



FOUNDATIONS

DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS

Foundations:

Introduction: Some things to know about Foundations.

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Bible Quick Reference Guide To Key Verses

Introduction: Some things to know about Foundations

This is a study of what the Bible says about God, Christianity and life. A biblical perspective will always be applied. While other materials may be cited, the biblical viewpoint will be the final authority in each lesson. Since the **Bible is understood by faith (Hebrews 11:3)** believing what it says will result in the most profitable study.

Read I Thessalonians 2:13 and note that the Bible is not the word or words of men, but the Word of God, the truth and that it works effectively (effectually) in those who believe it.

How do the words or phrases in I Thessalonians 2:13 distinguish the Bible from other books?

The Bible can be read anytime and anyplace by simply opening it and selecting a passage. Every word, verse, chapter, book and Testament stands on its own. The best approach to understanding and applying what the Bible has to say, is to maintain a systematic reading schedule that takes you through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Read I Timothy 4:13 and notice the purpose of reading is to receive exhortation (or encouragement in seeing all that God is and does) and understand and apply doctrine (which are the truths that God teaches throughout the Bible)

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as his/her Savior, the Holy Spirit indwells the new believer. The Holy Spirit's job is to bring things to remembrance that have been read and use them to explain other things.

What have you experienced when you've read your Bible in the past?

Read John 14:26 to understand how the Holy Spirit brings things to a believer’s remembrance.

Read John 16:8-11 to understand how the Holy Spirit interacts with people who are not believers. He convicts them (or brings a verdict of guilty) of their sin because of their refusal to believe on Jesus, of righteousness, because Jesus went back to the Father, where only the righteous can go, and of judgment because sin and Satan will be judged by God.

The Bible explains itself and the Holy Spirit helps our understanding. Consistent, daily reading will also make this time profitable.

Read I Corinthians 2:12-13 for an example of how the Holy Spirit helps us understand things in the Bible by comparing them and bringing them to our minds as we read.

List some questions you have about the Bible or any subject it covers.

Finally, note how the Psalmists repeatedly asked the Lord to help them understand the Bible and the wondrous things that God had said and done.

Read Psalm 119:18 and notice the importance of prayer in conjunction with reading to understand the Bible and the will of God.

Believe – Pray – Read – Grow in the knowledge of God

Read each section before meeting and write down any questions you have about the verses in order to make the best use of the time spent with your Foundations’ partner. The appendix serves as a quick reference guide listing terms and definitions.

Application #1

Discipleship is not a process of education as much as it is the adaptation of the Word of God in such a way that it changes our lives. Therefore, it is not designed to increase our knowledge as much as it is to change our conduct.

List questions you have about God, the Bible or the Christian life. Keep a running log of these and the answers as you work through the Bible material. Ask God to help you understand the Bible and find the answers to your questions as you go. You can also discuss them with your Foundations partner but it is more exciting to find them yourself as you progress through the Bible. Record any insights you receive from Bible reading or questions you'd like to review with our Foundations' partner.

Did the verses in this section cause you to think differently about the Bible and its purpose? If so, what did you learn?

Identify the things that hinder you from reading through your Bible:

What would you like to get from Bible reading?

God the Father

Key verses: John 4:24 “God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Biblical truth: God is a Spirit. He is the object of worship, but must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

The Bible does not attempt to prove that God exists; it accepts that as a fact from the first verse. **The study of God is called “Theology”** which has been defined as "The doctrine of God with regard to Himself, His works, His will, His worship, as well as our required obedience, our future rewards and punishments, all as revealed by God Himself to the glory of His name."

Who is God?

God is the one true God, the Sovereign Lord and Creator of all. We know Him by His Word and therefore our sole trusted source of information on God is the Bible. I John 5:20, I Timothy 2:5

1. He exists eternally of His own will and in the beginning of time, God already existed. John 1:1-2, He is the everlasting God. Isaiah 9:6, Psalm 41:13
2. God is the creator of the earth and all that exists. John 1:3, Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 40:28
Jeremiah 32:17, Job 26:7
 - a. He is the creator of man. He created man to have a Lord and for God to be man’s God. Genesis 2:15, II Corinthians 6:16
3. There are no higher powers than God. Deuteronomy 4:35, 39, He gave all the other powers their power. Romans 13:1-6
4. He is the Father in the Trinity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; He is one God in three persons yet God is not divided. Matthew 28:19
5. He is holy: The word holy means sacred and deserving of reverence and worship. It means to be sanctified and set apart. He is completely Holy and righteous (without sin of any kind) I Peter 1:15-16, Leviticus 20:7-8 says that God sanctifies us. (makes us holy)
 - a. The divine attributes (qualities) that He exhibits come from that Holiness. Exodus 3:5, Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8, Psalm 99:9
 - b. He is completely set apart from all other beings and things and for that because of that, He is not like anything else that exists or that can be seen. Exodus 15:11, Psalms 113:5.

How is God different than what I thought?

How can we know about God? How can I find out the truth about God?

