



New Member Orientation

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CANAAN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

- ◆ **LEARNING**
- ◆ **LIFTING**
- ◆ **LOVING**
- ◆ **LEADING**



Dear: _____

Greetings in the great and grand name of our Savior and Lord, ... **JESUS THE CHRIST!**

We thank and praise God that you have decided to join God's family here at Canaan Missionary Baptist church.

As a new member to our church family, this booklet is designed to inform and inspire you. Basic information regarding opportunities for Christian service here at Canaan church, times and places for ministry meetings and a schedule of regular Bible study and worship events are included herein.

Also included is a brief history of Canaan church, along with information regarding Pastor & Sis. Fort as well as our leadership team.

As a new member, you will be asked to complete our New Member Orientation class. And, while for some of you the topics may appear to be a little too basic, let me encourage you to attend and be blessed!

Finally, in addition to this booklet and your attendance in the New Member Orientation class, each member of our congregation is assigned their own deacon & deaconess team. The purpose of this team is to minister to any spiritual needs you may have. Please note the name and telephone numbers of your deacon and deaconess provided below.

May God continue to richly bless and keep you is my prayer.

Agape,
Pastor Fort

YOUR DEACON & DEACONESS:

Phone #: _____

Phone # _____

CANAAN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

OUR HISTORY IN BRIEF

The organizational meeting for Canaan church was held on Wednesday, December 6, 1989. The meeting was moderated by Dr. Bernard Black, President of the General State Baptist Convention of Arizona. Dr. Black was joined by Bishop Henry Barnwell, pastor of the First New Life Missionary Baptist church of Phoenix and Rev. D. Previn Carr, an assistant minister to Dr. Black assigned to preach an inspirational message at this occasion. Several things were accomplished at this meeting. Including: The official adoption of the church name. The identification and recognition of the charter members. And the Biblical direction for the organization of a Christian church was provided.

Canaan Missionary Baptist church held its inaugural service on December 10, 1989. Following prayer, Godly direction and recognizing the need for another Christian church in the east valley, Canaan church was born.

Reverend Montgomery Portis, a former associate minister with the Progressive Baptist church of Mesa, Arizona served in a significant role as both the minister with whom the church was organized and the primary preacher and teacher at Canaan church. Joining Rev. Portis as charter members of Canaan were: Bro. Roger Betts, Sis. Connie Betts, Sis. Carol Cooper, Sis. Linda Dailey, Sis. Greta Dillon, Sis. Michelle Dillon, Deacon Kenneth Hill, Sis. Sharon Hill, Bro. Marion Hill, Sis. Viveka Hill, Sis. Frankie James, Sis. Mercedes Jones, Sis. Vernell Junior, Bro. Charles Mayfield, Sis. Ruby Mayfield, Sis. Denise Portis and Sis. Valerie Smallwood. Children and youth present were: Sis. Adriann Portis, Sis. Ianna Portis, Sis. Isis Jones, Sis. Ikela Jones and Sis. Ashley Dillon.

The initial officers and workers in the church included: Sis. Michelle Dillon, usher's president; Deacon Kenneth Hill, chairman of Deacons; Sis. Sharon Hill, church musician; Bro. Marion Hill, choir director; and Sis. Vernell Junior, church financial secretary/treasurer.

Shortly after the official organization of Canaan, Rev. Portis (*an enlisted soldier with the U.S. Air Force*); was moved to another part of the country; and at the time the church called various ministers to share in the preaching and teaching duties of the church. Among those called was Rev. Sherman J. Fort, an associate minister at the Ebenezer Baptist church of Phoenix, Rev. Wesley Jones Sr., pastor. After preaching and teaching on several occasions, Rev. Fort was asked to serve as the interim pastor, and then eventually as the pastor of Canaan church .

Since that time the Lord has blessed Canaan to grow, go and glow for God. The church has experienced growth spiritually, numerically, financially and socially; with an emphasis on ministering to the whole man. God has also richly blessed Canaan with many associate ministers over the years. Including at least three who have been called to pastor churches here in the valley of the sun.

We thank and praise God for the things He has done! And, we pray that the Lord will allow us to demonstrate His light in this dark world.

CANAAN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

OUR MOTTO:

*TO LEARN GOD'S WORD AS OUR WISDOM
LIFT JESUS IN OUR WORSHIP
LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS AS WE WALK
AND LEAD THE LOST TO THE LORD AS ACTIVE WITNESSES
OF JESUS CHRIST
(II. Timothy 2:15 John 12:32; Matthew 25:31-40; Matthew 28:18-20)*

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

*TO EDUCATE, EQUIP, EMANCIPATE AND EMPOWER THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST FOR PERSONAL, FAMILY, COMMUNITY, STATE, NATIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL EDIFICATION THROUGH THE TIMELESS
PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF GOD'S HOLY WORD, THE EXAMPLE OF
JESUS THE CHRIST AND THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
(Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 4:11-16)*

OUR MINISTRY THEME:

*BECOMING A HEALTHY CHURCH,
ROOTED IN GOD'S WORD AND WITNESSING IN THE WORLD.*

WHAT WE BELIEVE

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES:

We believe the Holy Bible was written by divinely inspired men of God, and is a perfect in its instruction. We believe the Bible has God as its author, salvation as its goal and truth without any mixture of error as its content. We believe that the Bible reveals the principles by which God will judge us and therefore is, and shall remain, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried.

ABOUT GOD:

We believe the Bible teach that there is one, and only one living and true God. That manifested in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

ABOUT SALVATION:

We believe the Bible to teach the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. By Christ's birth death, burial, and resurrection and soon return; God has made salvation possible through simple faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Believing both in and on Jesus Christ as the Son of God and savior of the world saves men from eternal damnation.

ABOUT REPENTANCE AND FAITH:

We believe the Bible teaches that repentance and faith are the work of the Holy Spirit of God. The word repent means to '*turn from our sin*' to Jesus Christ our Savior. By turning to Christ as Savior and then trusting Him as Lord, we experience repentance and demonstrate faith.

ABOUT THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST:

We believe the Bible instructs that a visible church of Christ is comprised of believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel. Observing ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word. We believe the only Biblical officers are Bishops or Pastors, Deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Word of God, ... the book of Acts and the Epistles to Timothy in particular.

ABOUT BAPTISM & THE LORD'S SUPPER:

We believe the Bible teaches that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20); as to demonstrate outwardly that which has already taken place inwardly, and symbolically link us to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe the partaking of the Lord's supper is to be shared by members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine which commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

ABOUT OUR CHURCH FAMILY

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Quote: *“Good leadership is the result of good follow ship!”*
-Pastor Fort

At Canaan we believe that God has graciously blessed us with some of the best and brightest of His people to provide servant-leadership! In addition to their commitment of time, talent and treasure, the leadership team of Canaan church, is supported quarterly through leadership meetings, annually, through a church training conference and spiritually through pastoral prayer and supplication as they carry out *‘the work of the ministry.’*

***“AND HE GAVE SOME APOSTLES, AND SOME PROPHETS;
AND SOME, EVANGELISTS; AND SOME, PASTORS AND TEACHERS;
FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS, FOR THE WORK OF THE
MINISTRY, FOR THE EDIFYING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST:”***

-Ephesians 4:11 & 12

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES @ C.M.B.C.

C.M.B.C YOUTH MINISTRY

J.A.M. (Jesus and Me)

C.M.B.C. YOUTH MINISTRY

T.L.C. (Teens Lifting Christ)

C.M.B.C. SINGLES MINISTRY

S.W.W.J. (Singles Walking With Jesus)

[this ministry is currently in-active]

C.M.B.C. COUPLES MINISTRY

C.M.B.C. W.O.W. WOMEN'S MINISTRY

C.M.B.C. MEN'S MINISTRY

C.M.B.C. COUNSELING MINISTRY

(Deacon & Deaconess Teams)

CkC CANAAN'S KID'S CLUB

Sunday morning ministry *(ages: 18 months to Four years old)*

ABOUT OUR PASTOR & FIRST LADY

Sherman Joel Fort, was born and raised in San Jose California. As the tenth of eleven children and a son of the San Francisco Bay Area, Pastor Fort has been blessed with a multicultural and multiethnic experience and exposure to people from all walks of life.

After accepting the call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, Reverend Fort moved to Phoenix in 1984 where he attended Arizona College of the Bible and Grand Canyon College as a full-time, on-campus college student. During his first two years in the valley of the sun, Rev. Fort served in various capacities of church life, including serving as the 2nd vice president of the Youth Department for the General State Baptist Convention of Arizona.

In 1998, following a brief hiatus from school Pastor Fort graduated cum laude from Pacific Coast Bible College based in Sacramento California, with a Bachelor of Theology degree. And is currently pursuing a Master of Ministry degree from International Baptist College & Seminary in Tempe Arizona.

In 1987 following a two year courtship, Pastor Fort married the former Ms. Angela Monique Howard of Phoenix Arizona.

