heaven as it is for it is sinful (I Corinthians 15:50)
 - c. It is necessary that we lose this body before entering heaven.
2. A limit was put on the length of time a body can live (Psalm 90:10)
 - a. All men have an appointment with death unless the return of the Lord happens before they die (Hebrews 9:27)
 - b. Death is a natural process brought on by sin (Romans 5:12)
3. The body has to die and be resurrected or it has to be changed before it can enter heaven
 - a. Death is called sleep for the body, or all those that die in Christ will awake and be resurrected when He returns (John 8:52, John 11:11)
 - b. The body will be changed and will be like Jesus’ body when He returns (I John 3:1-3)
 - c. The decay of the body back into dust, or the fact that a body was burned (many martyrs were burned up at the stake) or eaten or lost at sea and dissolved by the ocean will not prevent a resurrection of their body.

Separation of the body from the soul and spirit

The soul is what God created and though there was a time in which it did not exist, it will now never cease to exist. The spirit is the life of the body. Once the spirit is separated from the body, the body dies. It takes its last breath and dies. While the body is now dead (sleeping if the person is a Christian) the soul and spirit wake up instantly in the presence of Jesus.

1. To be absent from the body (soul and spirit) is for them to be present with the Lord.
 - a. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31, the eternality and consciousness of soul and spirit are seen.
 - i. Both men died leaving behind the body of a saint and the body of a lost man.
 - ii. Both men are conscious and not only aware of their new situation, but of their past life also.
 - iii. Lazarus is no longer a beggar but is in the presence of the angels, and the fathers of the faith.
 - iv. There is remembrance, knowledge of family, knowledge of personages
 - v. Bodies are in the dust, but spirits are in the place of their choosing during their lifetime.
2. Dying is gain for the Christian (Philippians 1:22-24)
 - a. In every respect, to be present with Jesus is better than any situation we could find in this life.
 - i. No pain and suffering
 - ii. With Jesus and like Jesus (I Thessalonians 4:17, I John 3:1-3)
 - b. Our loved ones are only separated from us temporarily if we are saved.
 - c. King David knew that he couldn't bring his baby back that had died, but knew he could go to where the baby is one day (II Samuel 12:23)
3. Dying will mean standing before Jesus and the examination of our Christian life.
 - a. What did we do with the new life that Jesus gave us? (II Corinthians 5:10)
 - b. Our works will not be judged for salvation. No part of the Judgment Seat of Christ is about our salvation. That was decided in our lifetimes and was settled eternally at that point (I Corinthians 3:11-15)
 - c. Our good works will abide the judgment and will become gifts to present to the Savior.
4. Dying is reward for the Christian
 - a. To be in His presence is the greatest reward
 - b. There will be other rewards given after the church age has come to an end
 - c. We will be like Him

The Second Coming of Christ

Key verses: John 14:1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

Biblical truth: Jesus is coming again. Jesus declared to the disciples plainly that He was going to make preparations for us to live with Him in the Father's house. This promise applies to those that believe in Jesus. Jesus declares plainly that there are many mansions in the Father's house and that the plan is for Jesus to go away then come back for us. His desire is that we would be always with Him.

The second coming of Christ is seen in many places in the Bible. This is such an important event that even Enoch (the seventh generation from Adam) spoke about the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints. It is important to understand that the second coming will occur in two parts. There will be a return of the Lord to receive His saints out of this earth. That is commonly called the rapture, or catching away. The second part will occur seven years later when the Lord returns to this earth with His saints. This is what Enoch prophesied of (Jude 1:14)

The return of the Lord for His saints

This is the event we commonly refer to as the “rapture.” The word rapture is not in the Bible but it describes the event well. It will be a catching away of the saints of the Lord. It will include those saints still living and those that have died in Christ, whose bodies are asleep in the dust. (Refer to the lesson on what happens at death) The event will take place primarily on this earth and in the sky. On the earth there will be a resurrection and a transformation, and in the sky there will be a meeting with Jesus and a reunion of bodies with their soul and spirit that have been with the Lord.

