



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS CLASS

2015 Edition

**1207 MCDONOUGH ROAD
HAMPTON, GEORGIA 30228**

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THE WORD OF GOD CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES CHURCH

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Dear New Member:

I am Michael J. Gray, the Senior and Founding Pastor of this church. Myself and my wife, Lisa Gray are co-founders in this work. We began this work in October 1993.

My wife and I thank God for you. We believe every promise found in the Word of God, for you and your family. We also believe God for a Godly Transformation of your life.

We are very excited you have become a member of The Word of God Christian Ministries Church.

We are praying for you. We believe God for your journey here to be filled with the blessings of the Lord.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Michael J. Gray, Pastor

Founding Scriptures

St. John 1:1-4

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning, through Him all things are made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and life was the light of men.

Founding Date: October 24, 1993

**The Vision of
The Word of God Christian Ministries Church**

- Our goal is to win souls into the kingdom of God through the Word of God.
- Our goal is to nurture these souls until the day of Jesus' return.
- Our goal is to develop the true Christian Church. We define Church as a Body of Believers all working together to accomplish the perfect will of God, in Christ Jesus.
- Our goal is to provide a facility for true worship and true Christian fellowship according to Acts 2:44-47;**44** And all that believed were together, and had all things common: **45** And sold their possessions and goods, And parted them to all men, as every man had need. **46** And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. **47** Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.
- Our goal is to provide a Christian Academy to foster academic excellence and spiritual teaching God's way.
- Our goal is to provide a facility for the elderly. We will provide a place for them to fellowship, socialize, pray, exercise, shop, do arts/crafts and enjoy the richness of God's Word daily.
- Our goal is to provide safe haven for battered women and children. This program will be designed toward total family restoration with the help of Christian professionals.
- Our goal is to provide a rehabilitation program for those who are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

THE SCRIPTURES: We believe that the bible is the inspired Word of God and is inerrant in the original writings. The Bible, being the revealed Word of God, is the foundation from which all claims of truth shall be substantiated (II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:12).

GOD: We believe that there is only one true and living God existing in three persons- ***Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*** Each is a distinct person, but all of one essence, and all having the same nature, perfection, and attributes, each is worthy of precisely the same worship, confidence, and obedience (Genesis 1:1-3,26; Matthew 3:16,17; John 1:1,14; John 10:30, 14:26, 15:26; Mathew 28:19).

JESUS CHRIST: We believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He shed his blood on Calvary in our place, was buried, rose again and ascended to the Father according to Scriptures (Luke 1:35) (Luke 23:44-24:12)

HOLY SPIRIT: We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity, co-existent with the Father and Son. The Holy Spirit is the chief agent in the regeneration of the soul, He convicts us of sin, and the comforter to the believer. The Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the Body of Christ, permanently indwells him, and seals him in salvation for all eternity. (John 16:1-13).

MAN: We believe that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and are in need of the Savior, Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:23; I John 1:8, 10; Romans 5:7-9; John 14:6).

SALVATION: We believe that all who in faith, confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus, believe in their hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, are born again by the Holy Spirit and thus become the children of God. Salvation involves redemption, regeneration, sanctification, and glorification (John 8:41-45; Romans 10:9, 10; Romans 5:7-11; Colossians 1:13, 14; John 17:16—22; II Corinthians 5:17, I Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:6,7).

THE PRIEST HOOD OF THE BELIEVER: We believe in the priest hood of all believers so that every Christian has direct access to God in prayer through Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, and that there is no mediator between God and man other than Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:9, 10; Hebrews 4:14- 5:2).

SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER: We believe that salvation is not only a gift from the Lord, but also sustained by the Lord. Therefore, since salvation is wholly of the Lord, apart from the works of man, we hold that the believer shall be kept by the power of God through faith, unto eternal salvation (Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 1:6; John 3:16; John 10:27-19).

SATAN: We believe that Satan was originally created a perfect being. He rebelled against God. As a result, he became depraved and the adversary of God's people, and leader of a host of angels who fell with him. Satan has been judged and defeated at the cross and awaits his ultimate doom at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ (Ezekiel 28:14-19, Isaiah 14:12-15)

ORDINANCES: We believe the local church observes two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that all who receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord should be baptized by immersion into water. Baptism is symbolic of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. The Lord's Supper should be observed in remembrance of Him to show forth His death for our sins until He comes again (Matthew 28:18-20; I Corinthians 11:17-34).

LESSON 1

WEEK 1

SALVATION – THE NEW BORN CHRISTIAN

Objective: To Provide a biblical understanding of salvation.

Memory Verse: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
John 3:16

You made the most important decision you will ever make in giving your life to Jesus Christ. Your commitment was based on your faith that Jesus Christ, the son of God, died for your sins, and through his shed blood, you are redeemed from the curse of the Law and you have eternal life.

Your faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ is based upon you acknowledging the following:

- You are powerless to change your life.
- God did not create you to live a life of sin.
- God created you with a purpose.
- Your destiny is in the will of God.
- In Jesus Christ you will fulfill the purpose for which you were created.

Let's review the steps that brought you to this point:

1. At some point in your life God convicted you in your heart that you were a sinner.
2. You prayed, confessed your sins and asked Jesus Christ to come into your heart and save you.
3. You accepted Jesus Christ as Lord of your life. You were born again, and adopted into the family of God.
4. Your salvation is based upon God' mercy and grace. God saved you without your help.
5. God gave you what you needed to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life.

John 14:10-19

John 3:16

Romans 3:23

Romans 5:12

Romans 10:9-1

I John 1:9

Romans 6:23

Regeneration, New Birth, Born Again

Regeneration (palingenesia) is from a compound word meaning, "birth" and "again," and is used to describe spiritual regeneration. It is the miracle of God by which the principle of new spiritual life is implanted in man and the ruling nature of his soul is made holy. This is the new birth, being born again (cf. John 3:3-8; Eph. 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:23; cf. Ezek. 36:25-27).

Robert Haldane gives one of the best summaries of this essential doctrine: "Grace--the operation of the favor of God in the heart--is communicated, and the sinner becomes a new creature. Regeneration is not a work which is accomplished gradually, it is affected instantaneously. At first, faith is often weak; but as the new-born infant is as much in possession of life as the full-grown man, so the spiritual life is possessed as completely in the moment of regeneration as ever it is afterwards, and previous to that moment it had no existence. There is no medium between life and death: a man is either dead in sin, or quickened by receiving the Holy Spirit; he is either in Christ, or out of Christ; God has either begun a good work in him, or he is in a state of spiritual death and corruption Thus the same grace that operates in the election of the saints is exercised in their calling and regeneration, without which they would remain dead in trespasses and sins" (Romans).

The Scriptures are quite clear that the new birth or regeneration does not take place in successive stages of spiritual experience, but is the communication of spiritual life in contrast to spiritual death. "You were dead in your trespasses and sins" ([Ephesians 2:1](#)). The word "regeneration" stresses the beginning of a new state of affairs in contrast with the old.

