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Finishing the Great Commission By Multiplying Disciplemakers

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Introduction

The purpose of this series of topical Bible studies is to help you lay a foundation for life change that will last for the rest of your life. Life change is about becoming more and more like Jesus.

Foundations follows the same process Jesus used to train His disciples:

1. Come

Come and get to know God and His people. This is the starting point of life change where we learn who God is and the importance of fellowship with other Christians.

2. Grow

Grow in your relationship with God. Learn how to grow spiritually through God's Word and prayer.

3. Serve

Learn about your spiritual gifts, abilities, and how to give to and serve God and others through your church family.

4. Go

Invest in the lives of others and invite them to know the Lord when they are ready. Then we make disciples by helping others go through this process.

This topical Bible study consists of questions that are answered by verses in the Bible. The verses are included for your convenience.

Please look up the verses in your Bible when you can. Write down the answers to the questions based on what the Bible verses say. Please do this before you come to the small group. During small group time, group members will have a chance to share with one another what they are learning.

The small group leader will not lecture, but will guide the discussion so that everyone learns from one another.

Additional bulleted questions are included to stimulate discussion and provide an opportunity to put into practice what you are learning.

A summary is provided at the end of each chapter to provide an opportunity to review what you have learned.

Pray and ask the Lord for understanding and to change your life to be more like Jesus as you study each of the chapters.

Chapter 1: God's Word

The Bible is the most amazing book ever written. The reason is that even though the Bible was written by 40 different men in three languages (Hebrew in the Old Testament, Greek in the New Testament, and Aramaic in a few verses), over 1800 years, the whole book fits together perfectly.

The Bible contains 66 books: 39 books in the Old Testament and the 27 books in the New Testament.

The word "Testament" means agreement, covenant, or contract. The Old Testament is about the agreement God made with people before Christ came and the New Testament is about the agreement God made with people after Christ came. The Bible is a supernatural book inspired by God and written through people.

God's Word is referred to in many ways in the Bible: scriptures, commandments, testimonies, precepts, judgments, laws, regulations, decrees, etc.

God's Communication to You

1. How did God give us His Word?

a. Nehemiah 9:13-14

You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses.

b. 2 Samuel 23:2

The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

c. 1 Thessalonians 2:13

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

d. What does God say about His Word? Psalm 138:2 (not NIV)

I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your unfailing love and your faithfulness, for you have so exalted your solemn decree that it surpasses your fame.

2. How do you know that the Bible is God's communication to you?

Jesus and God's Word

3. How did Jesus use Scripture?

a. Matthew 4:4, 7, 10

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

- What is the context of these verses? (What is going on?)

b. Mark 7:6-8

He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.' You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions."

- What are some traditions of men we hold to rather than what God says?

c. Mark 12:24

Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?"

- How does not knowing the Bible lead us into error?
- What are you learning from the Bible that is helping you avoid error?
- What have you learned about the power of God?

d. Luke 24:25-27

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

- What have you learned about Jesus in the Scriptures?

4. What did Jesus say about God's Word?

a. Matthew 5:17-18

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

b. John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

We Can Rely on God's Word

5. What do the following verses have to say about God's Word?

a. Joshua 23:14

Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.

b. Psalm 33:4-5

For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

c. Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

d. How did we receive prophecy in the Bible? 2 Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

6. Is the truth in God's Word relative or absolute? Why?

- How do you know you can rely on God's Word?

How God's Word Helps You

7. What are some ways God's Word helps you?

a. Psalm 37:31

The law of their God is in their heart; their feet do not slip.

- What are some ways God's Word keeps your feet from slipping?

b. Psalm 119:130

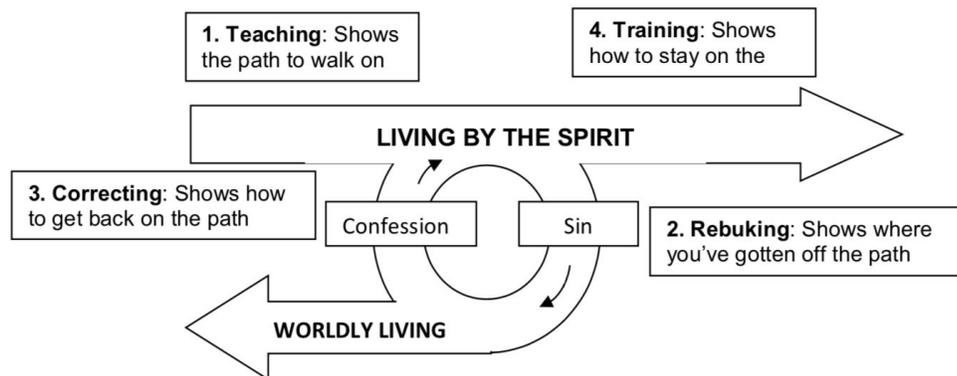
The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

- How does the Bible give you light and understanding?

c. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Describe the illustration.



- How has God's Word taught you? Rebuked you? Corrected you? Trained you in righteousness?
- How does God's Word equip you for every good work?

d. What does God promise will happen with His Word? Isaiah 55:10-11

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

- What does it mean that God's Word will not return to Him empty?
- e. What is one way the Bible is different from other books? Hebrews 4:12
- For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*
- How is God's Word living and active?
 - How does God's Word penetrate into your soul and spirit?
 - How does God's Word judge the thoughts and attitudes of your heart?
8. How has the Bible helped you?

God's Word Summary

Read the summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

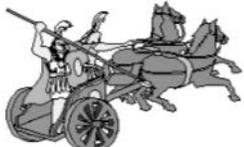
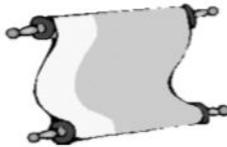
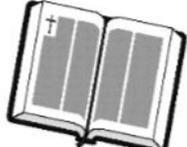
1. God's Communication to You
 - a. The Bible comes from men who spoke from God by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. God exalts His name and His Word above everything.