1. The promise of His coming
 - a. If I go away, I shall come again (John 14:1-3) He did go away and fulfill His work on the cross, in death and in resurrection.
 - b. In like manner as He was taken up from this earth (Acts 1:9-11) the cloud received Him out of their sight. We will see Him return that way.
 - c. Those that are looking for Him (saved) (Hebrews 9:28)
 - d. We are to be patient in serving Him until He comes (James 5:7) We are promised that He that started a good work in us will continue to perform it until He returns for us (Philippians 1:6)

- e. The Lord shall descend from Heaven and will receive us to Himself (I Thessalonians 4:15-17)
 - f. The Lord is coming with ten thousands of His saints (Jude 1:14) Though this verse refers to the second part of Jesus second coming, it acknowledges that His saints are already with Him. (that happens in the first part of the second coming)
 - g. He purchased us for Himself that He could take us to be with Him (Ephesians 1:13-14) the redemption of the purchased possession is His coming again to take us to be with Him. (Ephesians 4:30, I Thessalonians 5:9-10, II Thessalonians
 - h. Revelation gives us a picture of a door opening in heaven and a voice that tells us to come up to Him. (Revelation 1:7, 4:1)
2. What will happen at His coming (I Thessalonians 4:13-18, I Corinthians 15:51-54)
- a. There will be a resurrection and those that sleep in the dust will rise up (referring to the bodies of those that died in Christ (Daniel 12:2, John 5:25, I Thessalonians 4:16, I Corinthians 15:52) They will be changed from bodies that are corrupting or decaying to bodies that are incorruptible or cannot decay.
 - b. There will be an instant change in the bodies of those that are still living (I Corinthians 15:53) They will be mortal bodies right up to the time that Jesus returns then they will be instantly changed to immortal bodies.
 - c. There will be an ascending, or a taking out of the changed and the resurrected into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (I Thessalonians 4:17)
 - d. The bodies of those that slept in the grave will be reunited with their soul and spirit in the clouds which Jesus will bring with Him. (I Thessalonians 4:14)
 - e. This is not to make us sorrowful but so that we know that we have hope (I Thessalonians 4:13)
 - f. These are words of comfort (I Thessalonians 4:18)
3. How will a person know when the Lord is coming?
- a. There are no signs attached to the first part of the Lord's coming except that it will happen in a time when men are not thinking it will happen (Matthew 24:43-44, 50)
 - b. It will happen suddenly and without warning. (I Corinthians 15:52)
 - c. It will happen too quickly to make a decision to follow Christ at that moment. (Luke 12:40)
 - d. He told us that His coming is imminent. Even the apostles looked for His coming in their lifetimes (Titus 2:12-13)
 - e. The signs and wonders apply to the return of the Lord for His saints, or the second half of His second coming. It shall be preceded by the tribulation period that has a specific time line to it and many signs and wonders (Acts 2:19-20)

What affect does the imminent return of Jesus Christ have on how a Christian should live their lives?

The return of the Lord with His saints

The rapture sets in motion the events of the end of this age. After the rapture comes a seven year period of tribulation on the earth that will allow evil to work unrestrained by the Holy Spirit and the church. Sin will expand to its fullness in that seven years and the Lord will return to the earth (with all His saints) to wage a battle against sin and Satan. This time, the Lord will not stop at the clouds, but will return and set His feet on this earth in victory. This is not meant to be a full study on the things that will happen at His return, merely a summary of the order of events following the tribulation period (seven years) and beginning with the physical, visible return of Christ to the earth.

1. Some of the signs that will happen before the time of His return with His saints are as follows. Because timing is essential to the understanding of prophecy, problems in interpretation will naturally arise from neglecting these details. There are specific prophecies for Israel as a nation and the church as an organism. It is vital that one pays close attention to these details to understand what is still a future event and to whom it applies.
 - a. False Christs: (Matthew 24:4-5) Jesus warned His disciples against those who would come and claim to be Him. They would attempt to deceive the children of God. These imposters would be around in any age; therefore, Jesus was leaving instructions to all future generations on how to handle these false Christs.
 - b. Wars and rumors of wars: (Matthew 24:6-7)
 - c. Famines: (Matthew 24:7) Famine will also be a tool of the Antichrist to bring men into bondage to him. (Revelation 13:17)
 - d. Pestilence: (Matthew 24:7) Pestilence is disease.
 - e. Earthquakes: (Matthew 24:7)
 - f. Martyrdom and persecution: (Matthew 24:9-10)
 - g. False prophets: (Matthew 24:23-24)
2. Christ will make a physical and visible return to the earth with His saints and in His glory.
 - a. Revelation 19:11-16 Depicts the heavens opening and Jesus on a white horse, wearing a vesture dipped in blood (representing His own blood) and great names like faithful and true.