As an Arizona native Sis. Angela Fort is intimately familiar with the culture and climate of this great southwestern state. And as the youngest girl in her family of four siblings, and an active member of the Christian community in the valley of the sun for several years now, sharing her gift's of singing and teaching children & women, Sis. Fort is especially equipped to serve the Lord in this area of His vineyard. Together the Lord has blessed Pastor and Sis. Fort with two beautiful children Miss Kiara Noel Saran Fort and Miss Kennedi LaShae Saran Fort.

Since accepting the call to pastor Canaan church in 1990, pastor Fort has been the vehicle through which God has moved to minister to many people in the Canaan family and community at large. God has blessed Canaan with a number relevant and righteous church based ministries that meet the needs of the whole man. Including- vibrant children, youth, adult, couple's and singles groups. And, by working with various community Christian organizations already in place, Canaan has continued it's commitment to feeding and clothing the hungry and homeless of our community, state, nation and world.

Most recently Pastor Fort has revealed a fresh passion to meet the needs of specific persons in our community through the implementation of specific community based programs aimed at our children and youth and backed by grant dollars designed for such causes.

As the Lord continues to bless us to build people and construct a new worship and ministry facility for his glory, we believe it is through Pastor Fort's commitment to faith, family and a desire to move forward that God's will- will be accomplished in this present age.

**WHAT WE BELIEVE TEACH AND PREACH
ABOUT THE BIBLE/HOLY SCRIPTURES:**

We believe that the Bible, as given from God is the holy, complete and perfect Word of God. We believe that the purpose of the Bible is to teach mankind, reprove mankind, mature mankind and restore mankind to God.
-II. Timothy 3:1

OUR CHRISTian BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

*To conduct all matters of the Canaan Missionary Baptist church with the utmost character and integrity.
To do all things 'decently and in order' with The Holy **WORD** of **GOD**.*

OUR OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Sherman J. Fort:	Under-Shepherd/Pastor
Sis. Francine Barrow:	Administrative Assistant
Sis. Felecia Buycks: Chairperson	Board of Directors,
Deacon Roger Betts: Chairman	Board of Deacons,
Deacon Quitman 'Bill' Warren:	Treasurer

REAFFIRMATIONS OFTEN REPEATED @ C.M.B.C.

1. 'Preview ... before you present'

Rick Warren, Saddleback Community church, Saddleback Valley, CA.

No preachers, teachers, singers, dancers, etc. will be allowed to participate in service without prior approval of the pastor or his appointee.

2. 'Check with the tower!'

-The late Dr. E. V. Hill, Pastor, Mount Zion Baptist church, Los Angeles, CA.

Check with the pastor or appointee before making any move whatsoever in the name of the church.

3. 'Respect and recognize God's presence in worship through your dress, demeanor and disposition.'

Pastor Fort, C.M.B.C.

C.M.B.C. has no official dress code! And while we do dress down historically in the summer due to the summer heat in the valley we ask that every member dress in a manner that is appropriate for worship to our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ!

4. 'Know your place and your space and work therein.'

Sean Teal, Evangelist

Authentic love for God's leaders respect for God's servants and appreciation for God's ministers is mandatory within the C.M.B.C family! From the pastoral family, down to the newest members of God's church, respect and mutual reverence should be observed. One of the best ways of practicing this is to know (*understand*); your place or position in both Christ and His church before acting or reacting to any situation.

5. 'God gives blessings to, ... those He can get blessings through.'

Dr. A. Louis Patterson Jr.

As Christians we wish to underscore the need to be 'givers'. Freely we have received grace, mercy and love from the Lord. And, freely we are to give back in return.

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*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God,
a worker who does not need to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
II. Timothy 2:15

A BRIEF WORD OF INTRODUCTION

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God,
a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.”*
-2nd Timothy 2:15 & 16

TO GOD BE THE GLORY ... For the things He has done!

What Christians need now is a sincere love for the Word of God, and a clear understanding of what the Word of God says.

A desire to re-visit and provide a clearer understanding of the Word of God for believer's today is the backbone from which these Bible studies are done.

I pray that the living vibrant Word of God will challenge and change you. As it does all of us who read it sincerely- and seriously seek an intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ. I pray that we will be changed not just in thought, but in behavior.

And, I further pray that our behavior will demonstrate the love of God in every aspect of our lives.

Study God's Word with passion, enthusiasm and a real desire to know Him! To know, **JESUS CHRIST!**

Information About This Material

This booklet was compiled by Sherman J. Fort. Pastor Fort serves as the servant-pastor of Canaan Missionary Baptist church in Mesa, Arizona.

In most cases, the scripture quotes in this booklet are taken from the New King James and/or New American Standard versions of the Bible.

**For additional information or a complete list of available materials
please note the following:**

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REAL SALVATION

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

-Ephesians 2:8 & 9

Salvation. Saved. Born again. Redeemed. These words and many other words and phrases are heard often in Christian circles by ‘believer’s’ to identify themselves as people who have salvation in Jesus Christ.

Salvation is first base in the life of the Christian. And yet, it is here, at first base that so many of us get it wrong. And because of this fact, we want to begin this series of lessons on the subject of salvation.

WHAT IS SALVATION?

Salvation is: ... *“Deliverance, rescue, recovery or escape.”*

-Microsoft Works Thesaurus

In the Bible one word for ‘salvation’ is: **Soteria** (pronounced: so-tay-ree-ah). This noun originally meant: *“deliverance from, or preservation in dangerous or threatening circumstances.”*

Salvation for the Christian believer is in fact: To be delivered from the dangerous, threatening power and presence of sin.

WHAT SALVATION IS NOT

Salvation is not- having a ‘church experience.’

Salvation is not- coming down the aisle at the invitation time and being ‘voted’ into the body of Christ by the church family.

Salvation is not- a ‘feeling.’

Salvation does not- come from being ‘baptized.’

EXAMPLES OF SALVATION-

National Salvation or salvation for a nation:

“And Moses said to the people (the nation of Israel), ‘Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.

The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.’”

-Exodus 14:13 & 14

Salvation From Enemies:

“You will need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you.”

-2nd Chronicles 20:17

“Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, And do not be still, O God! For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head ... Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, That they may know that You, whose name alone is the Lord, Are the Most High over all the earth.”

-Psalm 83:1, 2 & 17 & 18.

Jesus Christ As Our Savior:

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

-Matthew 1:21

WHERE IS SALVATION FOUND?

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

-Ephesians 2:8, 9

According to this verse how are we saved?

By **G** _____ ... through **F** _____

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

-John 3:16

According to this verse, who gives us eternal life/salvation?

G _____!

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

....

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

-Romans 5:6 & 8

According to this verse where is salvation found?

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ...”

-Titus 3:5 & 6

According to this verse where is salvation found?

WHAT DEMONSTRATES/PROVES MY SALVATION IN JESUS CHRIST?

Characteristics of True Salvation:

First of all note that-

➤ **We are New Creatures!**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” -2nd Corinthians 5:17

➤ **We Love one another!**

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.”

“Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; ...” -John 8:42

“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.”

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” -I. John 3:14 & 16

➤ **We lay sin aside & desire the Word of God!**

“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” -1st Peter 2:1-3

➤ **We are light in the Lord Jesus Christ!**

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”

-Ephesians 5:8-10

“You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.”

-1st Thessalonians 5:5

➤ **We will not remain in sin!**

“Little children, let no one deceive you, He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

-1st John 3:7 & 8

“Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”

-1st John 3:9

It is impossible for the True Believer to REMAIN in sin- live a lifestyle of sin/keep sinning without conviction and repentance taking place!

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.”

-1st John 3:10

There is more to being a Christian than words we say! Being a Christian requires that we walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. Our Christianity must be lived and
‘fleshed out’ or ‘demonstrated’ in our lives everyday.

VICTORY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST!

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”

-1st John 2:1 & 2

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

-1st John 1:9

❖ **OUR SALVATION IS SECURE IN CHRIST JESUS!**

Consider the following verses of Scripture:

*“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
And I give them eternal life, and **they shall never perish;**
neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.
My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all;
and **no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are**
one.”
John 10:27-30*

*“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their
word;
that **they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me,**
and I in you; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent
Me.
And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that
they may be one just as We are one: ...”
John 17:20, 21 & 22*

*“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God
through us.
Now He who establishes us with you is Christ and has anointed us is God,
who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”
II. Corinthians 1:20, 21, & 22*

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His
abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus
Christ from the dead,
to **an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away,**
reserved in heaven for you,
who **are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation**
ready to be revealed in the last time.”
I. Peter 1:3, 4 & 5*

*“Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,
To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus
Christ: ...”
Jude verses 1 & 2*

PRAISE GOD FOR JESUS!