In [John 3:3](#) the Jewish religious leader Nicodemus understood Jesus to speak of a repetition of a birth, or a second or repeated birth. However, regeneration is not a second physical birth but the act of God imparting spiritual life.

"Regeneration" is the giving of the life of God, eternal life, to a sinner who is spiritually dead. It has a point of beginning whereby the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual life to the individual dead in trespasses and sins.

When a person is *anathen* he is born anew and undergoes a radical change that is like a new birth. It can only be described as being born again spiritually. Jesus demanded that the sinner, "dead in trespasses and sins," be born again. He demanded that there be the impartation of divine life to the believing sinner. Only God can cause a person to be born spiritually. It is the miracle of God; a birth from above by the Holy Spirit.

[Ephesians 5:26](#) says, "having cleansed it by the washing of the water with the Word," is not referring to water baptism, but the Word of God. This gives a good explanation of the "water" in [John 3:5](#), [6](#). John Calvin said the water and Spirit referred to the one act of the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God takes the Word of God, and when the sinner believes, imparts the life of God.

[Titus 3:5](#) is a key verse because this is where regeneration is described as "washing." "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." The Word has a cleaning effect upon the believer's life.

"As in [Romans 6:3-6](#), the immersion is the picture or the symbol of the new birth, not the means of securing it. . . . The Holy Spirit does the renewing, man submits to the baptism *after* the new birth to picture it forth to men," writes A. T. Robertson.

God does not save any sinner because of any righteousness or virtue or merit in them ([Rom. 3:21-24](#); [Eph. 2:8-9](#); [2 Tim. 1:9](#)). It is an act of His grace, love and mercy based on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. "When the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" ([Titus 3:4-5](#)).

The Apostle Paul is not referring to baptism by immersion here because consistently in the New Testament people are baptized *after* they were saved as in [Acts 10:43-48](#).

The believing sinner is born spiritually, cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Water baptism is an outward testimony of what has already taken place within the believer. It is not a means of salvation, but a testimony that the individual has already been saved by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.

The means of grace through which God saves us are the "rebirth" illustrated as "washing" from our sinfulness, and the "renewal by the Holy Spirit." The whole emphasis is on God's saving grace, rather than anything a person does.

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, all things are new and all things are of God" ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)).

To demand that "water" refers to baptism as an essential part of regeneration plainly contradicts other Bible verses that make it explicitly clear that salvation is received by faith alone ([John 3:16, 36](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#); [Titus 3:5](#)). Jesus was telling Nicodemus that in order to enter into the Kingdom of God he must be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. To be born again means to be born of the Spirit.

Only when God ushers in the new heaven and new earth will sin and evil be entirely absent ([Rev. 20:7, 8](#); [Psa. 2:5](#); [Acts 3:21](#); [Matt. 19:28](#)).

Key Scriptures

[Titus 3:5](#); [James 1:18](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#); [John 3:5, 6](#)

Abiding Principles and Practical Applications

1. The new birth is something that God alone does in the sinner by His grace by an operation of the Holy Spirit. We are saved by grace when we put our faith in Jesus Christ. It is the starting point of a radically new spiritual life. From that point on we are to live the Christian life by grace every day of our Christian lives ([Rom. 8:15-17](#); [Gal. 4:6-7](#); [Eph. 1:13-14](#)).

2. We did not save ourselves; "He saved us." How did God do it? The work of the Spirit of God did it through the miracle of the new birth.

3. The sinner cannot regenerate himself; he is dead spiritually. Only the divine operation of the Holy Spirit can bring life to a human spirit.

4. Water baptism by means of immersion is definitely a part of our obedience and testimony to the command of Christ, and is a beautiful witness to His death and resurrection, but the new birth does not come through water baptism. No amount of water baptism can effect a spiritual change in a person. Salvation comes through faith in Christ ([Eph. 2:8-9](#); [Rom. 10:9-10, 13](#)), not water baptism.

5. The Apostle Paul cautioned adding anything to the sovereign saving grace of God ([Galatians 1:6-10](#)). It is a false doctrine that teaches that a lost sinner can only be saved by a baptism administered by a minister of the only "true church."

DISCUSSION

1. Who created you? _____ (Genesis 1:27)

2. In whose image are you created? _____ (Genesis 1:27)

3. Why were you created? _____ (Isaiah 43:7)

4. In the beginning, what was man's relationship like with God? _____
 _____ (Genesis chapters. 1& 2. Gen. 1:13)

5. How was our fellowship with God broken? _____
 _____ (Rom. 5:12)

6. What is sin? _____

7. What is a sin of commission? _____

8. What is a sin omission? _____

9. Do you sin? _____

 Rom 3:23 (Rom. 3:23, I John. 1:8) 1Jo 1:8.

10. What is the consequence of omission? _____
 _____ (Rom. 6:23)

11. What is a wage? _____

12. What kind of death do we earn from disobedience? _____

(Isaiah 59:1&2, Act 5:1-11) Acts 5:1-11

13. When someone rejects Christ, he/she is already _____ (John 3:18)

14. As a result of disobedience, who became the father? _____ (John 8:44)

15. Is everybody a child of God? _____ (John 1:7)

16. Why do we need the Word of God? _____

_____ (John. 1:1, Ro 10:17) (Rom.10:17) (Hebrews 4:12)

17. In what ways do people try to save themselves, i.e., “what” do men and women do in order to substitute for true repentance and faith in Jesus Christ? _____

18. In what way have you tried to reach God? _____

19. The Bible describes our efforts as: _____ (Isaiah 64:6)

20. Why do our efforts fail? _____

_____ (Ephesians 2:8-10)

21. How does God feel about you? _____ (John 3:16)

22. How did God demonstrate his love for you? _____ (Rom. 5:8)

23. What did Christ death do for you? _____

_____ (I Peter 3:18)

24. How do we become saved? _____ (Rom. 10:9-10)

25. What did Jesus promise in John 10:9? _____

26. According to II Corinthians 5:17, what took place the moment you received Christ?

27. What happened to your sins? _____

_____ (Isaiah 1:18)

28. What promise does Jesus make to believers in John 10:27-29? _____

29. What is eternal life? _____ (John 17:3)

30. According to John 14:2-3, what is Jesus doing for you? _____

_____ Where will we be? _____

31. What does Hebrews 5:12-14 remind us as sons and daughters of God? _____

32. What should all believers do according to II Timothy 2:15? _____

33. Are you sure you're saved? _____ If no, what questions do you have? _____

LESSON II WEEK 2

GETTING TO KNOW JESUS

Objective: Introduce the class to Jesus Christ. Teach new members the desire for a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Help new members understand once they know Jesus for themselves, they will experience victory over sin and death. We will confirm through biblical evidence that Christ is deity – *God the human form*.

Memory Verse:

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1, 14).

Jesus Christ is the subject of more than 300 Old Testament Prophecies. His birth, nearly 2,000 years ago, and events of His life had been foretold by many individuals and prophets over a period of 1,500 years. History confirms beyond a doubt that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, the son of God and Savior of the world.