1. God must reveal Himself to us. He must make Himself known or seeable to us in some way. It was and still is God's will to reveal Himself to us. (Titus 2:11)
2. God reveals His Son (Jesus) and Jesus reveals His Father (God). John 1:18, Matthew 3:17, Luke 10:22
3. We could not find Him without Him reveal Himself to us. Job 11:7-10, the only things we can know about God are those that He reveals about Himself. Isaiah 55:6, Exodus 33:18-23.
4. **There are two major ways God revealed Himself**
 - a. **Through natural revelation.** Psalms 19:1-6 As great as this creation is however, it can only reveal God the creator, and not God the redeemer. The entrance of sin has ruined both the earth and man to the point that the earth is now a monument to sin and man happily worships the material things instead of the creator of them.
 - i. All things were created by God for His glory and Pleasure. John 1:3
 - ii. The complexity of the human body and the majesty of creation testify to the glory of the creator. Psalm 139:14
 - b. **Through special revelation.** Psalms 19:7-14, Hebrews 1:1-2, Romans 1:16-22, 19 Hebrews 11:1-3 There are many special and supernatural ways including angels, miracles and visions but ***the greatest of His special revelations of Himself to us are His Word and His Son Jesus.***
 - i. **He reveals Himself by His Word.** We don't know God by His face but by His Word. I John 4:12 It is His breath, or the Words that He breathed. II Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12
 1. Understanding this revelation requires faith. Hebrews 4:2, Hebrews 11:3
 2. The Bible does not contain all there is to know about God or Jesus but all that we need to know for redemption. John 21:25
 - ii. **He reveals Himself through His Son Jesus,** which is God Himself incarnate (in a body) manifested in the flesh for us. I Timothy 3:16.
 1. God did not reveal Himself to us for general knowledge only, but that He could redeem us from sin and death. Luke 19:10

- iii. The creation shows us a divine creator, but the Word of God reveals to us those things necessary for us to know God. Not just know of God, but know God. Romans 10:17, I Peter 1:23, II Timothy 3:15-17

How have I learned about God up until now? What have been my primary sources of information about Him?

How must He be worshipped?

John 4:24 "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." God cannot be approached or worshipped except in the truth of who He is and how He reveals Himself to us.

- 1. To worship God is to believe that He is who He says He is and worship Him in the truth that He revealed about Himself
 - a. He must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. John 4:24, Exodus 34:14, I Corinthians 2:5-12, Matthew 15:9 and Mark 7:7
 - b. If He is not worshipped in truth, the worship is vain (empty) Matthew 15:9, Mark 7:7, Hebrews 11:6
- 2. It must be accepted that He is both Loving Savior and also the righteous Judge of all. Romans 2:16, Hebrews 9:27, John 5:28-29
- 3. He commands that He be worshipped alone without sharing our worship with any other gods. Matthew 4:10

How is this different from the way I have thought God was worshipped?

Personal study time and application:

Reading: Additional verses: Search your Bible concordance or electronic Bible for “God, holy, worship and truth” See what verses you find and record the devotional thoughts, or questions. Answer the question about how you see your relationship with God right now, and how you think He may see it based on what you know about Him thus far.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

How do I see my relationship with God right now?

Questions

Jesus Christ – The Eternal Son of God

Key verse: John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Biblical truth: Jesus is the eternal Son of God the Father and in Jesus is the way or path to the Father (righteousness) the absolute and dependable truth and everlasting life. There is no other way to heaven where the Father is.

He is called the eternal Son of God because it is often thought that He did not exist before His birth to a virgin named Mary. The truth is that Jesus Christ is God and has always existed. He took on a body of flesh so that God could become the final and effective sacrifice for our sins, dying in our place and rising again from the dead. I Corinthians 15:3-10

The Bible Calls Him God.

There is no confusion in the Bible about who Jesus is. He is called God in the Old Testament and the New Testament and is recognized by the Father as His Son.

1. He is God manifest in the flesh. I Timothy 3:16
2. He claims to be one with the Father. John 10:29-30
3. The gospel of John says He already existed (was) in the beginning and that He was God and that He was made flesh and dwelt among us. John 1:1, 14.
4. John again says that God the Father, the Word (Jesus) and the Holy Ghost are one. I John 5:7-8
5. Isaiah the prophet calls Jesus the Everlasting God in Isaiah 9:6
6. Thomas called Jesus His Lord and His God in John 20:28
7. Paul, writing to the Colossian church called Jesus the image of the invisible God in Colossians 1:15 then goes on in the next verse to call Him (Jesus) the Creator of all things. Jesus is also God because all things exist and consist by Him. Colossians 1:17
 - a. Everything that the Bible says about God, it says it also about Jesus.
 - b. God acknowledges that Jesus is His beloved Son in whom God is well pleased.
 - c. To say that Jesus is not God come in the flesh is to be a false word or false spirit. I John 4:2-3
8. Paul, in the book of Philippians, shows how Jesus was in the form of God but took on a body for the express purpose of dying on the cross in our place.
9. Hebrews tells us that of all the ways that God has spoken to us, he was most pleased in these last days to speak to us by His Son who is the brightness of God’s glory and the expressed image of His person. Hebrews 1:1-3

10. Peter recognizes Jesus as the Christ (chosen one of God to be the sacrifice for sin) the Son of the living God. Matthew 16:13-18, then again in John 6:69.

How do these verses about Jesus agree or conflict with my understanding of who He is?