*While the marks of a true believer are righteousness, faithfulness, purity and holiness
before the Lord; it is equally true that God loves us so much He has given us an
Advocate in Jesus Christ the righteous. And through Jesus Christ we are saved!*

MY BIBLE STUDY LESSON NOTES:

LESSON TITLE:

KEY SCRIPTURE VERSE:

Write out your key scripture verse:

NOTES:

REAL REPENTANCE

JUST SAYING 'I'M SORRY' IS NOT ENOUGH!

-Pastor Fort

The word 'Repent' appears over one hundred and ten times in the Bible!
Repentance is something God is serious about.

You can't spell forgiveness, salvation, restoration or redemption without real repentance. The word repentance is a much used word in the Christian life. Pastor's, preacher's and the church community at large use this word so often, that it seems to have lost it's real meaning.

What do you think of when you hear the word repent?

To really repent, means: *"To have a change of mind, that leads to a change of behavior"*. More specifically, real repentance is seen in what I do and not just what I say!

One word used for 'repent' in the Bible is the word: **Metanoeo** (*pronounced: met-ahn-ah-eh-oh*). It literally means: A change of mind and behavior.

Examples of Repentance in our everyday lives!

DISOBEDIENCE: Parents and children- Mom tells her son not to use foul language. The son not only uses foul language, but directs it toward the Mother. The Mother corrects the son. The son is sincerely sorry and apologizes. The son demonstrates his sincerity by making every effort to not use foul language again. In the presence of his Mother or otherwise.

UNFAITHFULNESS: Husband and wife- One discovers that the other is having an inappropriate relationship with someone outside their marriage. After confronting the guilty spouse, the truth is revealed and confession is made. Sincere forgiveness is sought and received. The guilty spouse then demonstrates their repentance by avoiding any and all situations that would tempt or test them in this area of weakness; and they renew their commitment to being accountable to their partner in all areas of life.

An example of Real Repentance from Scripture!

SAUL:

“Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. All those who heard him were astonished and asked, ‘Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?’ Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.”

-Acts 9:19-22

REAL REPENTANCE INVOLVES:

*A change of mind!
A conviction of sin!
A change of behavior!
A desire to not repeat that same sin over and over again!
A turn from sin to the Savior!*

REAL REPENTANCE IS NOT:

*Weeping and crying alone!
Saying ‘I’m sorry’!
A 360 degree turn-around! It is a 180 degree turn!
Having other saints pray over you!*

John, the fore-runner of Jesus Christ had one message.
He said **Repent!**

“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, ‘Repent’, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” -Matthew 3:1

**JESUS CHRIST HAD A THEME TO HIS PREACHING!
IT WAS ‘REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL!’**

What does the following verse tell us about repentance?

“After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. The time has come, He said. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news.”
-Mark 1:14 & 15

What does Mark 1:15 say about the relevance of repentance?

What does Mark 1:15 say about the connection between repentance and believing the gospel?

It says they go T_____!

You can't have one (*the gospel*); without the other (*repentance*).

CHARACTERISTICS OF REAL REPENTANCE:

When we really repent we will:

- **OWN UP TO OUR SIN**- The first step in being healed of sin is to take responsibility for it. When we really repent we will own up to our part in committing the sin.

“*But the people of Israel said to the Lord, We have sinned.*”
-Judges 10:15

- **PUT AWAY THE SIN**- Remember that repentance involves *a change of mind, that leads to a change of behavior!* When we repent we will ‘put away’ the sin from among us.

“*So they got rid of their foreign gods and worshipped the Lord; ..*”
-Judges 10:16

- **WE CRY OUT FOR GOD’S MERCY**- Real repentance will cause the Christian to cry out for God’s mercy! God’s mercy and loving kindness will ‘wipe away our sinful transgressions.’

Mercy takes place when:
“We don’t get, what we really deserve in terms of judgment or punishment.”

-Let’s Read Psalm 51:1-3:

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions” -Psalm 51:1

- **WE SEEK TO BE WASHED FROM OUR SINS**- Real repentance convicts us of the filth and shame of sin; and causes us to seek the cleansing only God can give!

“Wash away all my evil and make me clean from my sin!” -Psalm 51:2

- **WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF OUR SINS**- Real repentance will make us conscious of our sins. Because of our desire to please God and the ever-present presence of the Holy Spirit in us, we will be always aware of our sin.

“I recognize my faults; I am always conscious of my sins.” -Psalm 51:3

- **WE WILL RECOGNIZE THAT WHEN WE KNOWINGLY SIN, WE SIN AGAINST GOD**- Real repentance will cause us to reflect on- not only the sin; but God, The One whom we sin against!

“I have sinned against You- only against You- and done what You consider evil.”
 -Psalm 51:4

**When we sin as David did with Bathsheba,
 it is a direct violation of the word, will and direction of God.**

- **WE RECOGNIZE GOD’S DESIRE FOR TRUTH IN THE ‘INWARD PARTS’**- Real repentance will remind us that God desires truth in our hearts!

“Behold, thou desires truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.”
 -Psalm 51:6

- **WE SEEK TO BE PURGED FROM SIN, AND RETURN TO THE JOY, GLADNESS, RESTORATION AND FREEDOM THAT ONLY COMES FROM BEING RIGHT WITH GOD & BEING IN GOD’S PRESENCE!**

“Let me hear the sounds of joy and gladness; I will be happy once again. Create a pure heart in me, O God, and put a new and loyal spirit in me. Do not banish me from your presence; ... Give me again the joy that comes from your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.”
 -Psalm 51:8, 10, & 12

- **FINALLY- REAL REPENTANCE EQUIPS US TO SHARE THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST WITH OTHERS!**

“Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinner shall be converted unto thee.”

-Psalm 51:13

HOLY LIVING

“HOLINESS, NOTHING ELSE WILL DO!”

What does the word ‘*holy*’ mean? What does it mean in the life of the Christian believer? How does it relate to our lives today? These questions beg to be answered by the Christian today!

Like so many other words and phrases, the word ‘*holy*’ or ‘*holiness*’ is used so often that in many cases the impact of the word has been lost.

The Bible word for holy is the word, **Qadosh**. (*pronounced kaw-dohsh*). It refers to that which is sacred. It means “*to set something apart*” or “*to consecrate something*”.

Another word for holy in the Bible is the word, **Hagios**. (*pronounced hag-ee-os*). It again refers to that which is “*set apart*” or “*dedicated*” to God. Holiness can refer to places and people.

Old Testament Christian leaders were called to be holy!

The Bible says: “*You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD.*”

-Exodus 28:36

-Read also Psalm 101:1-8

-TO TAKE OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE SERIOUSLY, WE MUST TAKE SERIOUSLY THE MATTER OF HOLY LIVING!

~HOLY LIVING IS LIVING A LIFE THAT IS SET APART AND CONSECRATED TO THE LORD IN EVERY WAY!

All Christians are called to be holy!

The Bible says: “*... but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”*”

-1st Peter 1:15 & 16

In the kingdom of God, everyone shall exercise holiness!

-The Bible says: “*In that day **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**” shall be engraved on the bells of the horses.” -Zechariah 14:20a*

THINGS THAT DO NOT MAKE US HOLY!

*Just reading your Bible everyday.
Just praying three times a day.
Just fasting once each week.
Preaching the Word of God doesn't make you holy!
Pastoring a church doesn't make you holy!
Leading a ministry group doesn't make you holy!
Singing in the choir doesn't make you holy!
Serving in a particular Christian organization
or area of Christian service, doesn't make you holy!*

HOW DO WE LIVE HOLY CHRISTIAN LIVES?

We No Longer Walk As Unbeliever's-

Someone said, ‘*Action speaks louder than words.*’ With this in mind, we are reminded that Christians are to look like Christ in our behavior. We should look like Jesus in the way we live our lives.

“*This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should **no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk**, in the futility of their mind,*” -
Ephesians 4:17

We Put Off The Old Man, & Put On The New Man-

“*.... that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you **put on the new man** which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*” -Ephesians 4:22, 23 & 24.

HOW WILL THE LORD HELP BRING US TO HOLINESS?

Holiness, as described in Scripture and called for in the Christian believer's life- does not require that we die in order to attain it.

It requires instead that we-

Dedicate ourselves completely to the Lord Jesus Christ everyday!

Listen at what Jesus said to His Father, when addressing the matter of holiness.

Through His true written _____, His spoken _____
and Jesus Christ, The living _____.

Jesus said:

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Sanctify-(set them apart*) them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**" -John
17:15 - 17

**words in parenthesis mine*

WHAT ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF HOLINESS?

We will gird up (*literally: 'brace-up'*); our minds with God's word!

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, ..."

-1st Peter 1:13a

We will be 'sober', and live with and through the Holy Spirit's control!

"be sober,"

-1st Peter 1:13b

**BEING 'SOBER' MEANS:
TO BE CLEAR IN MIND, THOUGHT AND BEHAVIOR!**

We will rest in the grace and hope found exclusively in knowing Jesus Christ! Instead of relying on people, programs etc., for security and hope- We will rely on Jesus Christ ONLY! Jesus Christ gives us all we need as His children.