LESSON TWO EXAMINES:

A. Who is Jesus? _____

Scripture References:

1. Matthew 16:13-16 Mt 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
2. Matthew 1:18-21 fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost
3. John 1:1 & 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
4. Hebrews 2:14 says: Jesus was a partaker of flesh and blood, meaning that He came to earth in the form of humanity. Luke 2:52 in The Living Bible says. “So Jesus grew both tall [physical] and wise [mental] and was loved by God [spiritual] and man [social].

Are you developing a well-balanced life in these four areas (physical, mental, spiritual, social)?

B. His Human Nature

1. How does Matthew (1:23-25) describe the birth of Jesus Christ? _____

2. According to Matthew 2:1, where was Jesus born?

3. Was Jesus' childhood like yours? (Luke 2:52) Yes or No? _____ If yes, why?

4. List the characteristics of Jesus' human nature in the chart below.

Scripture	Characteristic
a) Luke 19:41; John 11:33.35	_____
b) Matthew 4:2, 21:18	_____
c) John 4:7, 19:28	_____
d) Matthew 8:24; Mark 4:38	_____
e) John 4:6	_____
f) Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46	_____
g) Mark 3:5	_____

Which of these areas have you personally experienced recently? (Tell Jesus how you feel he understands.)

5. What is your response to Jesus' humanity? How does it make you feel towards Him?

6. How important is it to believe Jesus is God and man (I John 4:1,2) (Matthew 4:1-11)?

7. What advantage do we have because of his temptations (Hebrews 2:17,18)? _____

The Revealed Character of God

1. Jesus revealed many things about the character of God. Which characteristics are revealed through the following scriptures?
 - a) He is _____ Matt. 18:20, 28:28--20
Everywhere at the same time
 - b) He is _____ Heb 1:1-5, Hebrews 1:10,
10; John 1:13
 - c) He is John 16:30 _____ John 1:47-
50, 16:30, 21:17
 - d) He is John 13:1, 15:13
 - e) He is _____ Luke 23:34

f) He is _____Thessalonians 5:24

g) He _____John 8:46; II Corinthians 5:21

h) He is _____John 5:30; Acts 22:14

People seek happiness in materialism, alcohol, sex, career, etc. But, Jesus came to give you the real purpose of life.

Scripture References:

1. In Matthew 1:21, why was the Son of God named “Jesus” and why did He come to the world?

2. How was Jesus’ reason for coming going to be accomplished?

3. Read John 3:1-21. Define these terms in your own words.

	Term	Definition
a) v 3,7	born again	_____
b) v 15,16	believe	_____
c) v 15,16	eternal life	_____
d) v 17	saved	_____
e) v 18	condemned	_____

4. What is your impression of Nicodemus, the Pharisee and religious ruler, as he asked about salvation? _____

5. True or False. Nicodemus believed in Jesus. _____John 3:2

6. What was Jesus’ purpose in coming to the earth? _____

7. Is anyone exempt from sin? _____Romans 3:23

8. What do you earn as a result of sin? _____Rom 6:23

Do you believe in miracles? Jesus, as God, has unlimited power. We can learn many things about God through the miracles and works Jesus did on earth.

9. Each scripture gives a miracle performed by Jesus. State what miracle was performed and where it happened.

- a) John 9 _____
- b) John 6:16-21 _____
- c) John 6:1-4 _____
- d) John 2:1-11 _____
- e) John 4:46-56 _____
- f) John 8:1-11 _____

10. Each miracle also had a teaching involved. List some of the lessons, the miracles listed taught about Jesus Christ or God.

- g) John 9 _____
- h) John 6:16-21 _____
- i) John 6:1-4 _____
- j) Luke 5:17-25 _____
- k) John 2:1-11 _____
- l) John 4:46-56 _____
- m) John 8:1-11 _____

His Death, Burial and Resurrection (note if the scripture references death or resurrection)

Scripture References:

- 1. Luke 18:31-33 _____
- 2. Matthew 27 _____
- 3. Hebrew 9:22 _____
- 4. Ephesians 1:7 _____
- 5. Matthew 28:18 _____
- 6. Ephesians 4:8-10 _____

7. Revelation 1:18 _____
8. Explain why Jesus was called the Lamb of God. _____
John 1:29,36
9. What kind of lamb was He? _____ I Peter 1:19
10. How often must Christ's sacrifice be made? _____ Hebrews 7:25-27; 10:10-14
11. What did the blood of Jesus Christ accomplish? Heb 9:14 _____

LESSON III WEEK 3

ORIENTATION OF FAITH – CHURCH ORDINANCES

I. BAPTISM

Objective: To show how the ordinances, baptism and communion, relate to our relationship and fellowship with Christ.

Memory Verse:

For by the Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (*I Corinthians 12:13*).

WHY DO WE BAPTIZE?

- In obedience to Christ (*Matthew 28:19*)
- Jesus, in his baptism, identified himself with sinners (baptism unto repentance) (*Matthew 3:11, 13-16, Mark 1:4; Acts 19:4*) Needless to say, Jesus was perfect and sinless; therefore needed no repentance, he said to John the Baptist, “Suffer it to be so.” I must identify with sinners. (*Matthew 3:13-15*)
- To identify with Christ. (*Acts 2:28-29; Romans 6:4,5*)
- To express as a visual at what has taken place (naturally, spiritually, and supernaturally) within: “being born again.” (*Colossians 2:10-14*)

HOW DO WE PRACTICE OR WHICH WAY DO WE BAPTIZE

We, at The Word of God Christian Ministries Church understand the scriptures to teach baptism by immersion. Immersion means to plunge into, to dip under (*Matthew 3:13-16; Mark 1:9, 10*).

WHAT DOES BAPTISM DO FOR US?

I. The Bible defines baptism in two aspects:

A. Spirit baptism – The act of the Holy Spirit where he makes us a part of the body of Christ (*I Corinthians 12:13*). Every believer experiences this baptism. It takes place the very moment we believe and receive Jesus Christ as Savior (*Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12; I Peter 3:21; Mark 1:4-8*)

B. Water baptism – We see water baptism being mainly symbolic; those who have received the Lord Jesus as Savior should be baptized (*Acts 2:39-41; Acts 8:36-39*)

We believe that water baptism identifies us with Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3-11).

We believe that in baptism we declare ourselves dead to the old life of the flesh (sin) and alive in the Spirit (Romans 6:3-5).

We believe that in baptism we declare new power to live the Christian life by virtue of Christ's resurrection (Romans 6:6, 7).

We believe that every Christian should be baptized in obedience to the command of Christ, and therefore, only baptized believers should partake of the Communion Service (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 9:18, Acts 8:12; Acts 16:15, 33).

QUESTIONS:

Have you been baptized?_____

Were you baptized before you truly committed your life to Jesus Christ?_____

Was it your decision to be baptized?_____

Do you understand the significance of baptism? Explain in your own words._____

II. COMMUNION

Objective: The Lord's Supper took place on the night before Jesus died. The breaking of the bread symbolizes the body of Jesus Christ and the drink is symbolic of the blood that was shed for our sins. As Christians partake of the Lord's Supper, our purpose is to remember Christ, receive strength from Him, and rededicate ourselves to His cause.