Jesus is the Savior and He Died for All Mankind

1. Jesus was holy and completely without sin of any kind.
 - a. Jesus was born without inheriting the sin of Adam. Jesus' earthly mother was a virgin when He was born which means that a descendent of Adam was not Jesus' father. God was His Father. Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18, 23
 - b. Jesus lived a life without ever committing sin. I Peter 2:22, Hebrews 4:14-15
 - c. Jesus died completely innocent of any crime. It was our sins that were on Him when He died on the cross. I Peter 2:24, I Thessalonians 5:9-10
2. Jesus was the Savior that the Bible foretold would come and rescue mankind from the wrath of God
 - a. The law predicted He would come. The law required that innocent animals died in place of guilty men and women. The animal sacrifice could not take away sin but did show mankind that he needed a Savior that could. Galatians 3:24, Hebrews 10:1-10. What the animal sacrifices could not do, Jesus did.
 - b. The prophets predicted He would come. Luke 24:44, Acts 3:18, Isaiah 53:
 - c. Jesus told His disciples why He had come. John 12:32-33, Matthew 26:1-2
3. Jesus paid the price for the sins of all mankind. Jesus did not only pay the sin debt of those that accept Him, He paid the sin debt of the entire world.
 - a. His blood was the payment for sin. He has washed our sins away with His own blood. Revelation 1:5 This means that the guiltiness that a person has because of their sin can be removed (washed) away by means of accepting the blood of Christ as payment for their sin. I Peter 1:18-20
 - b. The beating of His body was the wrath of God being felt for our sin. The wrath of God abides on those that are not redeemed by the blood of Jesus. John 3:36 Jesus took the wrath of God (His anger poured out on Jesus because all our sin was upon Him on the cross) for us. Isaiah 53, Hebrews 12:2
 - c. He is the only sacrifice God will accept for sin. John 14:6.

- d. Jesus died for all mankind, not just those that believe on Him (I John 2:1-2, I Timothy 2:3-6, II Peter 3:9, John 1:11-12). He wants all mankind to be saved.

What implications are there in the truth that Jesus died for all men?

Jesus is Coming Again to This Earth

1. Jesus promised that He would return to this earth. The next time He comes, it will not be as the Savior but as the one who will receive all those that have accepted Him as Lord to spend eternity with Him, but also to judge all those that have rejected Him and cast them into an everlasting punishment called Hell.
2. He promised that He would return: Our key verse is John 14:6 where He says He is the way the truth and the life. Before that Jesus is describing His Father's house and says in John 14:2-3.
 - a. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go, I will come again to take you to be with me. This promise is made only to those that have trusted Christ.
 - b. I Thessalonians 4:13-17 tells us that Jesus is coming back to take us (believers) to be with Him and we will be with Him forever.
 - c. The two men that were present when Jesus ascended to Heaven testified that He would come again in like manner as He went up. Acts 1:11

Jesus is the Savior of all mankind, but not all men will believe in Him. It will be a shame that so many will find themselves in eternal punishment when all they had to do was accept a payment that was made on their behalf for sin.

How does a second coming of Jesus affect me?

Personal study time:

Reading: Additional verses: Search your Bible concordance or electronic Bible for “Jesus, sacrifice, Savior and blood” See what verses you find and record the devotional thoughts, or questions.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

How is my relationship with Jesus now?

Questions

Sin and the Fall of Mankind

Key verse: Romans 5:12 “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”

Biblical truth: God created man with a perfect body and a divine nature. It was from the dust of a perfect earth that God formed his body and with His own breath God gave life to mankind. (Genesis 2:7) Mankind was given everything for the glory of God and for his enjoyment, but was restricted from one thing. (Genesis 2:15-17) Because of his disobedience he brought sin upon himself and his race and a curse upon the once perfect earth. (Genesis 3:6, Romans 5:12)

The implications of the entire human race being in sin are that there is no person that is not sinful, neither is there any person who is not subject to the wrath of God because of their sin. The object of this section is to show the perfect creation of the earth, the disobedience of man that caused the fall and the state of mankind without salvation.

God created the heavens and the earth.

1. In the beginning God the Father created the heaven and the earth in six days and on the seventh he rested from His work. The days were normal days and the rest was from creating not from exhaustion. In other words, He finished, He didn't get tired. (Genesis 2:1-3)
 - a. The story of the creation begins in Genesis 1:1, and by Genesis 1:31 an account of six days of creating has been recorded.
 - b. God's comment about His creation is in Genesis 1:31 where God calls it “very good.” This would indicate that neither sin nor Satan were there at that time.
2. God created the earth out of nothing. (Hebrews 11:3) The seen things were made with unseen things. Jeremiah 32:17 He placed the earth in space on nothing. Job 26:7
 - a. God created the sun, moon and stars. (Genesis 1:3-5, 14-18)
 - b. God created the animals, the plants, the lands and the seas. (Genesis 1:20-23)
 - c. God created man. (Genesis 1:26-30, 2:7-9)
3. God made man to have a Lord and He gave man a job to do. (Genesis 2:15-17)
 - a. God made us in His own image. Mainly in three parts, the dust for our body, the breath for our spirit and an eternally existing soul. (Genesis 1:26-28)
 - b. God made a woman for the man and told him to be fruitful and multiply.
 - c. God gave them dominion over all the creation of the earth.
 - d. The creation was perfect and without sin in the beginning.

Why would you say this qualifies as a perfect race and a perfect environment? What would your expectation be about man's behavior in this environment?