“... and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ...”
-1st Peter 1:13c

We will not be conformed to the image or example of the world. Rather, we will be fashioned after our Savior and Lord, ... JESUS THE CHRIST!

“As being obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; But as He which has called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
-I. Peter 14, 15 & 16

The word 'holiness'- in one form or another appears over 627 times in the King James version of the Bible. Let's be clear about this fact:

GOD IS SERIOUS ABOUT HOLINESS!

REAL PRAYER!

PRAYER IS a voice which goes into God's ear, and it lives as long as God's ear is open to holy pleas, as long as God's heart is alive to holy things.

Of all the '*hot topics*' and issues facing Christians today prayer may very well be the single-most over-looked and under-appreciated of them all! Prayer is fundamental to our Christian faith. Prayer is foundational to who we are and what we will become as follower's of Jesus Christ. Prayer is mandatory in the life of every single believer and every single church, para-church movement and Christian organization the world over.

In fact, it is because of prayerlessness that much of the pain and suffering we experience is present in our world and in our lives. While we know that life is full of triumphs and trials, good times and bad for the believer and the unbeliever; we must nevertheless acknowledge that Real Prayer goes a long way in the quality of our everyday lives as Christians!

WHAT IS PRAYER?

The word '*Pray*' in Scripture is the word: *Sharal* (*pronounced: shaw-al*). This verb can be translated to mean: "*pray*," "*ask*" or "*inquire*."

What Prayer Model(s) Have You Experienced In Your Life?

- a. _____ b.

- c. _____ d.

What Prayer Models Do We See In Scripture?

1. Secret prayer: Matthew 6:6
2. Group/Public prayer: Matthew 18:20; Acts 21:5 & 6;
3. Agreement prayer: Matthew 18:19

What kinds of things do we see people praying for in the Bible?

	What they prayed for	Scripture reference	Who prayed
1	Physical healing:	James 5:13-15	James the disciple
2	Faith: man	Mark 9:24	Father of demon possessed man
3	Extended life:	II. Kings 20:2 &3	King Hezekiah's prayer
4	Mercy:	Psalms 51:1-19	A prayer of David
5	Food & well being:	Genesis 21:16b	Hagar's prayer

“THE MORE PRAYING *there is in the world the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil everywhere.”*

-Dr. Edward M. Bounds

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

Let's consider the prayer model given to us by Jesus Himself!

Matthew 6:9-13

Acknowledge & Adore God the Father:	Our Father which art in heaven ...
Seek His (God's) will to be done:	Thy kingdom come, thy will be ...
Request our daily provision(s):	Give us this day our daily bread
Confess our sins and ask for forgiveness	Forgive us our debts, as we forgive
Request protection from the flesh, the world and the Devil:	Lead us not into temptation, ... evil
Thank the Lord for His many blessings:	For Yours is the kingdom ... amen

❖ **To Whom do we pray?**

Jesus said: “**In this manner therefore, pray**“:
“*Our Father*” -Matthew 6:9

~So we pray to God the Father!

Quote: “*God the Father is the only one of the trinity who does not pray. He receives our prayers.*”

-Dr. A. Louis Patterson Jr.

❖ **In Who’s name should we pray?**

Let’s consider the answer of Jesus in Scripture!

“*Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”*
- John 14::6

“*And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*”
-John 14:13 & 14

~So we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. God’s only begotten Son!

❖ **In Who’s power and influence should we pray?**

We should pray through the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit!

“*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pay for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us”*
-Romans 8:26

~So we should pray with the power, influence and help of the God the Holy Spirit!

CLOSING QUOTE:

“*Without prayer the Christian life, robbed of its sweetness and beauty, becomes cold and formal, and dead; but in the secret place where God talks with His own, the Christian life grows into such a testimony of Divine power that all men will feel its influence and be touched by the warmth of its love ... That, surely is the purpose of all real prayer and the end of all true service.*”

-Edward McKendree Bounds

REAL FASTING

One of the first and most critical things every believer needs to do is practice fasting! Fasting is without question, one of the most misunderstood matters of the Christian life. While fasting is practiced by many people for a variety of reasons, including such things as: personal meditation, the cleaning of our physical bodies etc. Fasting is for the Christian a vehicle to obtaining and maintaining a more intimate relationship with God the Father, through His Son Jesus Christ!

WHAT IS FASTING?

FASTING: *“To abstain from the pleasure and satisfaction of the flesh, normally focused on food- for the purpose of Spiritual growth & development!”*

WHY SHOULD WE FAST TODAY?

Jesus fasted 40 days in the wilderness before beginning His public ministry!
Read: Matthew 4:1-2

Like Jesus, **Moses too** fasted 40 days!
Read: Deuteronomy 9:9

Like Jesus, **Elijah too** fasted 40 days!
Read: I. Kings 19:7 & 8

Daniel fasted for 21 days!
Read: Daniel 10:2 & 3

Queen Esther, her maids and the Jews in Shushan (or Susa); fasted for 3 days!
Read: Esther 4:15 & 16

Jesus instructs **His disciples** to have faith, pray and fast when dealing with demons!
Read: Matthew 17:19-21

The church at Antioch prayed and fasted and the Holy Spirit spoke to them!
Read: Acts 13:2 & 3

IN SHORT, Scripture teaches us to fast!

WHAT CAN FASTING DO FOR THE BELIEVER?

To 'fast' in its simplest definition means: "to abstain from food."
For the Christian believer however it is much more.

- ☞ *Fasting and prayer for the believer means to gain greater intimacy with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- ☞ *Fasting and prayer for the believer helps us to abandon all else, for the purpose of getting closer to God- and hearing from Him.*

- ☞ *Fasting and prayer for the believer develops Christian character, imparts wisdom from God and develops spiritual discipline in the life of the believer.*

- ☞ *Fasting and prayer for the believer, often precedes Holy Spirit power in the working of miracles, signs and wonders in the Christian life!*

LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT FASTING:

*"And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him,
kneeling down to Him and saying,
Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely;
for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.
So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.
Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long
shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."
And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him;
and the child was cured from that very hour.
Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"
So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you,
If you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,'
and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.
However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*
-Matthew 17:14-21 ~ (words of Jesus in red)

- The Problem:** *The son is possessed by a demon.
The disciples cannot cast the demon out!*
- The Prescription:** *Jesus Himself, casting the demon out!*
- The Process:** *Through the power of God, acquired through a right
relationship with Him- through prayer and fasting!*

THE PRACTICAL TRUTH ABOUT EVERY LAW OF GOD:

Every law and commandment God has given to us, has a practical side designed to help us in our every day lives.

Too often the believer (*especially the new believer*); looks at the laws and commandments of God to us, His children as meaningless.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Every instruction God gives us, including that of fasting has a practical side designed to help and aide us in our everyday lives.

Some Of The Practical Benefits Of Fasting:

- *It reminds us that we need to seek a closer relationship with God regularly.*
- *It helps to cleanse and purify our bodies.*
- *It helps to cleanse and purify our minds.*
- *It helps to cleanse and purify our emotions.*

Satan is on the prowl, searching “*to and fro, going up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour.*” -read: Job 1:7 & 1st Peter 5:8
It behooves each of us to do all we can to stay close to the Lord. Fasting is one way to help us grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior and Lord,
... JESUS THE CHRIST!

REAL FAITH

The Bible says: *“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, (God) ...”*

Without question, the single-most important element in the life of the believer is our faith in Jesus Christ! And, at the same time one of the most butchered and misunderstood elements of the Christian life is that of faith.

In recent and not so recent days we have witnessed a fresh wave of people who are not dealing with the well rounded, complete faith of the Bible. But rather are feeding people a diet of faith based on works alone.

Many people are declaring an exclusive faith- A faith that will heal our bodies when we're sick, make us rich when we're broke and give us relationships with others when we're lonely.

While Scripture clearly teaches us to in fact trust God at every level of our lives, for everything in our lives- very often the subject of faith is mishandled among those who declare the word of God.

This lesson is designed to help us look at our Christian faith from Scripture and learn how to 'please God' through it- and not ourselves.

WHAT IS FAITH?

The commonly used word for faith in the Bible is the word Pistis (pis-tis). The verb form of this word is: Pisteuo (pis-too-oh).

The word 'Faith' Pistis/Pisteuo means: *“to be persuaded of something, or to place confidence in someone or something”*

Of the more than two hundred times the word faith is used in the Bible, at least two hundred of those times, the noun Pistis is used.

Consider these comments/definitions of faith:

🔔 *“Faith is trusting God, in spite of how things look.”*
-Pastor Fredrick L. Fairley Sr.

🔔 *“Faith is putting your weight on God.”*

🔔 *“Faith is **F**orward **A**ction **I**n **T**rusting **H**im.”*
-Dr. Albert L. Patterson Sr.