Memory Verse:

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He comes (I Corinthians 11:26).

To understand communion, we must first understand its birth (Matthew 26:17-30).

COMMUNION IS CALLED:

- The Last Supper
- The Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:20)
- The Eucharist
- The Communion (I Corinthians 10:16)
- The Breaking of Bread (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7)
- The Lord's Table (I Corinthians 10:21)
- The Cup of Blessing (I Corinthians 10:16)

ORIGIN OF PASSOVER

It is born out of the Passover feast (Matthew 26:17).

It is born out of Christ's revelation to his disciples about his soon coming death for the sins of the world (Matthew 26:28).

It was to be done with deep soul searching (Matthew 26:22).

It was to be understood symbolically, of eating Christ's body and drinking His blood (Matthew 26:26, 27).

It was to be a part of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:28).

It is to be done with thanksgiving. It represented the removal of the sins of the partakers.

It was done in remembering of Jesus Christ. (What He did for us on the cross of Calvary. (I Corinthians 10: 11-25).

It was to be a witness of Christ's death (atonement) until His return (I Corinthians 11:26).

It was not to be taken in open and blatant un-repentance (I Corinthians 11:27-32).

The Communion Service is a service of remembrance of Jesus Christ and all that He accomplished for us to live in grace.

HOW SHOULD WE APPROACH THE COMMUNION TABLE?

1. _____ (I Corinthians 11:23-26)
2. _____ (I Corinthians 10:16, 17)
3. _____ (I Corinthians 11:28).
4. _____ (Rev 22:12)

QUESTIONS:

When do you begin preparing for the Lord's Supper? _____

Do you understand the significance of Communion? Explain in your own words.

QUICK REVIEW

1. HOW DOES WATER BAPTISM IDENTIFIES US? (underline the best answer)
 - A. As One Who Believes fully in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior
 - B. WITH CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION, DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION
 - C. AS SOMEONE WHO IS LEAD BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

2. WHEN SHOULD COMMUNION BE TAKEN? (underline the best answer)
 - A. ONLY WHEN WE HAVE SINNED AND ASKED FORGIVENESS
 - B. EVERY FIRST SUNDAY
 - C. TO REMEMBER WHAT CHRIST DID FOR US ON THE CROSS
 - D. ONLY WHEN WE HAVE NOT SINNED, LEST WE EAT AND DRINK TO OUR DAMNATION

LESSON IV WEEK 4

Christ Centered Life-The New Life Of The Believer

THE CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

Objective: To show the difference between our new life in Christ and the indwelling life of Christ, not our own efforts, the key to the Christian life.

Memory Verse:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away behold, all things are become new (II Corinthians 5:17).

INTRODUCTION

The Christian life begins with spiritual birth (John 3:6) through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8, 9). The Christian life is a personal, daily relationship between the believer and Christ. This life is lived by faith. We commit our lives to Christ's keeping because He has proven Himself faithful by His life, His death, His resurrection and His abiding presence.

Paul challenges us in Ephesians 4:1, 2 to live worthy of the name "Christian," meaning "Christ's one." This includes trusting the Holy Spirit to produce His Fruit inside me and yielding to Him. The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

A NEW CREATION

People should be able to see a difference between Christians and non-Christians because of the way Christians live, II Corinthians 5:17 says: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Paul admonishes us in Ephesians 4:17-24 to leave behind the old life of sin now that we are followers of Christ. Know, however, that the ***Christian life is a process***. Although we have a new nature, we don't automatically have all good thoughts and attitudes when we become new people in Christ. We as followers of Christ must be committed to the truth. This means that our words should be honest and our actions should reflect Christ's integrity (Ephesians 4:15).

EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Living truly or Holy” is not always easy, convenient, or pleasant, but it is necessary. The Christian life is more than difficult, it is humanly impossible. Jesus Christ alone can live it. It is the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives that transforms our lives. Know, however, that when the Holy Spirit moves in, our human spirit stays. We then go through the process of allowing our human spirits to decline while the Holy Spirit increases His influence and control over us.

When the Holy Spirit moves in, there is a war that goes on inside of us. Paul spoke about that in Romans 7 when he said, “the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish” (Romans 7:19). We all experience this. In Galatians 5:17 he describes the two forces at work within us – the Holy Spirit and our evil inclinations. Paul is not saying that these forces are equal. The Holy Spirit is infinitely stronger, but we are weak. Left to our sin, we will make wrong choices. Our only way to freedom from our natural evil desires is through the empowering of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 4:23, 24; Colossians 3:3-8).

As we journey through this life, we are to “walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16), bear the “Fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-25), set our minds on the Spirit” (Acts 18:25), “not quench the Spirit” (I Thess. 5:19), “not grieve the Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 4:30) and be filled with the character of the Holy God and to be controlled in our actions and reactions by that character.

WHAT YOU MUST DO

In Colossians Chapters 2, 3 and 4, Paul says, Christians must:

- A. Walk like Christ Jesus (2:6)
- B. Be rooted in Christ (2:7)
- C. Be built up in Christ (2:7)
- D. Be established in the faith (2:7)
- E. Abound in the faith (2:7)
- F. Be joyful in the faith (2:7)
- G. Beware of deception (2:4,8, 18-19)
- H. Live dead to the world and all its sinful ways (2:20-23)
- I. Seek things above (3:1)
- J. Set affections above 3:2)
- K. Mortify, put to death, members on earth (3:5).

- Become dead to: Fornication
- Uncleanness
- Inordinate affection
- Evil concupiscence (evil desires)
- Covetousness which is idolatry
- L. Put off the old man (3:8)
 - Anger
 - Wrath
 - Malice
 - Blasphemy
 - Filthy communication out of your mouth
- M. Lie not one to another (3:9)
- N. Put on the new man (3:10-12)
 - Bowels of mercies
 - Kindness
 - Humbleness of mind
 - Meekness
 - Longsuffering
- O. Forbear on another (3:13)
- P. Forgive one another (3:13)
- Q. Put on divine love (3:14)
- R. Let God's peace rule (3:16)
- S. Be thankful (3:16)
- T. Teach, admonish one another (3:16)
- U. Let God's word dwell in you (3:16)
- V. Sing with grace (3:16)
- W. Do all things in Jesus' name (3:17)
- X. Give thanks to God (3:17)
- Y. Continue in Prayer (4:2)
- Z. Watch with thanksgiving (4:2)
- AA. Walk in wisdom (4:5)
- BB. Redeem the time (4:5)
- CC. Speak with seasoned grace (4:6)

RESULTS OF LIVING THE CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

As Christians abide in Christ and live in the fullness of the Spirit, the fruit of Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, gentleness and self-control, listed in Galatians 5:22-23 is developed and the Christian becomes more mature spiritually. The maturing of the fruit of the spirit is the life of the Christian. The more we acknowledge His life within us, and the more we allow Him through the power of the Holy Spirit to live out His life through us, the more evidence we will see of the fruits of the Spirit.