The disobedience of man caused his fall into sin

1. The first temptation in the garden came to Adam from Eve who had been told a lie and deceived by the devil. Genesis 3:1-6
 - a. Sometime after God finished the creation and said that it was very good, Satan (at one time a cherubim in the presence of God) was cast out for his pride and desire to be God. (Isaiah 14:12-14)
 - b. He approached Eve and tempted her will with the three avenues of lust (eyes, flesh and pride) that the Bible warns us of. (Genesis 3:1-6, I John 2:16)
 - c. She was deceived by his lies and disobeyed God. She approached Adam and decided to disobey God and eat the fruit. (Genesis 3:6, I Timothy 2:13-14)
 - d. Their sinless nature changed and they became conscious of their nakedness and for the first time, felt shame. (Genesis 2:25, 3:7-11)
2. God came looking for them (Genesis 3:8-9) and pronounced a judgment on them and a curse on the earth and on Satan. (Genesis 3:14-19)
3. The disobedience of Adam and Eve caused the entire human race to become sinful because their children born would be born of sinful parents. (Romans 5:12) God was the Father that brought them to life as a sinless man and woman, but they had lost that state, and only God can birth sinless children. Sinful men and women give birth to sinful children.
 - a. Sin passed upon the entire human race. (Romans 3:23, 3:10-12)
 - b. Death came because of sin. (Romans 6:23, James 1:15)
 - c. The wrath of God is directed at sin and sinful men. (Colossians 3:6, John 3:36)
 - d. God is holy and will not let sin in his presence. (I Peter 1:16)
4. The death of the body is not the end of the wrath of God toward sin. We were given an eternal soul that lives on after the body dies and is fully conscious of all the things that are happening to it.
 - a. Each one is appointed unto death because of his sin. (Hebrews 9:27)
 - b. After death is the judgment.

How does this conflict with the basic idea that man is inherently good?

Where does man stand with God?

1. The official standing of mankind before God (apart from salvation in Jesus) is;
 - a. Sinful (Romans 3:23, 5:12)
 - b. Condemned already (John 3:18)
 - c. Unrighteous (Romans 3:10)
 - d. Cursed (Galatians 3:10)
 - e. Having the wrath of God abiding on him/her (John 3:36)
2. Each person is charged with the guilt of their sin because of their birth to sinful parents and because of their willingness to follow in the disobedience of their parents and regularly break the law of God.
 - a. The law of God is the law of righteousness. A person, to be righteous, must be born without sin, and then never break the law of God. (Galatians 3:10) This is not possible for a man in his own power to do.

There are many descriptive words in the Bible for the man that has not received salvation in Jesus. Like those words in number 1 above. None of these descriptive words gives a man or woman any hope that there is anything good or righteous in him when he is born. There are also no words that indicate that he can somehow make himself good or righteous in the sight of God.

A person must pay for his sin debt or have it paid for him. Since he cannot be righteous in his own power, he must be made righteous.

Discuss the implications of this truth with respect to mankind and especially the person who has no Savior?

Personal study time:

Reading: Additional verses: Romans chapter 3-10. These chapters discuss the sinfulness of mankind and the righteousness of God. Reading one to two chapters per day and making notes of the contrast between sinfulness and righteousness will assist in the study of the next section on salvation.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

Does mankind deserve the title of sinner? Why or why not?

Questions

Biblical Salvation

Key verse: Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Biblical truth: God is holy and created mankind and this world perfect and without sin. Through man's own disobedience, or sin, his perfection was lost and he fell under the curse of sin and death. From Adam's original sin until now, every man is born with that sin curse on them and will have to have a Savior or face an eternal punishment. The only Savior that could satisfy God is the one He provided for us, His Son Jesus Christ. Since Jesus Christ is God, God has provided Himself for us as the only acceptable Savior.

The key verse (Acts 4:12) says it very clearly. There is no salvation in any other (person, thing or belief). Salvation is in the name of Jesus Christ and all that He did for us to save us.

To be saved, a person first has to recognize that they are a sinner.

1. The condition of a man without Christ or without Christ's salvation is plainly presented in the Bible.
 - a. All have Sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10-13)
 - b. There is none righteous and none that do good or seek after God.
 - c. All have gone out of the way.
 - d. The person who does not know Jesus Christ is condemned already. (John 3:18)
 - e. There is no person that does not sin (I Kings 8:46)
 - f. Every person takes their own way rather than God's way (Romans 3:12, Isaiah 53:6)
 - g. The Scripture (Bible) says that all have sinned. (Galatians 3:22)
2. Sin is the breaking of God's law, or the transgression of the law. (I John 3:4)
 - a. Sin includes violating any of God's rules, commandments or laws. (James 2:9-10)
 - b. Sin carries the penalty of death. (Romans 5:12, 6:23)
 - c. God is angry because of our sin. (Matthew 3:7, John 3:36)
 - d. Sin separates man from God. (Isaiah 59:2)
3. Man is not capable of saving himself or paying for his own sin. (Titus 3:5)
 - a. He has nothing to give to redeem himself and must recognize that there is only one Savior. (Acts 4:12)
 - b. Jesus paid for the sins of all men through his death on the cross. Because he died for all, it proves that all were sinful and need His sacrifice. (II Corinthians 5:14-15)

Describe the time you understood that you were a sinner and that you had no relationship with God?

The next step is to believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and that He is the only Savior.