🔔 *“Faith is confidence in the testimony of another.”*
-The Thomas Nelson Open Bible

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

-Hebrews 11:1

Let’s look at faith in the following ways:

▪ **SAVING FAITH:**

“That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”
-Romans 10:9 & 10 (NAS)

The first prayer that God receives from us is the prayer of saving faith. Saving faith is exercised when we confidently trust in Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation and relationship with God the Father.

▪ **Biblical examples of saving faith-**

Three thousand plus are saved on the day of Pentecost: read: Acts 2:40 & 41

The Philippian jailer, and his house-hold are saved: read: Acts 16:31-34

▪ **FAITH IN ACTION:**

Christian sacrifice to God is made better/excellent by faith:

Hebrews 11:4

Faith builds an ark, when there is no rain:

Hebrews 11:7

Faith follows God's direction without knowing where it's going
9

Hebrews 11:8 &

Faith trusts God to deliver a child when the bodies reproductive
system have shut down.

Hebrews 11:11

Faith heals: The centurion's servant-
Jairus's daughter-
The woman with the blood hemorrhage
Blind Bartimaeus-
The ten lepers-
Sick saints-

Matthew 8:5-10

Mark 5:22, 23

Mark 5:25-34

Mark 10:46-52

Luke 17:11-19

James 5:13-15

LIVING OUT OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH ... EVERYDAY:

The faith that '*pleases God*' is the faith that is seen in what we do. Not just what we say.

People who 'lived out' their faith-

1. Abraham

2. Joseph

3. David

4. Paul

5. Peter

6. John the baptizer

7. _____

8. _____

THE FAITH OF GOD:

As Christian believers we should be faithful to God!
After all God is faithful to us!

Consider these verses of Scripture-

↳ *“Thy faithfulness continues throughout all generations;”*
-Psalm 119:90a

↳ *“But I will not break off My loving kindness from him,
Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness.”* -Psalm 89:33

↳ *“Thy loving kindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens,
Thy faithfulness reaches to the skies.”* -Psalm 36:5

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

We need Saving Faith to trust Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.

We need Living Faith, to go through our lives trusting God for everything we need.

We need Delivering Faith, to know that God can, wants to and will deliver us from sin and Satan.

HOW DO WE GET FAITH?

-We stay under the influence of the Word of God!

↳ *“Now faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

PRAY FOR FAITH!

↳ *“Lord I believe, Help my unbelief.”*

REAL PEACE

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW IS ... REAL PEACE!

Real peace is the desire of every individual. And, when we consider the stress and strain involved in living out our daily lives today- people are looking for peace like never before.

The search for peace is not a new search, it is an old one. People have been pursuing peace since the dawn of mankind. Since Adam and Eve committed the first sin in the garden of Eden, man has been in pursuit of peace.

What is peace?
The word for Peace in the new testament is the word: Eirene. (eye-ray-nay): A noun meaning peace. It is “a period marked by cessation of open and hostile aggression between people and nations.”

It can be used figuratively to refer to peace in the sense of harmony. Frequently in the new testament the meaning of this word moves in the direction of the Hebrew word for peace ... Shalom! Shalom meaning ‘well being’ and ‘wholeness.’ Normally used to greet or say farewell. example in John 20:19 & 21

What peace is not:

Peace is not found in making a certain amount of money.

Peace is not found in living in a certain home, or house on a hill.

Peace is not found in having your name on the church roll.

Peace is not found in being married to the perfect person.

Peace is not found in having the ideal job.

Peace is not _____

Peace is not _____

Some Facts About 'Peace' in scripture:

The word 'peace' appears over 300 times in the Bible.

This fact alone speaks to us of the seriousness where-with the Lord God considers peace. The Bible speaks of peace over and over again.

Real peace comes from God alone!	read: Isaiah 26:3
God alone will give us universal peace!	read: Isaiah 2:4
Jesus Christ is the prince of peace!	read: Isaiah 9:6
Jesus Christ is the source of real peace!	read: John 14:27

As we go through this lesson we will look at some key scriptures dealing with peace.

Let's consider first Isaiah 26:3 & 4:

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You: because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength:"

What does this verse say about peace?

- This scripture provides the promise of coming perfect (*or complete peace*); to the children of Israel by our Messiah-King, **JESUS THE CHRIST!**
- This scripture declares that in 'that day' (*the Millennium*), God and God alone will give perfect peace to His people.
- We have this very same promise today from God Almighty! God will, and God wants to- give all of us His perfect peace. Our receiving His peace is connected to our 'trusting' Him. And having our minds '*stayed*' or kept on Him by Him!
- The verse declares that the believer should trust God forever! For in the Lord alone is everlasting strength.

Scripture #2:

*“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice!
Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.*

*Be anxious for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication,
with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*

*and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brothers, whatever things are honest, whatever things are true, whatever
things are noble, whatever things are just, what ever things are pure, what ever
things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if
there be anything praiseworthy, --meditate on these things.*

*The things you learned and received and heard and seen in me, these do,
and the God of peace will be with you.*

-Philippians 4:4-9

From this passage of scripture, we see several things. Including some steps in the process of peace. Consider the following:

- Context: Relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior comes before real peace.*
- Verse 4: Rejoicing in the Lord precedes peace.*
- Verse 5: Kindness, gentleness and moderation are keys to peace in this life. As well as remembering that Lord is ‘at hand.’!*
- Verse 6a: Trusting God, to the point that we have anxiety about nothing is a must for real peace.*
- Verse 6b: Real peace is maintained through consistently giving thanks to God and sharing our requests and heart with Him.*
- Verse 7: God’s peace will guard our hearts and minds the way a soldier guards his assigned post.*
- Verse 8: Keeping our peace in this life, and growing stronger in peace everyday is marked by what we allow to go into us. We are commanded to meditate on the right things.*
- Verse 9: We should do what we’ve learned, received seen, and heard in Jesus Christ, ... our Savior and Lord!*

SOME ADDITIONAL VERSES ABOUT PEACE:

II. Corinthians 5:18-21

Matthew 5:9

Romans 14:19

Galatians 5:22

Isaiah 52:7

Jeremiah 33:6

Psalms 29:11

Isaiah 26:12

THE HOLY SPIRIT

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” -John 15:26

If there is a subject both believers and non believers alike need clarification on it is the subject of ... The Holy Spirit!. The Holy Spirit is a topic of discussion like never before in the life of the church.

People the world over, from seemingly every denomination imaginable are discussing and debating the role, responsibility, power and place of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

This lesson is designed to clarify the Holy Spirit’s person, place, power and pre-eminence in the life of every child of God.

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT:

- *A warm and fuzzy feeling.*
- *A spirit of dancing*
- *A spirit of ‘speaking in tongues’*
- *A spirit of shouting ... alone.*
- *A spirit of laughter ... alone.*
- *A*
- *A*

Note: The Holy Spirit of God living inside of us, brings us joy, peace and comfort. And while those emotions may cause us to dance, shout, laugh etc., none of these are the fundamental work of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS: *The Bible says the Holy Spirit is*

- ✓ *The third person of the trinity!*
 - ✓ *The Spirit of God*
 - ✓ *The Spirit of Truth*
 - ✓ *The Helper*
 - ✓ *The Comforter*
 - ✓ *The ... _____*
-

The Holy Spirit IS the 3rd person of the trinity!

Consider the following scriptures:

*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep..
And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”*
Genesis 1:2

*“But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?
While it remained, was it nor your own?
And after it was sold, was it not in your own control?
Why have you conceived this thing in your heart?
You have not lied to men but to God.”*
-Acts 5:3 & 4.

THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

A fundamental fact concerning the Holy Spirit is that He is a person! Again, let's re-state the fact that the Holy Spirit of God is not an 'it' or a 'thing'. He (*the Holy Spirit*); is the 3rd person of the trinity.

Consider the following scriptures:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." -II. Cor. 13:14

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." -Matthew 29:19

Consider what the Holy Spirit is called in the following Scriptures:

1. The Holy Spirit is called God: read: Genesis 1:2!
2. The Lord God: read: Isaiah 61:1
3. Father: read: Matthew 10:20
4. Spirit of God: read: Romans 8:9

The Holy Spirit is called **GOD**, the **LORD GOD**, **FATHER** and **SPIRIT OF GOD**! Scripture is clear. He is the 3rd person of the trinity.

Consider the fact that the Holy Spirit is God!

Acts 5:3 & 4: Ananias lies to the _____ ... of God.

Matthew 28:19 The Holy Spirit is identified with God the Father & God the Son.

What is the job of the Holy Spirit among believers?