QUICK REVIEW

READ: Galatians 5:16-26

1. WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT? _____

2. WHAT ARE THE WORKS OF THE FLESH? _____
3. A CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE IS (underline the best answer)
 - A. FELLOWSHIPING WITH OTHER BELIEVERS
 - B. SERVING GOD IN THE CHURCH
 - C. IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT THE HOLY-SPIRIT
4. THE HOLY SPIRIT RESIDES
 - A. AT THE LEFT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER. JESUS IS ON THE RIGHT.
 - B. WITHIN EVERY BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN
 - C. IN THE HEARTS OF MANKIND
5. THREE THINGS THE HOLY SPIRIT ENDEAVORS TO ACCOMPLISH IN US ARE:
 - A. TO CONVICT, TO INTERCEDE AND TO GUIDE
 - B. TO CONDEMN, TO EACH AND BRING PROSPERITY
 - C. TO HEAL OUR BODY, TO WARN, TO MAKE US HAPPY

LESSON V
WEEK 5

COMMUNICATION WITH GOD

GOD TALKS TO US THROUGH HIS WORD

Objective: To gain spiritual dependence of God's word for daily Christian living

Memory Verse:

But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves
(James 1:22).

When you personally receive Christ as your Savior and Lord, you began a great adventure. That great adventure is mapped out in the Holy Scriptures. As you read and study the Bible in the power of the Holy Spirit, you will find strength and direction. You will learn and claim the many great promises God has reserved for His own.

Approach the Bible with prayer, reverence, awe, and expectancy: with a willing mind, with thirst for truth and righteousness and fullness in the Lord Jesus Christ, with a humble and contrite heart, trusting God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to finish the work in which God has begun.

“If a man loves me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23)

What is the Word? _____ (John 17:17)

Who wrote the Word? _____ (II Peter 1:21)

Is all the Word infallible? _____

_____ (II Timothy 3:16, 17)

Why were the scriptures written? _____

_____ (John 20:31)

What is the Word able to do for you?

_____ (Romans 1:16)

_____ (Romans 10:17)

_____ (John 8:32)

_____ (1 Peter 2:2)

_____ (Hebrews 4:12)

What is the importance of the Word? _____ *Psalm 119:105*

How do we get into the Word and how does the Word get into us?

_____ (*II Timothy 2:15*)

_____ (*Joshua 1:8*)

_____ (*Psalm 119:9-11*)

_____ (*Romans 10:17*)

_____ (*Rev. 1:3*)

What does Isaiah 55:10-11 say concerning the Word of God? _____

What does Hebrew 4:12 say about the Word of God? _____

PRAYER

LEARN HOW TO TALK TO GOD

OBJECTIVE: To learn to use the great power available through prayer.

MEMORY VERSE: If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. (*John 14:14*)

Prayer is the inspiring experience of conversing with and the praising of God as our loving heavenly Father. Few experiences can equal prayer in empowering Christians and lifting them above their problems. Many times, a lack of character can be traced to a lack of prayer. When it is hardest to pray, one should pray harder. Our prayer life should be such that we come to know the Lord Jesus in a personal way. Our life becomes more effective as our relationship with Christ become more intimate.

What is prayer? _____

Who can pray? _____ (*John 9:31*)

Why should we pray? _____ (*Matt 26:41*)

How should we pray? _____ (*I Thess 5:16-18*)

To whom should we pray? _____ (*Psalms 5:1-2*)

In whose name should we pray? _____ (*John 16:24*)

Who is praying for us? _____ (*John 17:9*)

When, where, and what should we pray? See table below to write the when, where and what we should pray.

WHEN	WHERE	WHAT
<i>Dan. 6:10</i>	<i>Matt. 6:6</i>	<i>Job 42:10</i>
<i>I Thess 5:17</i>	<i>Matt 14:23</i>	<i>Eph 3:14-17</i>
<i>Ps. 5:3</i>	<i>Acts 16:25</i>	<i>Matt 9:38</i>
<i>Mark 1:35</i>	<i>Acts 12:5</i>	<i>Matt 11:24</i>
<i>Ps. 55:17</i>	<i>Luke 18:10</i>	<i>Mark 14:38</i>
<i>Luke 18:1</i>	<i>Luke 9:16</i>	<i>Luke 6:28, I Tim. 2:1-3</i> <i>Luke 6:12,13, Jonah 2:7</i>

What are the results of prayer? _____
 _____ *Phil. 4:6-7*
 _____ *John 14:13, 14*

QUICK REVIEW

1. GOD TALKS TO ME THROUGH HIS _____
- 2 THE WORD OF GOD IS USED FOR (underline the best answer)
 - DD. CORRECTION, INSTRUCTION, DOCTRINE
 - EE. PRAYER, FASTING, HOLINESS
 - FF. WEDDING CEROMONIES
3. NAME FIVE WAYS TO KNOW THE WORD OF GOD
 - A. HEAR IT, PRAY ABOUT IT, READ IT, CARRY YOUR BIBLE, MEMORIZE IT
 - B. MEDITATE ON IT, STUDY IT, READ IT, MEMORIZE SCRIPTURES, HEAR IT.
 - C. WATCH CHRISTIAN TV, STUDY IT, TALK ABOUT IT, READ BOOKS ABOUT IT
4. PRAYER IS A _____ WITH GOD.

5. THREE TYPES OF PRAYER ARE (underline the best answer)
- A. THANKSGIVING, PRAISE, PROCLAMATION
 - B. CONFESSION, SUBLIMATION, THANKSGIVING
 - C. INTERCESSION, THANKSGIVING, PRAISE
 - D. BEGGING, CLAIMING, INTIMIDATION

LESSON VI
WEEK 6

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

MEMORY VERSE:

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. 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 (Romans 12:1-2)

I. INTRODUCTION

Whenever there is a body of people, there must be Order. There must also be rules of ethics. There is no need to establish laws to govern interpersonal relationships for those who abide alone. Law and order is necessary to preserve order, happiness, and good relations between people. When laws are established there needs to be submission to those laws for harmony to be maintained. If the laws are violated, discipline must follow (Romans 13:1-2)

- a. The law should not just be obeyed externally, but also internally so that one may have a clear conscience before God. (Romans 13:1-5).
- b. Therefore, there is need for the “I Will” of every person to be submitted to the “SUPREME WILL,” the will of God. The “Will of God” is expressed in the “Word of God.” The Word shows God’s way of doing things.
- c. Because of the sinfulness of man and the imperfection of believers, there is a *need for divine discipline* in the church.

II. DEFINITION OF THE WORD DISCIPLINE

1. The word discipline is found only one time in the bible. Yet, its definition is the basic foundation of the Bible teaching.
 - a. Job 36:10 – He openeth also their ear to discipline
 - b. Strong Correction – a place in the desert; “Chastisement”
 - c. Correction is not punishment. It is correction. If correction is not heeded, then it leads to punishment. So to be corrected does not mean to be punished.
2. Discipline is defined as:
 - a. Teaching, learning to discipline.
 - b. Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or morals.
 - c. Discipline is defined as – if unheeded, punishment, to inflict pain or penalty.
 - d. Discipline is defined as rule or system of rules which governs conduct or activity.

III. DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH BODY

1. I am my brother's keeper (Galatians 6:1-2)
2. It demonstrates that "None of us lives unto himself" (Romans 14:7-8)
3. Sometimes someone will tell you to mind your own business and keep your nose out of theirs. The fact is that your brother is your business as being members of God's family (Matthew 18:15-17).

IV. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

1. To **MATURE** a body of believers
Unto maturity -- "be no more children"
(Ephesians 4:12-16; I Corinthians 3:11)
2. To **PROVE** that leaders love and care
"...that our care for you... might appear..."
(II Corinthians 7:12)
3. To **INTENSIFY** self-examination in the church.
"...what carefulness...what clearing...what fear..."
(II Corinthians 7:11)
4. To **AFFIRM** obedience to God's Authority
"...whether ye obedient in all things"
(II Corinthians 2:9)
5. To **PURIFY** the spirit and message of the church.
"...A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"
(I Corinthians 5:6)
6. To **DESTROY** fleshly lust in a believer
"...Deliver...unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh..."
(I Corinthians 5:5)
7. To **CONFIRM** individual responsibility for one another.
"...exhort one another daily...lest any of you be hardened"
(Hebrews 3:13)
8. To **DENY** Satan any advantage in the church
"Least Satan should get an advantage of us..."
(Corinthians 2:11)
9. To **PROTECT** scripture from perversion and error.
"...deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped."
(Titus 1:10:11)

- 10 To RESTORE repentant believers
“...forgive him, and comfort him...comfort your love ...”
(I Corinthians 5:11; I Samuel 16:1)

V. THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE

As in the natural family, there must also be discipline in the spiritual family.
Discipline is needed for the following reasons:

1. Discipline is basically designed to maintain order and spiritual development.
Without it there would be chaos.
 - a) When there was “no king in the land – when there was no law, no order, no government or structure, the people did what they wanted to do and what they felt like doing, which also lead to destruction”. (Judges 18:1, 19:1, 21:25).
2. Discipline introduces the principle of submission. My will submitted to the will of God.
3. Discipline exercised in love, gives an individual and a congregation a sense of security.
4. Discipline is needed to uphold the moral standard of God’s Word. Maintaining the holiness of God in the church.
5. Discipline guides the immature. Stabilizes the weak and cause people to come to maturity in the Lord.

REVERENCE OF THE TEMPLE

To have reverence for the Church (the Body of Christ) and the Church Building and Facilities, we must understand what the Church is – the importance of the purpose of it. If we do not have understanding of the purpose, we will abuse it.

I. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

- A. The word Church means – “the called out”. We as people who have been saved are “the called out”, the chosen of the Lord.
 1. The “called out” come together in a collective gathering at an appointed time and place. The Church Building is the place where the “called out” gather.
 2. In reality, we individuals who are saved are the called out, the church. The New Testament Church is revealed as The Body of Christ composed of all nations of people who are saved (Acts 2).

- B. The congregation means Convocation - assembly
 - 1. Numbers 10:7 - the congregation was gathered by the trumpets: a summons.
 - a) Psalms 22:22 - In the midst of the congregation
 - b) Psalms 35:18 - Give thanks in the congregation
 - c) Psalms 149:1 - Praise him in the congregation of saints
 - 2. Israel was called together out of their tents and homes to the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. That was the church, the assembly.
 - 3. The church is the “called out” the congregation is the “called out” to assembly together.

II. **WHY WE SHOULD REVERENCE THE CHURCH BUILDING**

- A. It is a place God has chosen for assembly. It is a place where God has placed you in His universal Body.
- B. To reverence the place is to reverence God. To give to the place is to give reverence to God.
- C. If you love and respect God, you will love and respect His people and His place.
- D. If you love your home, would you disrespect your home by letting it get in disarray or disorder? Would you allow family, friends or visitors to come to your home and disrespect it?

WAYS THAT DISRESPECT THE CHURCH BUILDING

- E. Once service begins or order is called for, you continue to talk and/ or walk around.
 - 1. Once the service is called to order, understand the presence of God is “not coming” the presence of God is already there. When you get to church, the presence of God is already present.
- F. Please use the restroom before service – getting up to go to the restroom can be very distracting to people around you.
- G. If a person wants to talk to you after order has been called, please quietly advise the person this conversation will pick up “after service”.
- H. Remember noise may cause the person next to you **not** to hear what the Spirit is saying to them.
- I. In a collective gathering, God speaks to His assembled people – Holy Spirit speaks directly to each person concerning what that person needs to hear. Example: You hear what the minister is saying, what he is saying does not affect you, so you began to move or talk. The distraction or noise may and (does) cause the person next to you to

miss what is being said and what is being said is ministering to him or her directly. **THEY MISS OUT** because of your non- reverence for the CHURCH BUILDING.

- J. When the Holy Spirit begins to minister under the anointing of song, tongues, and the Word – Be sensitive.
- K. The end of the sermon is not necessarily the end of the service.
 - 1. The service is opened in order. The service will end in order.
 - 2. Do not get up and “slip out” thinking no one will see. This is OUT OF ORDER.
 - 3. Because the preacher has finished his message, DOES NOT MEAN THE SERVICE IS OVER. Please do not move unnecessarily, because the people who the Spirit is dealing with for the altar call may become distracted.
- L. The Church Property is NOT just the building, but also the entire grounds. Once you exit the church building, enter the parking lot and turn onto McDonough Road you are no longer on the ground of the Church’s property.

- 1. To respect the Church’s property is to respect the authority and the laws that govern the Church’s property.
- 2. Parking attendants showing you where to park, and how to enter and exit the parking lots are ministers doing the ministry to the best of their ability and the glory of God. OBEY them. OBEY SET RULES.
- 3. Obedience shows respect not only to the one you are obeying, but also and ultimately to the glory of God.

QUICK REVIEW

- 1. THE WORD “CHURCH” MEANS _____. IF YOU HAVE BEEN _____, YOU ARE _____, THE CHOSEN OF THE LORD.
- 2. TRUE OR FALSE: I AM MY BROTHER’S KEEPER
- 3. TRUE OR FALSE: DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED TO UPHOLD THE MORAL STANDARDS OF GOD’S WORD.
- 4. THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS:
 - a. TO MATURE, PROTECT, RESTORE
 - b. TO TEAR DOWN, CRUSH, HUMILIATE

LESSON VII
Week 7

HOW TO BUILD CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Objective: To gain understanding in how to build Christian relationships.