1. God so loved the world that He created, that He gave His only begotten (born to a body) Son that whosoever believes in Him would have eternal and everlasting life. (John 3:15-16)
 - a. God delivered His Son for us to die in our place. (Romans 8:32)
 - b. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)
 - c. There is only one way to God and that is through the person of Jesus Christ. (John 14:6, Acts 4:12)
 - d. God loved us while we were yet sinners. (Romans 5:8), but our sin separated us from God. Someone had to take our sins. Jesus took our sins on Himself for us so that we did not have to bear them. (Isaiah 53:5-6)
 - e. He became the propitiation or the full and acceptable payment for our sins. (I John 2:2)
2. God loved us but could not love our sin. Because of our sin, we were enemies with God. Someone had to reconcile us. We did not agree with God to meet in the middle because God does not compromise. Jesus is the mediator that reconciles us to God.
 - a. Reconciliation happens through the death of Jesus Christ for us. (Romans 5:10)
 - b. Reconciliation is possible only through salvation. Jesus does not impute (or account) our trespasses and sins unto us, but does impute (account or transfer) His righteousness to us so that we can come to the presence of God. (II Corinthians 5:18-21)
 - c. Through reconciliation, Jesus takes us to God. We do not meet in the middle as a compromise. (I Peter 3:18)
 - d. Jesus is the mediator (and only mediator) between God and man. (I Timothy 2:5)
 - e. Jesus was both man and God (and is God) and so could mediate between God and men. (Hebrews 4:15)
3. Jesus, the Savior, paid the price to redeem all mankind by taking on the sin of the world and dying for us, thereby redeeming us. (Romans 3:24, Galatians 3:13, Titus 2:14)

How would you expect a person to respond to this kind of love for mankind?

Salvation must be accepted by faith in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ.

1. Salvation is received by grace through faith. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - a. Grace is the favor God shows toward us that we do not deserve. Faith is merely believing what God says as fact. (Ephesians 2:5)
 - b. It is not by our works but His. We access His finished work through faith in Him. (Titus 3:5) A person must have Jesus to have life. (I John 5:12)
 - c. To the one who believes, his faith in Jesus is counted as righteousness. (Romans 4:5) God no longer counts his sins as those have all been paid for in Jesus, and counts him now as righteous. (Romans 4:6-8)
2. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin and makes us righteous. (I John 1:7-9) He washed us clean from sin in His own blood. (Revelation 1:5)
 - a. Salvation cannot be bought with money, but is received as a free gift. (I Peter 1:18-19)
 - b. We are brought close to God because of the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13)
3. Confession of sin must be made and the name of Jesus must be called on.
 - a. The first step in confessing Jesus is acknowledging sin and repenting of it. Repentance means to turn from pursuing it. It does not mean that a person has to confess every single sin or that they have to become a good person first. It is a change of mind about sin that sees sin as God sees it, (evil and ugly) and deciding to turn from it to Jesus. (II Peter 3:9, Psalm 119:59)
 - b. Man believes with His heart and (Romans 10:13)
 - c. Confession is made with the mouth. (Romans 10:9)
 - d. Salvation is the work of the Savior. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Salvation happens when a person understands that they are a sinner, repents (decides, or changes their mind about) of sin as a way of life and accepts Jesus Christ as their personal (personally needed) Savior. His work of salvation is once and permanent as future lessons will show.

Personal study time:

Reading: Philemon and the story of Onesimus. The story is about a disobedient servant and a loving protector named Paul (who is a picture of the savior) who leads the runaway slave to salvation in Jesus. Paul also bears the expense of Onesimus and shows him tremendous, undeserved favor.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

Did Onesimus deserve the favor Paul showed him?

Questions

Eternal Security and Assurance

Key verse: John 5:24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

Biblical truth: Jesus starts this verse by emphasizing that it is truth. “Verily, verily or truly, truly, all that hear and obey the Word of God which calls all men to repent of their sin and believe on Jesus Christ has (present tense) everlasting life. Everlasting and eternal are words that signify that the life is permanent and does not end. Additionally, the believer no longer faces the threat or worry of condemnation. He is no longer dead in sins, but has passed from death to life. He/she is alive now and for evermore. (I John 5:12)

A person should examine himself to see if there are Biblical evidences of salvation. II Corinthians 13:5

1. Many people are deceived about salvation and believe that it is by:
 - a. Religion. (Matthew 7:21-23)
 - b. Good works or morality. (Isaiah 64:6, Philippians 3:9, Revelation 3:17)
 - c. By the way they feel in their own heart. (Jeremiah 17:9)
2. We can be absolutely certain that we have been saved and are going to heaven (I John 5:13) There is evidence of life for those that are born again. It is not a process but an instantaneous work of Christ in us. (Titus 3:5)
 - a. Evidences of Biblical salvation.
 - i. A desire to do God’s will instead of your own. (Psalm 40:8)
 - ii. A change in lifestyle or attitude toward sin. (I John 3:9)
 - iii. A desire to live a pure and holy life. (I John 3:3)
 - iv. Becoming more and more like Him daily. (I John 3:2)
 - v. A love for the Word of God. (I John 2:3-6, Psalm 119:97, Joshua 1:7-8)
 - vi. A desire to fellowship with believers around the things of God. (I John 4:7, John 13:35)
 - vii. The chastening (discipline) of God when you sin. (Hebrews 12:6-8)
 - viii. The Spirit of God confirms salvation in your heart. Bearing witness with our spirit (Romans 8:16) and reproofing us when we sin. (I John 3:19-21)
3. All things have become different and new. II Corinthians 5:17
 - a. Those that are in Christ have experienced many changes.
 - b. Many of these are subtle and have happened over time, while many were distinctly a part of the salvation experience.

How has your life changed since accepting Christ and what things are different?

Where do doubts come from?