2. Jesus and God's Word
 - a. Jesus quoted scripture when tempted by Satan.
 - b. Jesus demonstrated the importance and power of God's Word.
 - c. Jesus encouraged others to understand and obey the scriptures.
 - d. Jesus explained to His disciples what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself.

3. You Can Rely on God's Word
 - a. Every promise in the Bible has been fulfilled, not one has failed.
 - b. God's Word is right and true, every word is flawless.

4. How God's Word Helps You
 - a. It helps your feet to not slip.
 - b. It gives you light and understanding.
 - c. It teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains you.
 - d. It equips you for every good work.

Survey of the Bible

Old Testament	New Testament
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>Books of the Law Will of God for human conduct. Beginning of Civilization & Nation of Israel. Written by Moses.</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Gospels Life, Death, & Resurrection of Jesus</p> </div> </div>
Joshua Judges Ruth I Samuel II Samuel I Kings II Kings I Chronicles II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Books of History History of the nation of Israel up to 400 years before the coming of Christ. Various writers.</p>  </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Acts</p> <p>Historical beginning of the church after the ascension of Jesus.</p> </div> </div>
Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Books of Poetry Written by Moses (Job), King David (Psalms) & King Solomon</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Letters (Epistles) of Paul Letters of instruction written by the Apostle Paul to churches or individuals.</p>  </div> </div>
Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Books of Poetry Written by Moses (Job), King David (Psalms) & King Solomon</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Miscellaneous Letters (Epistles) Letters of instruction written by various writers to churches or individuals.</p> </div> </div>
Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Major Prophets Books of warning to the Nation of Israel & foretelling of future things.</p> <p>Minor Prophets (Books are shorter in length but not less important)</p>  </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Hebrews James I Peter II Peter I John II John III John Jude</p> </div> </div>
	<p>Revelation</p> <p>Future of the church & the Nation of Israel.</p>
	<p>The Bible tells us: Who God is. What God desires. What God offers.</p>  <p>The Bible is God's Communication to us The Bible is our operator's Manual. It explains how to have a relationship with God, how to live, & how to love others.</p>

How the Old Testament & New Testament Fit Together

Old Testament	New Testament
<p>How does the Old Testament apply to Christ? It looks to the coming of Christ.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 53:5: But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.</i></p>	<p>How does the New Testament apply to Christ? It looks at the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.</p> <p><i>I Corinthians 15:3-4: ...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, & that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.</i></p>
<p>Who are the central people of the Old Testament? They are the people of the nation of Israel.</p> <p><i>Deuteronomy 10:15: Yet on your fathers did the Lord set His affection to love them, & He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples...</i></p>	<p>Who are the central people of the New Testament? They are those people that make up the church, the Body of Christ.</p> <p><i>I Corinthians 12:27: Now you are Christ's body, & individually members of it.</i></p>
<p>What is God's purpose in the Old Testament? God's purpose is to reveal Himself to the world through the Nation of Israel & look forward to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus.</p> <p><i>Deuteronomy 4:6: So keep & do them, for that is your wisdom & your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes & say, "...this great nation is a wise & understanding people."</i></p>	<p>What is God's purpose in the New Testament? God's purpose is to reveal Himself to the world through His life, death, & resurrection & through His Church which is the body of Christ.</p> <p><i>I Timothy 3:15: ...I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar & support of the truth.</i></p>

Why These Books Were Included in the Bible

The early Church fathers investigated each book to make sure it was authentic, spoke with God's authority, and had lasting spiritual impact. The Bible has withstood over 2000 years of scrutiny and opposition.

Chapter 2: Experience Life Change

Life Change is a Process

1. God wants us to experience a process of life change. What is life change?

a. Ephesians 4:15

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

- How have you experienced life change?
- What kind of life change do you want to experience?

b. How is spiritual growth like physical growth? Hebrews 5:13-14

Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

- How does a spiritual baby behave?
- Why does a person stay a spiritual baby regardless of how many years they have been a Christian?
- How do spiritually mature people behave?

Our process of life change is:

1. Come

Come and get to know God and His people. This is the starting point of life change where we learn who God is and the importance of fellowship with other Christians.

2. Grow

Grow in your relationship with God. Learn how to grow spiritually through God's Word and prayer.

3. Serve

Learn about your spiritual gifts and abilities and how to give to and serve God and others through your church family.

4. Go

Invest in the lives of others and invite them to know the Lord when they are ready. Then we make disciples by helping others go through this process.

Three Aspects of Salvation		
Justification	Past tense – I have been saved from the penalty of sin.	My position is in Christ.
Sanctification	Present tense – I am being saved from the power of sin.	My condition is becoming like Christ: Come–Grow–Serve–Go
Glorification	Future tense – I will be saved from the presence of sin.	My expectation is to be like Christ when I go to be with Him.

- Which aspect of salvation are we experiencing now?

Experience Life Change through God’s Word

a. What is your spiritual food that makes you grow? Matthew 4:4

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

- What happens if you don't eat enough physical food?
- What happens if you don't get enough spiritual food?

b. What must you do to experience life change I? 1 Timothy 4:7-8

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

What are some of the habits you have that you do regularly to care for your body?

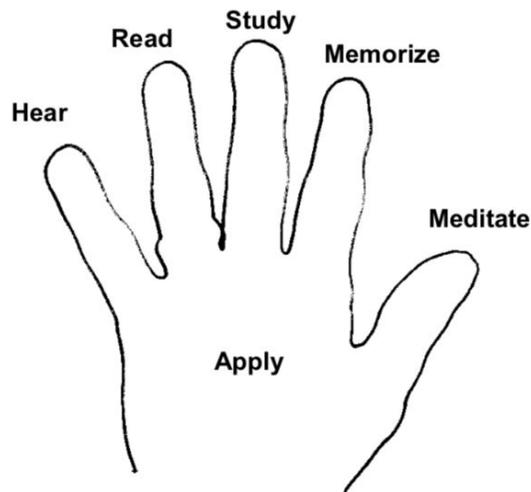
What are the benefits of spiritual habits?

c. What has God given us to help us experience life change? 2 Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

- What do you receive through God's promises?