Definition: A Christian relationship is a bond in which the participants exercise the character and qualities of Jesus Christ, such as unconditional love, kindness, forgiveness, patience, humility, honesty and righteousness.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SECULAR AND CHRISTIAN RELATONSHIPS

Secular Relationships

Christian relationships

Self-serving	Serving God and others (Matt. 20:26-29; Phil 2:3, 4)
Places self-first	Places God first (Matt. 6:33)
Is accountable to	Accountable to God and brethren (Col. 1:28)
Impatient	Patient (I Cor. 13:4)
Jealous	Not Jealous (I Cor. 13:4)
Boastful	Humble (Phil 2:5-14)
Arrogant: What can I get	What can I give? (I Cor. 13:4, 5; I Jn 4:7,8)
Unforgiving, Holds grudges	Forgiving, Forgives, (I Cor. 13:4, 5; Matt. 6:14, 15)
Rejoices in unrighteousness	Rejoice in the truth. (I Cor. 13:4-6)
Easily shaken or broken.	Endures (I Cor. 13:4-7)

The essence and foundation of Christian relationships is unconditional love (Matt. 22:35-40, I Cor. 13:4-13, John 14:15, I John 4:20-21, I John 5:2-3).

WHY ARE CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS IMPORTANT?

For individual spiritual growth and maturity: To increase in Christ-likeness: To perfect our capacity to love God and man.

- Love one another. Jn. 15:12
- Restore one another. Gal. 6:1
- Bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2
- Confess our sins to one another. James 5:16
- Pray for one another. Cor. 3:12
- Admonish and teach one another. Col. 3:16

HOW TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Strive to be Christ-like. Don't fake holiness.

Love people. Treat love as a verb and "act" on it.

Constantly look for ways to affirm others positively and edify them instead of being critical and tearing them down.

Forgive people who have wronged you.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal weaknesses/ strongholds in your character which need to be confessed and repented.

Be serious and intentional about conforming to the image of Jesus Christ. (Romans 12:2; Matt. 6:33)

Questions

1. What is love? _____ Rom. 5:8; I Cor. 13:4-13).

2. Why is love so important in our relationship with God and others?

3. Is love a feeling? _____

4. How can we show our love for God? _____ (John 14:15)

5. How can we show our love for friends? _____ (John 15:13)

6. How can we show our love for others? _____ (Gal 5:13; Matt 20-28)

7. Do you believe that sexual relationships are intended only for the marriage relationships between a man and a woman? _____

(I Cor. 6:13b, 16-20, Gal. 5:19; Romans 1:24-32 Lev. 18:22, 20:13)

WHAT THINGS (ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS, THOUGHT-PATTERNS, ETC), NEED TO BE PERFECTED IN YOUR LIFE SO THAT YOU MAY HAVE, MAINTAIN AND ENJOY MORE SPIRIT- FILLED RELATIONSHIPS?

FINDING YOUR PLACE IN MINISTRY (I COR. 12:12-31)

OBJECTIVE: To understand how the Holy Spirit empowers each of us to carry out God's Will as servants in the Body of Christ. When we are saved, we become servants for Christ and He equips us for Ministry.

MEMORY VERSE:

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

The three (3) chapters known as the “Gift” chapters are:
Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4

UNDERSTANDING MINISTRY/GIFT AND WHERE WE FIT

I Corinthians 12:12-13

The Apostle Paul compares the Body of Christ (all believers) to the human body. Each member is dependent on the other. No member is more or less important than the other. Unity is the key factor. “Though we are many members, we are of one body.”

Romans 12:1-2

“We are to present our bodies a living sacrifice”. Like soldiers in the armed forces of our country, we are to look upon our duty to Jesus as chosen people who no longer conform to the desires of this world, but are being trained to carry out God’s agenda.

Romans 12:3-8

God gives gifts according to His grace. We are not to get puffed up in our Ministries but operate in terms of God’s glory, not ours. We are unique in our gifts, personalities, and abilities and should use them according to our faith.

If we love children, we should direct our efforts towards working in the Youth Ministries. If the Lord has delivered you from substance abuse, you might direct your attention to the Over-comers Ministry. There are many areas where you can use your unique gift. Ask where the need is greatest, and pray for the Lord to show you where He would have you to be.

Ephesians 4:1-4

We should always be aware that we are God’s chosen people and walk worthy of that calling. Our lives should be lived in such a way that it ministers to all those who see and know us.

We should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. We need to understand that it is the same Spirit living in us and that bonds us together. The same Spirit gives us gifts to proclaim Jesus is Lord.

CHRIST AS LORD AND HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Ephesians 4:11

“He called some to be Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers” (sometimes known as the fivefold ministry gifts).

Other gifts (sometimes referred to as “foundational” gifts) can be found throughout the reference chapters including the following.

Acts 8:20; Romans 1:11, 11:29; 12:6; I Corinthians 12:1-31, 13:3-8, 14:1, 14:12
Ephesians 4:7-8, I Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6, Hebrews 2:4)

DISCIPLESHIP - A LIFESTYLE

Jesus said in John 8:31-32, “If you continue in my word, then are you my disciple indeed and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” As we follow Christ, we must continue to study and grow in God’s word. We then take on the same responsibilities as disciples, spreading the Gospel.

Acts 1:8 tell us that Jesus told his disciples: “And you shall be my witness ... in Jerusalem, Samara, Judea, and the uttermost parts of the earth ... our homes, schools, jobs, families, communities, any place we might be.

IDENTIFYING YOUR MINISTRY GIFT(S)

- a. Pray that the Lord reveal to you what your special gifts are.
- b. Begin to notice what characteristics “flow” in your spiritual activity. Ask yourself do I work best with adults, young people, or children? Where would I be happiest in service? Where is the greatest need? Have I any talent that would make my service here acceptable?
- c. Always recognize if your desire is not spiritually motivated. Ask yourself am I doing this for recognition to myself or for God to get the glory?

QUICK REVIEW

1. CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE (underline the best answer):
 - A. IT IS A SIN TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-CHRISTIANS
 - B. THEY HELP PERFECT OUR CAPACITY TO LOVE GOD AND MAN
 - C. WE STAY OUT OF TROUBLE WHEN WE HAVE CHRISTIAN FRIENDS
2. THE FIRST THING I MUST DO TO FIND MY PLACE IN MINISTRY IS (underline the best answer):
 - A. SIGN UP FOR AN AUXILARY I LIKE
 - B. PRAY FOR DIRECTION FROM GOD
 - C. ASK A SPIRITUAL PERSON WHO KNOWS ME
3. THE PURPOSE OF MINISTRY GIFTS ARE (underline the best answer):
 - A. TO LIVE A PROSPEROUS LIFE
 - B. TO GET CLOSER TO GOD
 - C. TO EDIFY THE BODY OF BELIEVERS AND MINISTER TO THE LOST
 - D. TO BUILD OURSELVES UP IN CHRIST SO WE WONT HAVE LOW SELF-ESTEEM

LESSON VIII
Week 8

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Two questions come to mind when examining the topic of stewardship:

1. What is a Christian steward?
2. What are we to be stewards over?

- A. A steward is “a manager or superintendent of another’s possessions.” We are stewards of all that God possesses and His possessions includes all the substance of the earth especially you and I; our money; our talents, our minds, our bodies and our time.
- B. God owns everything (Psalm 24:1, 89:11; I Corinthians 10:26). He is the creator and sustainer of the universe. “Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things and by Him all things consist” (Colossians 1: 15-17).
- C. A Christian steward is one who realizes “we live and have our being” in Christ. The Christian steward recognizes God as their preeminent master and lives for Him. The whole of the Christian's life belongs to God- their personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, everything- is dedicated to Christ. This is true Christian stewardship. Remember, “Each one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12).
- D. A mature Christian steward is one who is responsible and dependable and will walk in obedience to the commands and will of God (Romans 4:1,2).
- E. BIBLICAL BASIS FOR...