1. Doubts are uncertainties about the truth. The truth does not change, only our confidence in the truth changes. Doubts about God and our salvation come when we do not fill our mind with truth so that lies are easily exposed as lies.
 - a. God knows that there are many false doctrines and lies that would compete for our trust so He gave us the Bible and its faith building power to help us understand and have confidence in the truth.
 - b. Faith relies totally on the Word of God as the standard and accepts it unconditionally, as such; we place the burden of truth on God where it belongs. (I Thessalonians 2:13, II Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 11:3)
 - c. So then reading the Word of God is a faith and confidence building habit. (Romans 10:17, John 17:17)
2. What causes us to doubt our salvation? To some degree it's an indication that we are not filling our minds with truth or that we don't fully understand how Jesus saves us that think that somehow our own works or goodness are involved.
 - a. Because we sin after we get saved, a person may think they have messed up their salvation. (I John 1:9 and I John 2:1-2) explain that He has cleanses us from all our sin (past and future) and already knew we would sin after salvation. He saved us knowing all the sins we would ever commit. They are all paid for.
 - b. If after salvation, a person lives like they did before, the Holy Spirit could be making that person uncomfortable because sin does not fit well in our new life in Christ. While that can make a person feel "unsaved" it is really just the Holy Spirit at work in him making him uncomfortable with his sin.
 - c. A person should examine themselves to see if they are really saved. (II Corinthians 13:5)
3. Salvation is the work of Christ in us, not our own works, so we do not maintain good works in order to "stay" saved.
 - a. By grace we were saved. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - b. We are His workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10) God does the saving.
 - c. Our salvation is totally by grace and not any of our works. (Romans 11:6, Titus 3:5)

- d. Salvation is a gift that does not depend on our works or goodness to obtain or to keep it. (Romans 6:23)
- e. Faith in Jesus is not a work because the Bible distinguishes it from a work. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

How does spending time in the Bible and with God affect my faith and or doubts I may have?

Eternal Security is a Biblical fact and Promise:

Eternal security (God's power to keep saved what He saves) is a biblical fact and promise. A person's confidence in that does not determine if it is truth or not, only to what extent the person will enjoy and appreciate the blessings of salvation. The Bible makes it plain that the believer is eternally saved and secure, based on the power of God.

1. God gives us eternal life and we will never perish. (John 10:28)
 - a. The believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise until the day that we are taken to heaven. (The day of redemption) (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30)
 - a. The believer is "kept" by the power of God. (I Peter 1:5)
 - b. He will never leave us (believers) or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)
 - c. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. (Romans 8:35-39)
 - d. He will not cast us out or reject us. (John 6:37)
 - e. It is impossible for God to lie and all that He said He will do He has all the power He needs to do it. (Hebrews 6:18-19, Numbers 23:19)
2. The key lesson verse makes it plain (John 5:24) that we already have everlasting life, we shall not face condemnation and we have passed from death unto life.
 - a. God gave us His Word so that we could know (not wonder or just hope) that we have eternal life. (I John 5:13)
 - b. Reading the Word of God daily will help us see His truths and promises daily and will keep us confident (persuaded) that He is able to keep that which He saved. (II Timothy 1:12)
3. It is not the strength of our faith which saves us or keeps us saved, but the strength of the object of our faith. Putting our faith and trust in Jesus Christ means trusting God to save us and keep us. There is nothing more powerful. (Jeremiah 32:17)

Personal study time:

Reading: The book of I John is a great book to read and experience how God explains His love for His children. There are many great verses about our security in Him as believers and how He has cleansed us from all sin. Read all 5 chapters and write about the things you discover or questions you have.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

How did the sermons this week reference eternal security?

What things happened during the week that may have caused you to doubt God's love for you or your salvation?

Baptism

Key verse: Romans 6:3-4 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Biblical truth: Jesus Christ came to this earth to live in perfect obedience to God, lay down His life to the hands of those who crucified Him and die for us on the cross. The story of His life does not end there, for after being in the grave for three days and three nights, He rose again by the power of the Spirit of God. (His own power) Baptism is a picture of what Jesus did for us, His death, burial and resurrection, and also a picture of how we are raised in Him to newness of life. I Corinthians 15:3-4

Baptism is also the way that **John the Baptist would reveal the Savior to the world**. When John baptized Jesus, it ***wasn't because*** Jesus had confessed His sins or received salvation, for Jesus is God and cannot sin. It was because Jesus would die, be buried and rise again from the grave to save us from sin. This is the picture we see in baptism. Matthew 3:13-17

What is Baptism?

Baptism is an ordinance (authoritative direction from God) of the church. It is a tradition, a precept and a teaching that God has commanded us to do.

1. The church was commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19-20)
2. The early church immediately baptized new converts. (Acts 2:41)
3. Phillip baptized those that had believed after they heard the gospel preached. (Acts 8:12)
4. Peter commanded those of the house of Cornelius to be baptized after it was obvious that God had saved them. (Acts 10:48)
5. Baptism is often called the first step of obedience because it happened so soon after and was so closely associated with receiving salvation.
 - a. In every instance of salvation that we find in the Bible when they got saved they were immediately baptized.
 - b. Mark 16:16 links salvation and baptism very close together—though not a part of salvation it is completely linked.
 - c. An external revelation of an internal reality—our public confession and testimony that we have been saved by the grace of God.