How to Get a Grasp on Your Bible



Hear God's Word

a. Romans 10:17

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

- What are some ways you hear God's Word?

Problem: We forget 95% of what we hear after 72 hours.

- What can you do to become a better listener?

Read God's Word

If you read 15 minutes a day, you can read through the Bible in a year.

Bible Reading Suggestions

- Choose a reading plan.
- Read in different versions such as the New International Version or The Message.
- For variety, read it out loud sometimes.
- Underline or color-code key verses.
- Respond back to God in prayer about what you read.

Study God's Word

a. Acts 17:11

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Bible reading gives us an overview of God's Word, but Bible study gives us detailed knowledge of specific truths and helps us develop deeper convictions. Bible study is feeding on the meat of God's Word. We can read through a chapter in the Bible in two to five minutes, but it may take an hour or more to study the same chapter.

Bible study is how we let God be our teacher rather than some other person. God wants to teach us directly from His Word. We are responsible to study God's word for ourselves instead of just relying on others if we want to grow spiritually.

Bible study involves several aspects that help us interpret it correctly so we can apply it to our lives correctly.

Foundations is a topical Bible study. We study what God says about different topics and we apply it to our lives in order to experience life change and become more like Jesus.

Memorize God's Word

a. Proverbs 7:2-3

Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Benefits of Memorizing Scripture

a. How can scripture memory help you resist temptation? Psalm 119:11

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

b. How does it help you make wise decisions? Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light on my path.

c. How does it strengthen you? Psalm 119:28

My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

d. How does it comfort you? Psalm 119:50

My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.

e. How does it help you share with unbelievers? 1 Peter 3:15

...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

When to Memorize a Verse

- During your quiet time
- While exercising
- While waiting (spare moments)

- When is the best time for you to memorize and review verses?

How to Memorize a Verse

- Start by saying the topic of the verse.
- Say the reference before and after the verse.
- Memorize one phrase at a time.
- Use verse cards.
- Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
- Review the verse daily for a month and then once a month for life.
- Always memorize the verse word perfect.

Other Help for Memorizing

- Read the verse aloud many times.
- Write it down.
- Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
- Display your verse cards in prominent places.
- Get a partner so you can check each other.

What to Memorize

Start by memorizing the Experience Life Change Memory Verses on the next page. You can cut them out and make memory cards to help you review.

Give an example of memorizing Galatians 2:20 in the Experience Life Change Memory Verses.

Three Keys to Memorizing

1. Review
2. Review
3. Review

If you review a verse once a day for 30 days and then review it once a month for the rest of your life, then it's yours for life.

a. We remember what is important to us. Psalm 119:72

The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

- Why do you think you should memorize Bible verses?
- How do you know that you can memorize Bible verses?

<p>— </p> <p>Life Change</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.</p>	<p> —</p> <p>Life Change</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.</p>
<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 1</p> <p>Come and Worship</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Matthew 22:37-39 ³⁷Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'</p>	<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 2</p> <p>Come and Fellowship</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.</p>
<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 3</p> <p>Grow through God's Word</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness</p>	<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 4</p> <p>Grow through Prayer</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Philippians 4:6 - 7 ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.</p>
<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 5</p> <p>Serve Like Jesus</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.</p>	<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 6</p> <p>Serve by Giving</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>2 Corinthians 9:6-7 ⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.</p>
<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 7</p> <p>Go and Be Witnesses</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.</p>	<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 8</p> <p>Go and Make Disciples</p> <p>NIV</p> <p>Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.</p>
<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 9</p>	<p>—</p> <p>Experience Life Change 10</p>

Meditate on God's Word

a. Psalm 1:2-3

...but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.

What is Meditation?

Meditation is focused thinking about a Bible passage in order to discover how you can apply its truth to your own life. Meditation is not emptying your mind. Meditate on God's Word while hearing, reading, studying, and memorizing it.

Ways to Meditate on God's Word

- Picture it! Visualize the scene in your mind.
- Pronounce it! Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
- Paraphrase it! Rewrite the verse in your own words.
- Personalize it! Replace the pronouns or people with your own name.
- Pray it! Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.

a. Matthew 22:37-39

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

- As you mature in Christ, you will have a more balanced input of God's Word. How do you take in God's Word now?
- What are you going to do to have a better intake of God's Word at this point in your spiritual growth?

Apply God's Word

The purpose of hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on God's Word is to put it into practice in your lives. Applying God's Word to your life is how to experience life change. Putting God's Word into practice in thought, word, and deed is so important that the entire next chapter is devoted to it.

As you do your part and develop the habit of feeding on God's Word, which is necessary for spiritual growth, you must never forget God's part and live by the Spirit and His power every day.

Steps for Applying God's Word to Your Life

1. What should my life be like from God's Word?
2. What is my life like that is different from God's Word?
3. What am I going to do to put God's Word into practice?
4. How will I check up to make sure I have accomplished what God wants me to?

Experience Life Change Summary

Read the summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

1. Life Change is a Process
 - a. Life Change is the process of becoming like Jesus.
 - b. Spiritual growth is a process of maturing just like physical growth.
 - c. Our process of Life Change is to Come-Grow-Serve-Go.

2. The three aspects of salvation
 - a. You have been saved from the penalty of sin.
 - b. You are becoming like Jesus.
 - c. You will be like Jesus when you go to be with Him.

3. Experience Life Change Through God's Word
 - a. God's Word is your spiritual food that makes you grow.
 - b. God provides everything you need for spiritual growth.
 - i. His Word to guide you.
 - ii. His Spirit to help you understand His Word.