- b. He had another name which only He knows.
 - c. Eyes of fire, to judge the works of men.
 - d. Crowns on His head as He is no longer meek and lowly but has taken His rightful place as King.
 - e. His armies of saints and angels are with Him and He is come to rule on this earth with a rod of iron.
 - f. This is prophesied in Zechariah 14:3-5 that His feet will stand on the Mt. of Olives.
3. The order of the events set in motion by His return.
- a. National repentance by the nation of Israel (Zechariah 12:10-11, Romans 11:6) this does not mean that all Jews will be saved, but that Israel as a nation will be saved because some righteous people are found in her. (Proverbs 14:34)
 - b. The destruction of the armies of the world (enemies of God) and the Antichrist (Zechariah 14:12-14, Revelation 14:19-20, II Thessalonians 2:8, Revelation 19:19-21)
 - c. Christ will descend to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4, Isaiah 52:7)
 - d. The nations will be judged (Proverbs 14:34, Matthew 25:31-34, 46, Joel 3:2, 12-14) Once again, nations are judged based on whether or not there are righteous people found in them. Is there enough righteousness in them to preserve them as a nation? For Sodom and Gomorrah, the number was 10 righteous people, but only 8 were found. (Genesis 18:32)
4. After these things, the millennial (thousand year) reign with Christ on this earth begins. (Zechariah 14:9) The binding of Satan (Revelation 20:1-3). This will be a one thousand year period on the earth where Satan will be bound up and not able to roam free as he does now, Jesus will be on the earth as its King and we will be with Him. It will be a time of complete peace as the King will rule with a rod of iron.

Questions about future things to discuss with your Foundations partner, Sunday school teacher or pastor.

Personal study time and application:

Reading: The study of things to come and prophecy is a study of the entire Bible. Prophecy and its fulfillment are Bible wide subjects. The explanations of things found in the gospels and the epistles require a working knowledge of the Old Testament and the covenants and prophecies. Great Bible books to read include Genesis (especially chapters 12-15) then the major and minor prophets. As you read these books, ask yourself questions about what you are reading.

1. Who is the Bible Speaking to in the passage you are reading? This is the person, nation or group that is directly impacted by the verses.
2. Does the apparent meaning seem to challenge a plain Bible teaching? If so, look to the context of the chapter and seek to bring the verse back into harmony with plain Bible teaching. If that is not possible, ask the Lord to help you understand it and go on reading. (Remember that NO prophecy of the Bible holds an interpretation that is contrary to the plain doctrinal teaching of the Bible)
3. Does the passage represent a time that has already past, a time that was happening in the present or some future event? Time and audience are the keys to understanding prophecy.
4. Remember that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation and avoid “new discoveries” in Scripture or in Science that conflict with plain Bible teaching.

What lesson does the fulfillment of Bible prophecy teach us about God?

Why can we be confident that we as saved people will not go through the tribulation?

What does I Thessalonians 4:17 mean when it says “so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Key Verses

Who we are in Christ Jesus: 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Accepting how God made me: Psalm 139:14 “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”

Personal Separation: I Corinthians 6:14 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?.”

Methods of Bible study: II Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Preparing for a ministry of disciple making: II Timothy 2:2 “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Finding the person you can disciple: Mar 3:14 “And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,”

Finding God’s will and direction: Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” **Romans 12:2** “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

The Word of God: Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Giving: 2 Corinthians 9:7 “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Forgiveness: Ephesians 4:32 “and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

What happens at death: Philippians 1:21 “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

The Second Coming of Christ: John 14:1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”