- d. I have been saved by the grace of God, have died to my old way of life, repented of my sin, and believe that Jesus is the Lord. (Romans 10:9-10)
- 6. Is a picture of the gospel which is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:1-4) These same truths are illustrated in Romans 6:1-6.
 - a. Our death with Christ to sin and our old life. (Rom. 6:1-3)
 - b. Our burial with Him. (Romans 6:4)
 - c. Our being raised to walk in newness of life Romans 6:5

Have you been baptized since accepting Christ? If not, have you considered it in the light of Biblical truth?

Being Baptized

Knowing now that baptism is a command that was given to all those that would accept Him as Saviour, it is good to understand the facts surrounding the qualifications and the practice of baptism. Its important to remember that Jesus was our example in baptism. In the Bible, only those old enough to make a profession of faith were baptized (which eliminates all infants being baptized) and that they were baptized in water (not just with water) quickly after their profession of faith. Baptism never happens before a profession of faith in the Bible and never as a part of anyone's salvation.

1. Why should a person get baptized?
 - a. Because Jesus gave us this example Luke 3:21-22 and God the Father was pleased.
 - b. Because it is the example that we see from those who got saved in the New Testament. (Acts 2:41; 8:38; 9:17,18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:4,5)
 - c. Because the Great Commission gives the church the command to go, teach, baptize and then teach more. (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - d. It is a means of public testimony and identifying ourselves with Jesus Christ II Corinthians 5:17, in Christ. (Romans 6:3)
2. Who should get baptized?
 - a. The Bible teaches that baptism is for Believers – everyone who gets baptized in the Bible does so after they have believed. (Acts 8:36-37)
 - b. People who have been born again by faith and are sure of their decision to place their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

- c. People who wish to be identified with Jesus Christ and His teachings. (Romans 6:3-5)
 - d. People who want to give testimony of their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.
3. When should a person get baptized?
- a. Only when you are old enough to make your own decision—only those old enough to make a decision were baptized.
 - b. After salvation—it is very important that you realize that salvation is by grace and that you will receive no merit, no points, no good works by getting baptized. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - c. What if a person got baptized and later realized that they weren't saved what should they do? Following the Biblical pattern they would have to be baptized after salvation as a profession of their faith.
4. How should a person be baptized?
- a. By immersion in much water. (Acts 8:38-39) They went down into and came up out of the water.
 - b. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - c. In a way that adequately portrays the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 6:1-6)



5. Precautions to take into account.
- a. Baptism does not wash away our sins. (Ephesians 2:8,9; Galatians 3:11)
 - b. What actually cleanses a sinner from his sin is the blood of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 1:7; 1John 1:7; Colossians 1:20)
 - c. We gain no “points” with God by being baptized or having done this “religious work”.
 - d. Baptism is not the principal work rather the preaching of the gospel. Paul said that he was sent to preach the gospel not baptize. (1 Corinthians 1:13-18)

How would does being baptized affect my Christian life?

Personal study time:

Read about these instances of baptism and consider the truths that they present. Make any notes about what you see in the verses in the space provided and talk with your Foundations partner about any questions you may have. If you have not yet been baptized and have decided that you want to be obedient to the Lord's command and identify with Jesus and what He did in you, let your Foundations partner know.

Bible Examples of Baptism

1. John the Baptist baptized where there was a lot of water. (John 3:23) Since a part of baptism is the "burial" part, it makes sense that you need much water.

2. A person had to confess what according to Matthew 3:6?

3. Jesus was baptized to fulfil all righteousness since He was the one who was actually going to rise from the dead. (Matthew 3:15) What did God say from heaven when Jesus came up out of the water of the Jordan river after being baptized by John? (Matthew 3:16-17)

4. On the day of Pentecost, those that believed then immediately were baptized. (Acts 2:41)

5. Phillip taught a eunuch from Ethiopia about Jesus and told him that if he would believe in Christ, he could be baptized. What things do you see in Acts 8:36-39 about this event?

6. The keeper of the prison where Paul and Silas were being held was saved and baptized the same hour. (Acts 16:25-33)

Reading and Studying the Bible

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

Biblical truth: The key verse is the command by the Lord to study so that we can be workmen that rightly divide (or rightly interpret) the Word of God. Christians accept the Bible as their final authority on all matters of faith and practice. It is good practice therefore, to both read and study the Bible. It is critically important as disciple makers that we learn to study and become teachers of the Bible. Above reading and studying, a workman in the Bible should expect to prepare their hearts for the Word of God and also prepare themselves to be examples of what the Bible teaches. (Ezra 7:10)

Reading the Bible is different from studying the Bible, but they work together. I Timothy 4:13 advises that we should be diligent readers of the Bible, taking notice of exhortation and doctrine. Reading is exhortation in the faith, seeing the goodness and severity of God and collecting doctrines and pictures of doctrines as you go. It is not a full comprehension of all the things you read.

How to Read the Bible

Systematically reading the Bible is the building of a personal relationship you have with God as well as an exercise in personal discipline. The sooner that daily Bible reading becomes a habit, the more fulfilling will be your daily walk with Jesus.

1. Find a convenient time that you can commit on a daily basis to reading the Bible. Early morning is preferable and from 15 to 30 minutes should be allowed per day. Waiting until later in the day or the evening is fine; however you should expect more obstacles to your reading time to appear as the day progresses.
2. Start with prayer. (Psalm 119:18, 9-11) Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand what you are reading. It is His job to help us understand as well as bring other things to our remembrance so we can learn about Jesus.
 - a. Things in the Bible are Spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:12-14)
 - b. The Holy Spirit will teach us all things (I John 2:27)
 - c. The Holy Spirit will bring all things to our remembrance. (John 14:26)
3. Prioritize the time you spend reading the Bible. (Job 23:12, Psalm 132:4-5) Make it as necessary as your daily meals, and don't go to bed unless you have read.