4. How to Get a Grasp on Your Bible
 - a. Hear God's Word: We forget 95% of what we hear after 72 hours.
 - b. Read God's Word: Bible reading gives you an overview of God's Word.
 - c. Study God's Word: Bible study is how you feed on the meat of God's Word.
 - d. Memorize God's Word: There are many benefits to scripture memory; you can memorize if you make it a priority.
 - e. Meditate on God's Word: Meditation is focused thinking about a passage of God's Word.
 - f. Apply God's Word: Have a balanced intake of God's Word; experience life change by putting God's Word into practice in thought, word, and deed.

Chapter 3: Obey God

The reason we hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on God's Word is to obey it and experience life change: to become more like Jesus.

Why You Should Obey God

a. Why does God want us to obey Him? Deuteronomy 10:12-13

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the LORD'S commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

- How do you know that obeying God is for your own good?

b. What is the relationship between loving God and obeying Him? John 14:15, 21

If you love me, you will obey what I command. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

- Who knows what is best for a young child, the parent or the child?
- How is this like you and God?
- How does it make you feel when your child obeys you?

c. Both men in this parable hear God's Word. How was the wise man different from the foolish man? Matthew 7:24-27.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

- What was your life like when you faced hardship in life without the solid foundation of God's Word to guide you?
- How has the solid foundation of God's Word helped you through some rough times in your life?

1. Why is it wise to obey God?

Practical Help in Obeying God

Remember from the previous chapters all of the resources God has given you to help you obey Him and experience life change. God has also given you everything you need to resist temptation and avoid sin and its destructive consequences.

2. What should your attitude be in obeying God?

a. Deuteronomy 26:16

The LORD your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them with all your heart and with all your soul.

b. Psalm 40:8

I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.

c. Luke 8:15

But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

- What are some reasons we sometimes don't have a good attitude about obeying God?
- Why are you motivated to obey God?

A lesson on temptation

a. Who tempts you? Matthew 4:1-3

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

b. Who never tempts you? James 1:13

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone...

c. Where does temptation come from? James 1:14

...but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

- What are some of our temptations?

d. What led Achan to his disobedience. Joshua 7:20-21

Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

- What could he have done to avoid sin?
- What can you learn from Achan to avoid sin?
- What are some things you covet? Things that distract you from God?

3. Use the following verses as a guide and define sin.

a. Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray. each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

b. James 4:17

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

- How do temptation and sin differ?

c. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

- Are your temptations different or more difficult than anyone else's?
- What limit does God place on any temptation you will face?
- What does God provide with every temptation that allows you to avoid sin?
- What is a temptation you are facing now?
- What way out has God provided for you to avoid sinning?

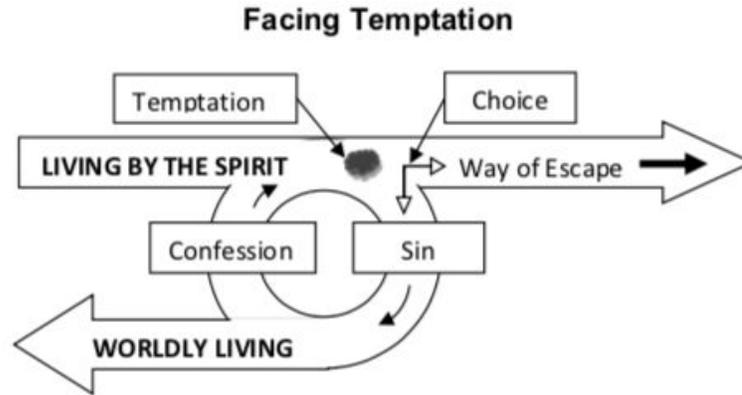
Sometimes we don't take advantage of God's way to avoid sin. Our sin doesn't cause us to lose our salvation but it does damage our relationship with God just as sin damages any relationship. God has provided a way to repair our damaged relationship with Him.

d. What can we do to repair our damaged relationship with God? 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- Why is it so important that we do this?

Discuss this illustration:



4. What can you do to resist temptation?

a. Proverbs 4:13-15

Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life. Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evildoers. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way.

- What can you do to better hold on to God's Word?
- Are there any relationships that are getting you off the path?
- What can you do about it?

b. James 4:7

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- What practical things can you do to submit yourself to God?
- What practical things can you do to resist the devil?

Obey God Summary

Read the summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

1. Why You Should Obey God
 - a. It is for your own good.
 - b. It is how we love God.
 - c. It is the wise thing to do and will keep us from destructive behavior.

2. Practical Help in Obeying God
 - a. You should have a positive attitude about obeying God.

- i. Obey with all of your heart and all of your soul.
 - ii. Desire to obey God.
 - iii. Have an honest and good heart and persevere.
- b. Understanding temptation.
 - i. The devil tempts us.
 - ii. God never tempts us.
 - iii. Temptation comes from your own evil desire.
- c. A lesson from Achan.
 - i. He looked at, dwelled on, and coveted riches.
 - ii. He should have looked away and not dwelt on this temptation.
- d. Sins are acts of disobedience to God.
 - i. Sin may be acts of omission or commission.
 - ii. Sin may consist of thought, word, or deed.
 - iii. Sin damages your relationship with God.
- e. Temptation is the opportunity to sin and sin is the act of disobedience.
- f. God helps you resist temptation.
 - i. Everyone faces temptation just like you do.
 - ii. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear.
 - iii. God always provides a way of escape.
- g. If you confess your sin, God will forgive you
 - i. When you sin, you don't lose your salvation.
 - ii. Confession repairs your damaged relationship with God.
- h. What you can do to resist temptation
 - i. Remember God's Word.
 - ii. Stay away from people who drag you down.
 - iii. Choose to be around people who build you up.
 - iv. Submit to God by yielding your will to His.
 - v. Resist the devil by relying on God's supernatural provision.