The Holy Spirit re-_____ the believer. John 3:5

The Holy Spirit dwells _____ the believer. Romans 8:11

The Holy Spirit g_____ the believer. John 16:13

The Holy Spirit sanc_____ the believer. Rom. 15:15, 16 & II
Thess. 2:13

The Holy Spirit bears witness we are God's children. Romans 8:16

***“GOD IS SPIRIT
AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM
MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND
TRUTH.”
John 4:24***

**JESUS CHRIST COMFORTS HIS DISCIPLES WITH THE PROMISE
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT~**

*“If you love Me, keep My commandments.
And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper,
that He may abide with you forever-
the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him
nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.
I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you
A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me.
Because I live, you will live also.
At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he
who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself
to him.”*

*Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself
to us, and not to the world?
Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word;
and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with
him.
He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear
is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.
These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.
But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,
He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said
to you.
Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to
you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

-John 14:15-27

*“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit
of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”*

-John 15:26

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM SCRIPTURE?

We know that He

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Helps the believer | b. Guides the believer into all truth |
| c. Comforts the believer | d. Sanctifies the believer |
| e. Indwells the believer | f. Convicts the believer |
| g. _____ | h. _____ |

We also know that the Holy Spirit gives GIFTS to every believer! Let's look a little more closely at this Bible fact.

The Bible says:

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: ...”

-Romans 12:5 & 6a

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:”

-I. Corinthians 12:7

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

-I. Peter 4:10

Many people brag and boast about their abilities or gifts in God, but the real truth is that any Spiritual gifts we have come from God- through His Holy Spirit!

EVERY SINGLE CHRISTIAN, HAS AT LEAST ONE SPIRITUAL GIFT FROM GOD!

LET'S DEFINE THE TERM 'SPIRITUAL GIFT'!

A Spiritual gift is the supernatural ability of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, working in the life of the believer to do that which will edify His body and glorify His name. It is a work that the believer would NOT be able to do without the Lord.

What Is The Purpose Of The Spiritual Gift(s) God Has Given Us?

The purpose of the gift(s) God has given us is to: ...

1. For the **E**_____ of the saints!

*“And He (Jesus Christ, by way of the Holy Spirit); Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
for the equipping of the saints ...”*

-Ephesians 4:11 & 12a

2. For the **W**_____ of the ministry!

“... For the work of the ministry, ...”

-Ephesians 4:12b

3. For the **Ed**_____ of the body of Christ!

“ ... For the edifying of the body of Christ, ...”

-Ephesians 4:12c

How long can we expect to be supernaturally gifted by God to do His work?

- ❖ Until we come into the unity of faith in Jesus Christ, and are mature children of God.

Consider the rest of this portion of Scripture to the church at Ephesus-

“... till we all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head- Christ
from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

-Ephesians 4:13-16

***WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT WE CAN,
OR CANNOT DO FOR GOD.
IF WHAT WE DESIRE TO DO IS A WORK GOD WANTS US TO DO FOR
HIM, HE WILL GIFT US TO DO IT!***

MY BIBLE STUDY LESSON NOTES:

LESSON TITLE:

KEY SCRIPTURE VERSE:

Write out your key scripture verse:

NOTES:

REAL STEWARDSHIP

INTRODUCTION: Of the many subjects already discussed in this booklet, the subject of Stewardship is certainly one of the most practical and beneficial! In the same light, the subject of stewardship can also be one of the most debated and mis-understood topics among believers. Let's look at what the Word of God has to say about the subject of stewardship.

The word steward or stewardship has been defined as:

"A trust granted for profitable use."
-The Open Bible, by Thomas Nelson

"A person employed to manage another's property, especially a large estate."
Oxford American Dictionary, 1980

A Christian Steward can be described as: A believer who has been charged with the management of the Lord's property. The most precious of which is ourselves!

A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A STEWARD:

➤ **Joseph was a Steward-**

Joseph was a steward & manager of Potiphar's house ...

*"And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand.
So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer (or Steward)- of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority."
Genesis 39: 3& 4*

➤ **Joseph had a Steward of his own-**

The Bible records a word about Joseph's steward when Joseph's brothers came to Joseph's house in Egypt.:

*"Now when they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house, they talked with him at the door of the house, ..."
-Genesis 43:19*

THE MOMENT ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR AND LORD, WE GIVE UP PERSONAL OWNERSHIP & TAKE UP OUR CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP!

REAL STEWARDSHIP INVOLVES THE COMMITMENT OF OUR:

I. **TOTAL SELF:** Most often, we hear the word stewardship in church linked to the management of money. In fact, in many churches it's the only time we hear the word stewardship. However, stewardship involves much more than just the management of money. Stewardship for the Christian speaks to the management of our *Total Self*!

a. **Managing Our Body!** As Christians we should consider our physical health and well being as part of our Christian responsibility to God!

-The Bible says:

“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

I. Corinthians 6:20

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies

a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

Romans 12:1

b. **Managing Our Mind!** As Christians we should also honor God in our thinking. We should manage what we allow to enter our mind and heart.

-The Bible says:

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ...”

Philippians 2:5

c. **Managing Our Spirit!** As lovers, believer's and follower's of Jesus Christ we are also commanded to be controlled by the Holy Spirit of God! It is our responsibility to see to our spiritual health, by asking God to continually fill us with His Spirit.

-The Bible says:

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ...”

Ephesians 5:18

There are many, many Scriptures that speak to how the Christian is to manage himself or herself in all matters of life. As a final note of Scripture for this section of our lesson, let's consider the Psalm of David in Psalm 101, where he addresses personal commitment to holy living-

-The Bible says:

"I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O Lord, I will sing praises.
I will behave wisely in a perfect (blameless); way.
Oh, when will You come to me?

I will walk within my house with a perfect (blameless) heart.
I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away;
it shall not cling to me.

A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness.
Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy;
the one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, him I will not endure.

My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me;
he who walks in a perfect (blameless) way, he shall serve me.

He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house;
he who tells lies shall not continue (be established); in my presence.

Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land,
that I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord."

Psalm 101:1-8

Note some of the areas of life that the Lord deals with in writing this Psalm through David:

1. *Personal behavior*
2. *Personal dwelling*
3. *Personal viewing*
4. *Personal friendships*
5. *Personal morality*
6. *Personal justice*
7. *Personally committed to right relationships*
8. *Personally employing righteous people.*
9. *Personally dealing with sin in a righteous way.*
10. *Other areas? _____*

- II. **TIME:** Every member of the body of Christ is commissioned by God to manage their time wisely. Many of us don't think of God in terms of time management, but we should! As Christian's we owe God our Time!

Speaking more practically, most of us give our jobs 'at least' 40 hours each week. We give another several hours to recreational activity that is not always beneficial, including things like watching television. We can and should give the Lord some quality time. Not just our tired, worn-out time, but some real quality time!

QUOTE: OUR TIME ON EARTH IS ANOTHER THING WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO CONTROL OVER. AS CHRISTIANS WE SHOULD MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY SECOND WE HAVE ... FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

- ❖ **All Time and especially our time as believer's is really in God's control! Period!**

"But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord; I say, "You are my God," My times are in Your hand;"
-Psalm 31:114-15a

- ❖ **Our Time on earth is fleeting and fading fast!**

"Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor. Selah" -Psalm 39:5

"Remember how short my time is; for what futility have You created all the children of men?"
-Psalm 89:47

- ❖ **We should manage our lives every second of every day as though it's our last second and our last day!**

"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."
-John 9:4

- ❖ **We should never take any day or date for granted. We should plan and prepare, remembering that God's perfect and permissive will, will prevail!**

"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.

For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

-James 4:13-15

III. TALENT: As believer's we all have been given spiritual gifts for works of service to the Lord!

In writing to the variety of spiritual gifts within the body of Christ, the Apostle Paul writes to both the church of Corinth and the church at Rome.

-The Bible says:

*"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.
... For in fact the body is not one member but many."*

-I. Corinthians 12:12 & 14

*"For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,
let us use them: ..."*

-Romans 12:4-6

WHEN IT COMES TO USING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR THE LORD WE SHOULD:

1. DISCOVER OUR SPIRITUAL GIFT!

- Through prayer & fasting.
- Through taking a 'spiritual gifts' test?
- Through trial and error.

2. DEVELOP OUR SPIRITUAL GIFT!

- Through Christian education and discipleship programs at your church.
- Through Christian education at an accredited & Biblically based institution.
- Through personal prayer and Bible study.

3. BEGIN DOING OR DEMONSTRATING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFT!

- By getting busy for the Lord in your home.
- By getting busy with the work of the church, in your church.
- By getting busy with ministry in your community.

IV. **TREASURE:** Of all the areas of the Christian life, the area of money may very well be the last frontier left to tame! Like it or not, where when and how we spend our money speaks volumes about our spiritual life in Christ Jesus!

**How, when and where we spend our money reflects where our heart really is,
And is a barometer on how we really feel about God!**

Consider what the Scripture has to say about our heart and treasure:

*“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy
and where thieves break in and steal;*

*but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust
destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

-Matthew 6:19-21

Taking A Closer Look At Matthew 6:19-21:

In Matthew chapter six, Jesus is teaching His disciples many things- not the least of which are the Priorities of the kingdom of God. Jesus is teaching them about the importance of prayer, fasting, and generally total faith in God to provide their every need.