1. Stewardship of our time (Mark 13:33-37).

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time for the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

2. Stewardship of our bodies (Romans 12:1)

¹⁹ What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

3. Stewardship of our gifts (Romans 12:3-8; I Cor. 12)

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterance of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be gloried through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (I Peter 4:10, 11)

4. Stewardship of our possessions (Matthew 6:25-34).

For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7)

Matthew 6:25-34 lets us know that God owns everything; therefore, we own nothing and we are only stewards of what He has given us. God holds the key to every material and spiritual thing. The only reason we have anything, or have it now, or will have it, is because God loves us enough to give it to us to bring glory to Himself and abundant life to us and to those with whom we share.

II TITHES AND OFFERING

Definitions: **Tithe** - ten percent (10%) of all your gross increase (i.e. if your salary is \$500.00 per week your tithe would be \$50.00).

We believe in tithing from our gross income before taxes.

Offering – the amount God asks you to give above your tithe.

Alms – finances or giving of time and services extended to those in need.

Tithes - God's Blueprint for Giving (Heb. 7:1-10)

In Heaven, everyone is going to do things God's way. It would be wise to learn that we do not have to wait until we get to Heaven to live and act by the principles of God. When it comes to giving, God has a plan for giving in scriptures. It would be wise if we would do it God's way. God knows how to make us successful. He knows how to let us get the most out of our giving.

Hebrew 7:1-10 gives one of the most detailed descriptions of giving in the scriptures. It teaches three simple and beautiful things about God's design for giving. It tells us of the central place of tithing in God's plan of economy.

The Eternal Principle

Before the law, Abraham gave a tenth (part of all) to Melchizedek (Heb 7:2). Long before the Levites were commanded to take a tithe from the people, Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek. Before the Mosaic Law was instituted, God instituted tithing into the affairs of man.

A Perfected Principle

The whole emphasis of the Book of Hebrews is to show how Jesus Christ perfected the Mosaic system. He did not do away with the sacrificial system, He perfected it. Although tithing was part of the Law, it was also before the Law. Jesus referenced tithing in the New Testament. Therefore, we continue in tithing in this present age.

How is the tithe perfected? _____

The tithe is only the beginning. It is just a start. We can do nothing less. If we are not willing to give a tithe, we need *not* pretend we are going to serve God with all our heart.

A Blessed Principle

Not only is tithing an eternal principle and a perfected principle, it is a blessed one. The word "blessed" simply means, "Happy, fulfilled, satisfied, peaceful, contented."

Hebrews 7:1 "Melchizedek blessed Abraham." Abraham gave to Melchizedek the tithe of his harvest and Melchizedek blessed Abraham. The Word of God declares, "It is more blessed to GIVE than to RECEIVE." (Acts 20:35, II Cor. 8:1-3)

TITHING is obedience to God.

- A. Tithing reveals our trust and confidence in God's ability to take care of us.
- B. Tithing is the avenue God uses to bless his people financially (Malachi 3:10-11).
....Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.....I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes.....

The devourer is rebuked for our sakes when we give our tithes, according to the Word of God (Malachi 3:11).

OFFERINGS

- A. The giving of offerings is another avenue God uses to bless the believer. (St. Luke 6:38)
- B. The way you give is as important as the act of giving itself.
 - 1. God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor. 9:7)
 - 2. With the same measure you use in giving, it shall be measured unto you (St. Luke 6:38)

ALMS

Promise to givers of alms:

- 1. He who despises his neighbor sins, but happy is he who is gracious to the poor.(Proverbs 14:21)
- 2. He who opposes the poor reproaches his master, but he who is gracious to the needy honors him. (Proverbs 14:31)
- 3. He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again. (Proverbs 19:17)
- 4. That your alms may be in secret and your father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Matt 6:1-4)

Eight Biblical Ways To Relate To Your Pastor

In the Book of Ephesians (4:8-12) it states that Jesus led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. These gifts are spiritual gifts to the body (prophet, apostle, evangelist, pastor and teacher.)

Below you will find listed the eight ways that the bible states we should relate to these gifts, but we will be focusing particularly on the ministry gift of Pastor (fill in the blank)

- I. You must _____ him as a gift from God (Jer. 3:15)
 - A. Receive means to accept as in ownership.

- B. We know that every good and perfect gift comes from God, therefore if He gave the gift of pastor, it must be perfect.
- C. Until you receive the gift, you really do not benefit from it.

II. _____ your Pastor (I Thess. 5:12)

- A. Know him means having a level of knowledge of him that causes one to be familiar with, sure of, and understanding. It is more than surface knowledge.
- B. Know him also, after the spirit. The Bible tells us to know no man after the flesh. The man is imperfect, but the gift is perfect. Therefore, if you know your Pastor and walk in the spirit yourself, his imperfections in the flesh will not hinder you from receiving from him.

III. _____ him very highly (1 Thess. 5:13)

- A. Esteem means to respect, appreciate or hold high regard for.
- B. We are to do this in obedience to God.

IV. _____ for him.

- A. Intercede daily for those in authority and this includes the Pastor.
- B. This allows the Word to have free course.
- C. This also makes you involved in the message that comes forth and gives you a sense of your part in the ministry as well as your responsibility.
- D. When we are praying for the Pastor, we are less likely to be critical.

V. _____ with him (Gal. 6:6)

- A. Communicate with him in all good things.
- B. This includes your finances as well as verbal communication shown.
- C. Doing your part in the ministry is a good communication. It says I am with you.

VI. _____ or _____ **him** (Heb . 6)

- A. If you know your Pastor and receive him, then you should have no problems in following him.
- B. Follow and imitate in only those things that are good and acceptable unto God.
- C. If you feel that your Pastor can not be followed, you need to find a place that is led by a Pastor you can submit to and follow.

VII. _____ **him** (Heb. 13:17)

- A. As long as what you are being told is not contrary to the Word and will of God.
- B. Again, you must receive, know, and trust your Pastor or you will have problems obeying.
- C. Obedience is active. It means you have to do something you are told to do.

VIII. _____ **to him** (Heb. 13:17)

- A. Submission is an attitude. You cannot disobey and still submit.
- B. A submitted Christian will not spread or cause strife in the body.

QUICK REVIEW

1. A mature Christian Steward is one who is _____ and _____ and will walk in _____ to the commands and will of God.

2. The Tithes is equal to _____ of all our increase.
3. God loves a _____ giver.
4. He that hath pity on the _____, _____ unto the **Lord**, and he will repay.
5. How should you relate to your Pastor (underline the best answer)?
 - a. Pray for him, submit to him, know him, disrespect him
 - b. Receive him, esteem him highly, pray for him, obey him
 - c. Follow/Imitate him, communicate with him, disobey him