Chapter 4: Make Jesus Lord of Your Life

Jesus is Lord of All

1. What is Jesus called?

a. John 13:13

You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

b. Revelation 17:14

They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.

2. How has God exalted Jesus?

a. Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- How will every person acknowledge Jesus?
- How should children honor their parent's authority over them?
- How should we honor Jesus' authority over us?
- What does the word "Lord" mean as it applies to Jesus?

Make Jesus Your Lord

Just as God did not force you to accept Jesus as Savior, He will not force you to make Jesus Lord of your life. Jesus is Lord of the universe and He wants to be Lord of your life. It is your choice.

a. What does God want you to do? Romans 12:1

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

- Why should you do this?
- According to this verse what is the definition of worship?
- How is this an act of worship?
- How does this change your understanding of what worship is?
- What keeps you from giving Jesus control in every area of your life?

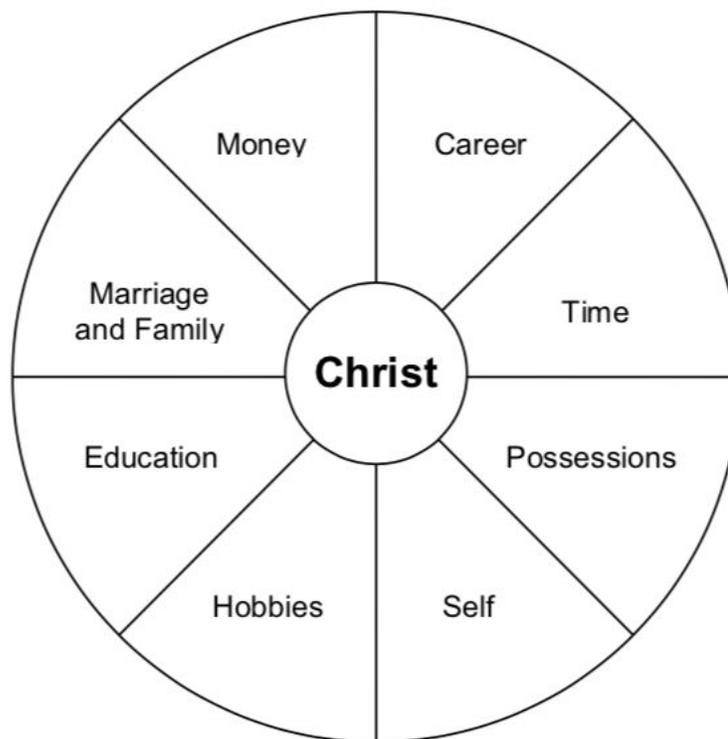
b. What makes you more willing to give Jesus control of every area of your life? Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

- What kind of prosperity does God want to give you?
- How has God given you hope?
- What kind of future do you want?
- What kind of future does God want for you?
- Why is it best to give control of your life over to Jesus rather than keeping control of it yourself?

Pray right now to give control of your life to Jesus and make Him Lord of your life just as He is Lord of the universe.

Once you have decided to make Jesus Lord of your life as well as your Savior, you must give Him control of every area of your life every day. The following illustration shows some of the areas of your life that you must give control over to Jesus. If you don't choose to give Jesus control of your life daily, then these things will control you.



- What areas of your life are you not allowing Jesus to control?
- What can you do to give Jesus control in these areas?

c. What can you do when you take control back in an area of your life? 1 Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

- Why is it necessary to humble yourself in order to put Jesus in charge of your life?
- How does anxiety keep you from putting Jesus in charge of your life?
- How do you cast all your anxiety on Jesus?

d. What happens when cares, worries, and desires are not committed to Christ? Mark 4:18-19
Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

- How does this happen?
- In other words, how do the worries of life, deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things choke out the Word and make it unfruitful?

e. How can you tell if Jesus is in control of your life? Luke 6:46
Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

f. What three things has your Lord asked you to do? Luke 9:23
Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

- What does it mean to deny yourself? What are you denying?
- What does it mean to take up your cross daily?
- What does it mean to follow Jesus?
- Why does Jesus want us to do these things?

Life Change Occurs by Faith

1. What is faith?

a. Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

b. Romans 4:20-21

Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

c. How should you live your life? 2 Corinthians 5:7

For we live by faith, not by sight.

- What does this mean?

3. What are some wrong things to put your faith in?

a. Psalm 146:3

Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.

- What does it mean to not put your faith or trust in a prince?
- What are some examples of people we could put our faith in?

b. Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding...

- How does trusting in our own understanding let us down?

c. Proverbs 28:26

Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom is kept safe.

- How does trusting in yourself make you a fool?
- Where does wisdom come from?

d. Jeremiah 9:23

This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of his riches..."

- What kind of wisdom should you not trust in?
- What are some problems with trusting in riches?
- Which of these things do you put your faith in?
- What are the results of placing your faith in these things?

e. Who should be the object of your faith? Mark 11:22

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered.

f. How much faith do you need? Luke 17:6

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

- Which is more important, how much faith you have or what your faith is in? Why do you think this is so?

Make Jesus Lord of Your Life Summary

Read the summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

1. Jesus is Lord of all
 - a. Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings.
 - b. God has exalted Jesus to the highest place and given Him the name that is above every name.
 - c. Every person in heaven and earth shall confess that Jesus is Lord.

2. Make Jesus Your Lord
 - a. Choose to make Jesus Lord of your life just as you chose to make Him Savior.
 - b. Give your body as a living sacrifice to God.
 - c. Jesus plans are to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
 - d. Give Jesus control of every area of your life every day.
 - e. When you take control of your life back, humble yourself and cast all your anxiety on Him.
 - f. Cares, worries, and desires choke the Word in your life and make you unfruitful.
 - g. You can tell if Jesus is Lord of your life if you do what He says.
 - h. Three things your Lord has asked you to do
 - i. Deny yourself.
 - ii. Take up your cross daily (die to self).
 - iii. Follow Him.