In verses nineteen through twenty one, Jesus instructs His disciples to do several things. Let's list some of those things.

1. Jesus mentions the wrong place to ‘lay up’ our treasures!

Where is that place?

2. Jesus mentions the reason not to lay up our treasures there.

What reasons does Jesus give?

3. Jesus mentions where our treasure should be stored up.

Where does Jesus say we should store our treasure? _____

4. Jesus tells us why we should place our treasure there.

What reasons does Jesus give? _____

5. In verse twenty one, Jesus tells us an important truth about the connection between our treasure and our heart?

What does this mean to you?

=====

Many people will relinquish their bodies, mind, home, schedule and natural gifts to God- relatively quickly; when compared with the amount of time it takes to give God their money!

-The Bible says:

*“Honor the Lord with your possessions,
And with the first fruits of all your increase;
so your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will overflow with new wine.”*

Proverbs 3:9 & 10

CONCLUSION: As Christians, we should lovingly and freely give God our Time, Talent and Treasure. We should also give God our bodies, mind and spirit without compromise.

In full, we should give God our total selves. We should make ourselves available to God everyday for use in His kingdom, **however He chooses to use us!**

*“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,
and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
So let each one give as he purposes in his heart,
not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.
And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you,
always having all sufficiently in all things,
may have an abundance for every good work.”*

II. Corinthians 9:6-8

*“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and
an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.”*

-Matthew 12:35

MY BIBLE STUDY LESSON NOTES:

LESSON TITLE:

KEY SCRIPTURE VERSE:

Write out your key scripture verse:

NOTES:

BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION: While it is true that water baptism is one of the most commonly practiced activities of CHRISTian churches around the world; it is nevertheless equally true that this is also a subject matter that is often misunderstood.

It is in light of the mis-understanding that many people have about baptism that we wish to share this brief lesson with you, and learn from Scripture what The Bible really has to say about baptism. Among the most common questions/themes discussed when it comes to the subject of baptism are matters such as:

- a) *sprinkling versus full body immersion*
- b) *is baptism essential to salvation?*
- c) *should infants be baptized?*
- d) *etc.*

Our goal is to learn what The Bible says about the subject of baptism.

~SOME FAST FACTS:

☞ *The Bible refers to the word baptism at least 110 times throughout the New Testament Scripture!*

☞ *The Biblical personality many people think of first when it comes to baptizing is: John the Baptist.*

☞ *Believer's baptism is commanded by Jesus Christ Himself in The Scripture.*

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

-Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)

☞ *Baptism and it's role in the life of the CHRISTian believer is one of the most frequently discussed and hotly debated topics among CHRISTians today!*

In light of the seriousness of this subject we will, with the help of The **HOLY SPIRIT**, address this subject as we have attempted to address the other subjects. Namely, from a Biblical and yet brief point of view.

~Let's look now at what the Bible has to say about baptism.

I. THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BAPTISM":

Consider the following definition for the word "baptize".

The word: "baptize" comes from the Greek word: "Baptizo" (pronounced: bap-tid'-zo). And it means: "To dip or immerse". The word baptizo comes from the word "bapto (pronounced: bap'-to); and it means: "To cover wholly with fluid, to make overwhelmed, fully wet; to moisten or stain (as with dye):- to dip."

In each instance where the words baptize, baptism, baptized, baptizest, baptisms or baptist is used the context is consistent with the act of baptism or the person performing the baptism.

Consequently as we define the word baptism for this lesson we are specifically speaking of someone being "immersed" or being made "fully wet" in water in connection with their prior commitment to **JESUS CHRIST** as Savior and **LORD!**

II. THE MODEL OF BAPTISM:

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him."
-Matthew 3:13 (NKJV)

Now that we've defined the meaning of baptism, let's consider our chief Model for baptism. Without question **JESUS CHRIST** is our example for holiness and righteousness in all things.

And, we thank **GOD** that he is also supplies us with our model when it comes to baptism.

As John 'the baptizer' prepares to conclude his ministry, **JESUS CHRIST** comes on the scene and is baptized by John in the Jordan river. [see Scripture reference above and read: Mark 1:9-11 and John 1:29-34 for further references]

~A common question concerning baptism is:

1. Why do you baptize in the first place?

The answer is in this text of Scripture. Because **JESUS** was baptized!
JESUS is our model in all things and He was baptized.

The Bible says that Jesus came to John ... "to be baptized ". (Mt. 3:13)

III. THE METHOD OF BAPTISM:

“When He had been baptized, Jesus **came up immediately from the water;**”
-Matthew 3:16a (NKJV)

~Another common question concerning baptism is:

1. Why is your method of baptism “full body” in the water?

Again, the answer to this is in the Scripture ... **JESUS** was baptized “*full body*” in the water.

↪ The Bible says He “*came up from the water.*” (Matt. 3:16a)

And because **JESUS** was baptized full body in the water, we baptize that way too!

IV. THE MANDATE TO BE BAPTIZED:

“**Go** therefore and **make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
-Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)

Well, we’ve looked at the method of baptism and the model for baptism and we’ve answered the questions about why we practice baptism and how we practice baptism. Now, let’s consider the mandate from Scripture to be baptized!

Just prior to His ascension, **JESUS** left some final instructions with His disciples. And, in Matthew chapter twenty eight and verse nineteen we see part of our **LORD’S** last words to His disciples.

JESUS instructed His followers to “Go ... make disciples of all nations” (and) ... “baptize” them!

The words of **JESUS** in Matthew chapter twenty eight and verses eighteen through twenty are often referred to as: ‘The Great Commission’. I mention this only to state that these words of our **LORD** are not mere suggestions to His followers (*including you and I today*); they are words that are in the command mode. These closing comments from our **LORD** are in fact a commanding commission to do what He said. In other words, **JESUS** told His disciples to: *GO* into all the world, *GIVE* His message of Salvation, *GROW* the new believer’s through the instruction **GOD’S WORD** and mark those who accepted Him as Savior through the act of baptism.

Now let me share address a few key questions prior to closing this lesson

a) *Is baptism necessary for our salvation?*

NO! Baptism doesn't save anyone.

One of the popular statements that's been made over the years by our church fore-parents about the fact that baptism is not essential for salvation is this:

QUOTE:

"You can go down a dry devil and come up a wet one."

-A Classic Church Comment

It's not baptism in water that really marks our souls as children of **GOD**, rather it is our right relationship with **GOD** through His only begotten Son, **JESUS CHRIST**; and the permanent presence of The **HOLY SPIRIT** who baptizes us into the body of **CHRIST** that saves us.

~ The **HOLY SPIRIT** is the real baptizer!



~**The Bible says:**

*"For **by one Spirit we were all baptized** into one body- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free- **and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**"*

-I. Corinthians 12:13

~ **Consider this:**

If baptism were essential to salvation, why didn't **JESUS** require the thief on the cross to come down from the cross and be baptized? [*read: Luke 23:39-43*]

If baptism were essential to salvation, what happens to all of the babies that are born and die prior to baptism?

If baptism were essential to salvation, what happens to all of those people who accept **JESUS CHRIST** as Savior and **LORD** and cannot be baptized due to their circumstances- and then die prior to being baptized?

-Consider another Scripture to help us on this question:

"There is also an antitype which now saves us- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,"

-I. Peter 3:21

b) What does baptism represent?

Baptism represents to the world our commitment to **JESUS CHRIST** as Savior and **LORD!**

We are baptized because it is an “*external act that demonstrates an internal reality.*” Baptism is something we do, not to become saved; but because we are saved!

Baptism also serves as a symbolic connection for CHRISTians with the death, burial and resurrection of **JESUS CHRIST.**

~**Consider what the Bible says:**

*“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?
Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.”*
-Romans 6:3-6 (NKJV)

~Baptism symbolizes our putting on **CHRIST!**

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
-Galatians 3:27

V. A FINAL QUESTION:

Who should be baptized?

This age old question can be answered by looking at The Scriptures. It is clear from The **WORD** of **GOD** that baptism IS NOT essential to salvation. That is to say, you do not have to be baptized in order to be saved!

It is equally clear from The Bible that baptism alone does not save anyone! Just as people can appear on the outside to be real lover's of **GOD**, and prove later not to be real lovers of **GOD**- the same is true of baptism.

People can be baptized in water- in the name of The Father, Son and **HOLY SPIRIT** and still not know **JESUS CHRIST** as their Savior and **LORD.**

Each time we see baptism in The Bible it is always after the person has made a commitment to **GOD**, through His Son, **JESUS CHRIST**, empowered by The **HOLY SPIRIT**; by faith!

Here's the conclusion of this question: When people have accepted **JESUS CHRIST** as their Savior and **LORD**, then they should be baptized.

Consider the example of the Ethiopian Treasurer as recorded in Acts chapter eight.