3. Life Change Occurs by Faith
 - a. Faith is
 - i. Being sure of what you hope for and certain of what you do not see.
 - ii. Being fully persuaded that God can do what He says.
 - b. You live by faith not by sight
 - c. Things you should not put your faith in
 - i. Human Beings.
 - ii. Leaders.
 - iii. Your own understanding.
 - iv. Yourself.
 - v. Your own wisdom, strength, or riches.
 - d. Your faith should be in God alone.
 - e. A small amount of faith is enough as long as your faith is in God alone.

Chapter 5: Know God's Will

God promises to guide you and let you know His will. All you have to do is to trust Him and seek His will. God is good, He loves you, and as your perfect Heavenly Father, He knows what is best for you.

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

God's Will

a. What does God want you to do? Ephesians 5:17

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

- Why is it foolish to not know God's will?
- Why do parents want their children to know and obey God's will?
- Why do parents want their children to know and obey their parent's will?
- Why does God want you to know and obey His will?
- What happens when we don't follow God's will?

b. What will God do to help you know His will for your life? Psalm 32:8

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

1. What do you learn about God's will for your life?

a. 1 Thessalonians 4:3

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality...

b. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

- Why does God want you to do this?
- How can you give thanks in bad circumstances?
- What are we like if we don't develop the habit of thankfulness?

c. 1 Peter 2:15

For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.

- What kind of good does God want you to do? To whom?
- How does this silence the ignorant talk of foolish people?

d. What should your attitude be toward God's will? Psalm 40:8

I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.

- What helps produce this attitude?
- Having God's Word in your heart.
- How does God's Word get into your heart?
- How does scripture memory help you know and do God's will?

e. How does God help you accomplish His will? Philippians 2:13

...for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

- How does God work in you to have the desire and the ability to do his will?

Biblical Principles in Determining God's Will

2. What are some biblical principles that help us know God's will?

a. Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

- What priority should God's kingdom and His righteousness have in your life?
- What happens in your life when you keep God's priorities?
- What are "all these things" that God will give you?

b. Matthew 22:37-39 Great Commandment

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

- Is loving God the driving force in your life?
- How can you love God more?
- Who is your neighbor?
- Who do you need to love more?

c. Matthew 28:19-20 Great Commission

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- Who are you praying for to come to the Lord? Family members, friends, neighbors, other people groups?

d. 1 Peter 1:15

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do...

- What does it mean to be holy?
- What are some areas in which you need to be holy?
- What is the difference between being holy and being moral?

e. 2 Peter 3:18

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

- What is grace?
- How can you grow in it?

You can determine God's will by asking yourself questions based on God's Word. The following questions are based on the verses above.

- Am I putting what God wants for me ahead of what I want?
- Will it help me love God and others more?
- Will it help or hinder me from helping others find the Lord?
- Is it something Jesus would do?
- Will it help me be more like Jesus?

3. Develop questions from the following verses to help you know God's will?

a. 1 Corinthians 6:12 (not NIV)

"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

- What are examples of things that are permissible but are not helpful? Can this master me?
- What are examples of things that can master you?

b. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

- Will this honor God in my body?
- What are some examples of honoring God with your body?

c. 1 Corinthians 8:9

Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.

- Will this cause a weaker brother or sister to stumble?
- What are some examples of this?

d. 1 Corinthians 10:31

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

- Will this bring glory to God?
- What are some examples of things that might not bring glory to God?

4. What can you do to know God's will?

a. Psalm 37:31

The law of their God is in their hearts; their feet do not slip.

b. Psalm 143:8

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.

- How can you put your trust in God?
- What does it mean to lift your soul to God?

c. James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Humbly ask God to reveal His will to you. Read the following prayer and make it your own prayer. Psalm 25:4-5 *Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.*

d. What are some conditions to finding God's will for your life? Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

- How do you renew your mind?
- How does this transform you?

e. Who will guide you as you seek God's will for your life? John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

f. What does waiting on God have to do with knowing God's will? Isaiah 30:18

Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

g. What is another important thing you can do to help you know God's will? Proverbs 15:22
Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

- What are some qualifications you should look for in someone to give you advice?
- What should you do with the advice you are given?

It is essential for you to be in a small group where there are godly people who know you, care for you, and can advise you. Who can you go to for godly advice?

h. What should your attitude be when you do the will of God? Ephesians 6:6
Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.

5. What other factors can help you know God's will for your life?

a. Romans 13:1

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

b. Ephesians 5:15-17

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

c. Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

- Why is it important to know that there is no authority who has not been put in place by God?
- How can you have peace about who is in power in the government?

Know God's Will Summary

Read the summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

1. God's Will

- a. God wants you to know His will
- b. God instructs, teaches, counsels, and watches over you

- c. Specific areas of God's will for your life
 - i. Become more like Jesus
 - ii. Avoid sexual immorality
 - iii. Give thanks in all circumstances
 - iv. Do good
- d. You should desire to do God's will
 - i. Memorizing God's Word helps you do God's will
- e. God works in you to want to do His will and to actually do it

2. Biblical Principles in Determining God's Will

- a. Questions to know God's will based on Biblical principles
 - i. Am I putting what God wants for me ahead of what I want?
 - ii. Will it help me love God and others more?
 - iii. Will it help or hinder me from helping others find the Lord?
 - iv. Is it something Jesus would do?
 - v. Will it help me be more like Jesus?
- b. Additional questions to help you know God's will
 - i. Is it beneficial? Will it control me?
 - ii. Does it honor God with my body?
 - iii. Is it a stumbling block to weaker Christians?
 - iv. Does it glorify God?
- c. Things you can do to know God's will
 - i. Memorize God's Word
 - ii. Put your trust in God daily
 - iii. Ask God for wisdom to know His will
- d. Conditions to knowing God's will for your life
 - i. Fully commit yourself to God
 - ii. Do not conform to the world, be transformed by renewing your mind with God's Word
- e. Be patient and wait on God's timing to reveal His will
- f. Be in a small group where you can get godly advice
- g. Do God's will from your heart
- h. Other factors to help you know God's will
 - i. Obey the authorities
 - ii. Careful and wise thinking
 - iii. God's will gives you inner peace

Determine God's Will for a Particular Decision

Decision:

Questions to Help Determine God's Will

Question	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Is there an answer in scripture?			
Am I putting what God wants for me ahead of what I want?			
Will it help me love God and others more?			
Will it help or hinder me from helping others find the Lord?			
Is it something Jesus would do?			
Will it help me be more like Jesus?			

What Bible verses or biblical principles relate to this decision?

Are there other areas in which I need to obey God?

Have I prayed about this decision?

Am I willing to do whatever God wants me to do? What advice have I received?

How do circumstances guide my decision?

What decision gives me peace?

Additional Questions:

What are the pros and cons in making this decision?

Pros:

Cons:

My decision is:

Chapter 6: Talking with God

Prayer is simply talking with God.

Romans 12:12

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Communication is essential for any relationship, including your relationship with God. You were created to have a relationship with God, so your communication with Him is very important.

Prayer is not about saying the right words, the right way to get God to do what you want Him to do. God is not a cosmic genie and prayer is not a way of “rubbing the lamp” to get God to come forth and give us what we want.

Prayer is Your Communication with God

a. Since you are a child of God forgiven by grace, how can you approach God? Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- Why can you approach God with confidence?
- What do you receive when you approach God?

b. What does God want you to do when you come to Him? Psalm 62:8

Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

- What does it mean to pour out your heart to God?
- Why would you pour out your heart to God?
- What does it mean that God is our refuge?

Benefits of Prayer

1. What do you learn about how God responds to your prayers?

a. Jeremiah 33:3

'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

- What are unsearchable things?

b. Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...

c. How did God answer prayer in this verse? Psalm 34:4

I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

- What are some fears you can discuss with God?
- How has God delivered you from your fears?

2. God teaches us how to be free from anxiety and experience His peace in Philippians 4:6-9.

a. From verse 6 what are you to do?

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

b. From verse 7 what will God do in response to your prayer?

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- How does prayer give peace?
- What is the connection between thanksgiving and peace?
- What are some things you are thankful for?
- How does being thankful for these things give you peace?

c. From verse 8 what are some things we should think about in order to be thankful and experience the peace of God?

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

- What are some specific examples of things we should think about that give us peace?
- What are some examples of things we think about that make us anxious and steal our peace?
- What is the connection between what we think and our peace?

d. From verse 9 what can you do to experience the peace of God?

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

- What are some things you have learned from God's Word and the example of mature believers and put into practice that gave you peace?
- What are some things you are doing that you need to stop that are stealing your peace?

Conditions to Answered Prayer

3. What are some conditions to answered prayer?

a. Psalm 66:18

If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened...

- Why does sin hinder your communication with God?

b. Matthew 21:22

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.

- Why is faith or belief an important aspect of prayer?

c. John 15:7

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done you.

- What does it mean to remain in Jesus?
- What does it mean for God's Word to remain in you? Scripture memory.
- What is the connection between scripture memory and answered prayer?

d. John 16:24

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

- What does it mean to ask in the name of Jesus? Pray by the power and authority of Jesus.

e. 1 John 5:14-15

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

- How do you know God's will?

God's answer to your prayer may be yes, no, or wait. You can trust God's answer to your prayer because He is your perfect heavenly Father, He is good, He loves you, and He knows what is best for you.

How to Pray

a. Matthew 6:9

This, then, is how you should pray...

There are no set formulas for how to pray, but a good way of praying includes the four elements of prayer Jesus gave us in the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9-15.

Adoration

a. Matthew 6:9

...Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...

b. Hebrews 13:15

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name.

As you read your Bible, make a list of God's character qualities (attributes) that you discover and then review them when you pray.

4. Praise God right now. Which of the following attributes of God are the most meaningful to you?

- Patient
- Merciful
- Forgiving
- Loving
- Eternal
- Unchanging
- Knows Everything
- Is Everywhere

Every person in the group gives an answer. Everyone has just prayed a prayer of praise. Why should you praise God?

- It reminds you who God is (Creator)
- It reminds you who you are (Creation)
- It gives you proper perspective

CONFESSION

a. Matthew 6:12

Forgive us our debts (sins)...

b. Psalm 38:18

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.

- What does it mean to confess?

All of your sins (past, present, and future) as a Christian were forgiven when you received Jesus for forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Sin causes damage to any relationship. Your sins as a Christian do not make you lose your position as God's child but your sins do damage your relationship with God. Confession repairs your damaged relationship with God and allows you to put Him back in control of your life where He belongs.

THANKSGIVING

a. Ephesians 5:20

...always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Look for the good in life, thank God for it, and you will be a more positive person. Make a list of all that you are thankful for and review it when you pray.

Everyone in the group share something they are thankful for.

SUPPLICATION

- Pray for other people

a. 1 Timothy 2:1

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people...

- Make a prayer list of people you want to pray for. You might pray for different people on different days of the week.
- Look at the prayers of Paul to help you pray for others: Ephesians 1:15-19; Colossians 1:3-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
- Pray for God's purpose and will to be done: ... in your life, ...in your words, ...in your attitudes, ...in your family, ...your church, ...your ministry, ...your job, ...your future, ...your city, ...the nation, .. the world.

b. Matthew 6:10

...your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...

- Pray for yourself
- Pray for your daily needs to be met

c. Matthew 6:11

Give us today our daily bread...

- Pray victory over temptation

d. Matthew 6:13

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

- Write down your requests and expect an answer!

e. Philippians 4:19

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

f. James 4:2

...You do not have because you do not ask God.