After receiving instruction from **GOD**, Philip meets this Ethiopian man traveling in his chariot. And after engaging the Ethiopian in conversation and responding to his need to have The Scripture explained to him; here's what the Bible says happened:



The Bible says:

*“Now as they went down the road, they came to some water.
And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’
Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’
And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’
So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.”*
-Acts 8:36-38 (NKJV)

CONCLUSION: Baptism is not something we do to get saved. It is rather something we do because we are saved. Baptism serves as an external symbol of the internal relationship we have with **GOD** through His Son, **JESUS CHRIST!** Baptism should be done after we have a proper understanding of who **JESUS** is and what **JESUS** has done to save us from sin. Baptism should be done by a fellow believer (preferably a pastor or associate minister of your church).

NOTES:

MY BIBLE STUDY LESSON NOTES:

LESSON TITLE:

KEY SCRIPTURE VERSE:

Write out your key scripture verse:

NOTES:

COMMUNION

INTRODUCTION: For many Christians who have been believer's for a long time, communion is a very common (perhaps even comfortable); practice of the church of Jesus Christ. In fact, most Christians in America participate in a 'communion service' on a regular basis.

Nevertheless confusion and disagreement still exists among many Christians about what communion is really all about. The goal of this lesson is to clarify what The Bible says about communion.

I am not foolish enough to believe that this one lesson will serve to answer every question ever asked about communion. I do however hope and pray that this lesson will provide a solid and stable Biblical understanding of what communion really is ... according to The Scriptures.

~Let's look and learn now.

I. THE BASIC MEANING OF COMMUNION:

We see the word '*communion*' in the New Testament four different times. This word appears twice in I. Corinthians 10:16; once in II Corinthians 6:14 and once again in II Corinthians 13:14.

Each time the word appears the meaning or definition of the word is the same.

We see the word 'communing' twice in the Old Testament. This word appears once in Genesis 18:33; and again in Exodus 31:18. Here again the same Hebrew word is used in both passages.

DEFINITION: In the Old Testament, the word "*Communing*" is the word: "*dabar*" (*daw-bar*); and means: "*To speak, to answer, to give, to rehearse, to commune.*"

In the New Testament, the word "*Communion*" is the word: "*Koinonia*" (*koy-nohn-ee'-ah*); and means: "*Participation, social intercourse, communication, distribution, fellowship or communion.*"

In short and for the purpose of our lesson, communion can be described as: the joining into common union (*comm-union*); with The **LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

~At this point it would be good to note that there are other names people use to describe communion. Some of those names are:

- ⇒ The Lord's Supper! This term is used simply because our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** instituted this ordinance following 'supper' (*what is commonly called 'The Last Supper'*) with His disciples. Read: Matt. 26:26-30
- ⇒ Eucharist! This term is derived from the use of the word "thanks"; or the phrase: "gave thanks" (KJV); in Luke 22:19. By definition the word "thanks" is the Greek word: 'Eucharisteo' (yoo-khar-is-teh'-o).

When this term is used it places emphasis on the 'giving of thanks' by our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** in prayer to **GOD** The Father; and can also speak of our thanks to our **GOD** for the perfect sacrifice of His Son **JESUS CHRIST** for our sins.

~**A QUICK EMPHASIS:** What is most important is that we are saved and have a Biblical understanding of what communion really represents before we partake of it.

II. THE BIRTH OF COMMUNION!

JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF is the author of the communion we practice today! Communion was first instituted by our **LORD** on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, also call The Passover.

"Now on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, ...

-Matthew 26:17a (NKJV)

"... When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve."

-Matthew 26:20 (NKJV)

NOTES:

Notice a few key things about this Passover Meal:

1. Notice the meaning of Passover in connection with the meaning of The Lords Supper!

☞ What did the Feast of Unleavened Bread or Passover commemorate or represent?

**Read: Exodus 12:1-51 for background information.*

REMEMBER that our **GOD** is a **GOD** of timing and perfection. **GOD** knew exactly what He was doing when He chose this feast to institute The Lords Supper by.

The Passover required the death of a lamb without spot or blemish. A lamb that had a relationship with the family and was dear to them. An innocent lamb.

JESUS is our “*Passover Lamb*”! He is the only one that causes eternal death, spiritual death to “pass over” us; through His shed blood! Hallelujah!

- **2. Notice the Passover meal/Lord’s Supper was a prepared meal!**
Prepared by chosen disciples!

“Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.”

-Luke 22:7 & 8 (KJV)

**Read also: Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:*

OUR LORD sent His disciples to prepare a room for this special occasion! There are far too many examples of people who make light of the Lords Supper. It should be a time that we properly prepare for. It should be a sanctified time. A time of righteous reflection and unadulterated appreciation to our **GOD** and King for His perfect sacrifice for our sins.

Notice that **JESUS** had certain men prepare the supper. In our churches today, we designate the preparation of The Lords supper to our deacons and deaconess. This is not by accident! It should be prepared by people who love **GOD** and understand the seriousness of the supper. Not everybody qualifies!

- Prepared in a certain location!

*“And they said unto Him, where wilt thou that we prepare?
 And He said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet
 you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.
 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, eat the
 passover with my disciples?
 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.”
 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.”*
 -Luke 22:9-13 (KJV)

OUR LORD send His disciples to prepare the supper in a certain location. While we recognize that **GOD** resides in our hearts. And, while we know that the church is made up of people and not a building; let me quickly point out that it is a good thing to have fellowship (*koinonia*); with other believer's in the house of **GOD**- whenever possible!

- Participated in by believer's only!

*“Having received the piece of bread, he (Judas) then went out immediately. And
 it was night.”*
 -John 13:30 (NKJV)

It was after Judas had been identified as the betrayer of **JESUS CHRIST**, and after Judas received the bread from The **LORD JESUS** that Judas leaves the supper. After Judas is gone, **JESUS** institutes the Lords Supper with the remaining eleven disciples!

Why does our **LORD** wait for Judas' exit? Because this meal is for *'family members only!'*

Many churches today appear to be more lax than ever in instituting the Lord's supper. Let's be clear. The Bible says that this meal is for those who are members of the body of **CHRIST** ... and them only!

III. THE BIBLICAL BACKGROUND FOR OUR PRACTICE OF COMMUNION!

Without question one of the most helpful passages of Scripture concerning the manner in which the church of **JESUS CHRIST** should practice the Lord's Supper can be found in I. Corinthians chapter eleven.

Here, the apostle Paul gives instruction to the church at Corinth concerning the serving of the Lord's Supper.

With the understanding that there are some marked differences between the way the early church practiced the Lord's supper and the way we do it today, there's still much we can learn.

Realizing that in chapter eleven of first Corinthians, the apostle Paul is speaking to a church who actually participated in a sit down dinner/meal with one another. And, recognizing that some of the people came to the meal with the intent of satisfying their physical hunger instead of seeking to remember the perfect sacrifice of **JESUS CHRIST** our Savior and Lord- Paul wrote some instructions to this church.

Let's see what we can learn:

1. When we partake of communion, it is the Lord's Supper that should be primary!

*"Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.
For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others;
and one is hungry and another is drunk."
-I. Cor. 11:20 & 21*

2. When we come together for communion it is not for the purpose of eating a meal that will satisfy our physical hunger!

*"What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."
-I. Cor. 11:22 (NKJV)*

3. The Lord's Supper comes from **JESUS CHRIST** Himself!

*"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ... "
-I. Cor. 11:23-25*

4. Participating in The Lord's Supper is tantamount to preaching of The Lord's death until He comes again!

*"For as often as ye death this bread, and drink this cup,
ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."
-I. Cor. 11:26 (KJV)*

WORD DEFINITION: The word “*shew*” used in the King James Version of the Bible in First Corinthians 11:26 is the Greek word: “*Kataggello*” (*Kat-angel’-lo*). *Kataggelo* means: “*To proclaim, declare, preach, speak of teach.*”

5. Participation in The Lord’s Supper is for those who have a right relationship with **GOD** through **JESUS CHRIST**, and understand what communion represents. These Christians should examine themselves before eating of the bread and drinking of the cup.

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

-I. Cor. 11:27 & 28

6. Partaking of The Lord’s Supper in an inappropriate way can have dire consequences.

“For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”

-I. Cor. 11:29 & 30

Christians should make sure that to the best of our ability our relationships with other people are in good standing. That is, if we have “*ought*” with our brother or sister in Christ- we should seek to settle that matter before we partake of communion.

~ read also: Matt. 5:23 & 24

7. Participating in The Lord’s Supper is important!

CONCLUSION: Communion is a special time in the church, where the local family of **GOD** come together to remember the sacrifice of **JESUS CHRIST** in giving His body and His blood for the saving of our souls.

Communion is a time where Christians of ‘*common union*’ come together to remember, reflect, and recognize the awesome **GOD** we love and serve. It’s a time check and re-check our relationship(s) with other people and our **LORD GOD** as well.

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1. Earth

2. Moth & rust destroy on earth. And thieves break in and steal on earth.

3. Heaven

4. Heaven is free from break in by moth, rust and thieves breaking in.