Believers face a spiritual battle every day. Satan wants to defeat you through temptation and fear. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face every situation during the day.

g. 1 John 4:4

...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

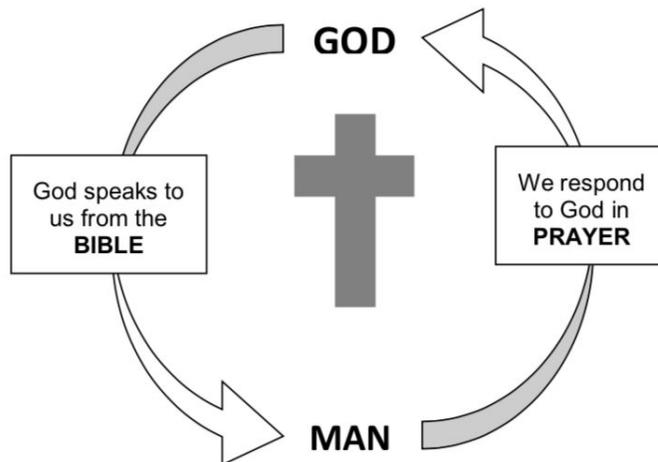
Praying for yourself and others is a way to give up control of things that you cannot control and giving control to God.

Everyone in the group share a prayer request for someone else or themselves.

Quiet Time

In order for your love relationship with God to grow, you should have a regular quiet time to be alone with God to get to know and experience Him through Bible reading and prayer. A quiet time is not just Bible reading to gain an overview of the Bible or a Bible study to gain in-depth knowledge of the Bible. Also, a quiet time is not just prayer to communicate your thoughts and feelings to God.

Quiet Time is a Dialog



The Importance of a Daily Quiet Time

Your time alone with God should be the top priority in your schedule for five reasons:

- We were created to have fellowship with God.

a. Genesis 1:27

So God created mankind in his own image...

b. Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

- Jesus died to make a relationship with God possible.

c. 1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Personal time alone with God was Jesus' habit.
- Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

d. Mark 1:35

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

e. Luke 22:39

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

f. Luke 5:16

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

- Every person who has been effective in ministry developed this habit: Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, etc.
- You cannot be a growing Christian without it!

e. Matthew 4:4

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

The Purpose of a Daily Quiet Time

The objective of your quiet time is not to study about Christ, but to actually spend time with Him and get to know Him!

It takes three weeks for you to become familiar with a new task. Then it takes another three weeks before it becomes a comfortable habit.

- To Give Devotion to God

a. Psalm 29:2

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

- To Get Direction From God

b. Psalm 25:4 (LB)

Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk.

c. Proverbs 3:6 Consider your way

...in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

d. Psalm 37:5 (LB) Commit your day

Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will.

- To Gain Delight in God

e. Psalm 37:4

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

f. Psalm 16:11 (GN)

...your (God's) presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever.

- To Grow Daily Like God

g. Acts 4:13 (LB)

When the Council saw the boldness of Peter and John and could see that they were obviously uneducated non-professionals, they were amazed and realized what being with Jesus had done for them!

h. Galatians 6:9 (LB)

And let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up.

How to Begin Quiet Time

Select a Specific Time

The best time to have a quiet time is when you are at your best. Whatever time you set, be consistent. Start with a few minutes and let it grow. Emphasize quality, not quantity!

Choose a Special Place

Luke 22:39, 41

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives and his disciples followed him. He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed...

Gather the Resources You'll Need

- A Bible

- A Notebook and pen or pencil to write down what the Lord speaks to you about and to keep your prayer lists

Begin With the Right Attitude

- Reverence

Psalm 46:10

...be still, and know that I am God...

- Expectancy

Psalm 119:18

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

- Obedience

John 14:21

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me...

Follow a Simple Plan

- Read A Passage: One chapter is enough to read.
- Mark the thoughts that impress you the most as you read.
- Record what God said.
 - Pick out the one thought you marked that impressed you the most.
 - Write down the reference and thought from the verse.
- Respond back to God.
 - Pray to God in response to what He has spoken to you in what you have written.
 - Your response in prayer may be adoration, confession, thanksgiving, or supplication.

Have a quiet time using the following passage of scripture and quiet time diary

John 15:4-10

Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Talking with God Summary

Read the Summary and choose the one thing that means the most to you. Why is it important?

1. Prayer is Your Communication with God
 - a. As a child of God you can approach Him with confidence
 - b. God wants you to trust Him, pour out your heart to Him, and find your refuge in Him

2. Benefits of Prayer
 - a. God will tell you great and unsearchable things
 - b. God will do immeasurably more than you ask
 - c. God will deliver you from fear
 - d. God will replace your anxiety with His peace as you pray

3. Conditions of Answered Prayer
 - a. Unconfessed sin hinders your prayers
 - b. Belief is needed for answered prayer
 - c. Remain in Jesus and have his Word remain in you
 - d. Ask in Jesus' name
 - e. Ask according to God's will

4. How to Pray
 - a. Use the Lord's Prayer as a model
 - i. Adoration (Praise for who God is)
 - ii. Confession
 - iii. Thanksgiving (For what God has done)
 - iv. Supplication (For other people and yourself)

5. Quiet Time
 - a. A quiet time is a dialog between you and God
 - b. Jesus showed us the importance of a regular quiet time
 - c. Have a regular quiet time

Use the Quiet Time Diary on the following pages and develop the habit of having a daily quiet time.

Quiet Time Diary

Date _____ Best thing I marked (Reference) _____

Thought from God:

Prayer response to God (Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication):

Date _____ Best thing I marked (Reference) _____

Thought from God:

Prayer response to God (Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication):

Date _____ Best thing I marked (Reference) _____

Thought from God:

Prayer response to God (Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication):

Quiet Time Diary

Date _____ Best thing I marked (Reference) _____

Thought from God:

Prayer response to God (Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication):

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