4. Read the Bible in a systematic fashion. The Holy Spirit can only bring all things to your remembrance if you have read them. Start in Genesis and read through to Revelation.
5. Don't get discouraged because you don't understand all or (some days) even some of what you are reading. Acknowledge that this is God's book and was written by an all knowing God. It will take time.
 - a. Certain things in the Bible were mysteries on purpose. (Colossians 1:26, I Corinthians 2:7-8)
 - b. The first day of the New Year seems to be the favorite time to start reading the Bible. Many have read Genesis through Numbers many times then stopped. Don't wait until the New Year. Start again now, and pick up where you left off.
6. Mark things in your Bible or make notes in a notebook. You will learn the Bible gradually as you read, and as the Holy Spirit uses the verses to put together little pieces into bigger blocks of understanding. (Isaiah 28:9-10) Things to mark include;
 - a. Promises (Jeremiah 33:3)
 - b. Examples to follow (I Peter 2:21-23)
 - c. Commands to obey (Ephesians 4:31-32)
 - d. Sins to avoid (Colossians 3)
 - e. Keeping lists of the similar things and important things that the Holy Spirit points out to you are beneficial.
 - f. Praying using the Scriptures (especially the Psalms) is good practice.
 - g. Write down questions that come from your reading.

Discuss and create a plan to read the Bible systematically, and how to create accountability measures in your life to make it a habit. (Worksheet is at the end of this lesson)

How to Study the Bible

Along with the systematic reading of the Bible comes Bible study. The Bible teaches us in II Timothy 2:15 that study is to prepare a workman. The Scriptures that we study are the Word of God and are very powerful. (Hebrews 4:12) They are also very profitable. (II Timothy 3:15-17) They took a young child named Timothy and make him a man of God.

1. Study time is different than reading time. Study is the pursuit of the understanding of a certain topic or passage. A passage (set of verses, chapter or an entire book) that you read as part of your daily reading could become the subject of a study. Additionally, a topic that came up in a passage such as, grace, could become the focus

of a study you conduct on the word “grace” in the Bible. The goal in study should be first the understanding and practice of the Bible truth learned, then the teaching of it to others.

2. Commentaries, Bible helps, concordances and other study guides are helpful however they all contain the biases of their authors and are not infallible like the Bible. In starting out, a good English dictionary, and concordance or a searchable electronic Bible are really all that is necessary.
3. Things you study can come out of your daily reading, your Sunday school classes or sermons delivered in church.
4. Before beginning the study, you should understand two important things about the Bible.
 - a. Firstly it is a legal document and as such is written oftentimes in legal terms. (John 12:47-48)
 - b. The Bible is understood in part by knowledge and in part by faith. Some things will be easy to grasp and others will require faith to understand because they are the works of an infinite eternal God. Like the creation. (Hebrews 11:1-3)
5. Three basic tenants of Bible Study: (There are specific methods covered later in Foundations level 2)
 - a. Read what it says. (observation) It is important to read the passage many times and even meditate (think about the words used) on the verses for a time.
 - i. The context of the passage is key. It is important to note who is being spoken to and what events are happening and in what Bible age the passage occurs.
 - ii. Believe what you read regardless of your level of understanding. (Hebrews 4:2, I Thessalonians 2:13)
 - b. Find out what it means (Interpretation) Usually the interpretation is apparent in the context and interpretation issues revolve around smaller thoughts or words. Allow the context to guide the interpretation. Many times, figurative language is followed up with a literal explanation. (Matthew 13)
 - i. Successful interpretation will be a growing process involving your daily reading and consistent study. It cannot be rushed. (Isaiah 28:9-10)
 - ii. The simplest explanation of a passage should be accepted over the very complex explanation. In Ezra’s day, they read the Bible and gave the “sense” of it. That is a simple explanation of what it means. (Nehemiah 8:8)
 - iii. Bible doctrines are best understood and explained using Bible words. (I Corinthians 2:13)

- c. Consider how it applies. (Application) Probably the most important part is the application. Through application of the Bible come godliness and more knowledge.
 - i. We should adorn ourselves with the doctrines of truth. That means we should apply them and live what we study. (Titus 2:10)
 - ii. Being doers of the Word and not hearers only. (James 1:22)
 - iii. It will make you happy. (John 13:17)
- d. If you have read it, tried to understand it and still cannot, then keep reading on through your Bible. God will show you the answer when you have read enough to understand it.

Discuss the differences between reading and studying and create a list of topics or passages that you would like to study.

More specific study methods are found in Foundations Level 2

Prayer

Key verse: Matthew 21:22 “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

Biblical truth: Prayer is talking to God. It is worship and it is asking. It is the presentation of our desires and burdens before the throne of grace with the confidence that we shall obtain help. (Hebrews 4:15-16) The help we obtain is mercy and grace and we receive it because of what Jesus did for us.

The three main components of prayer are, asking, waiting and receiving. The Bible tells us that if we ask we shall receive. There are no verses however, that tell us how long the wait will be. The difficult part of prayer is the patience during the waiting period. The time between the asking and the receiving is often the time that God uses to help you see that you don't really want what you asked for, and that He will make you more satisfied with what He knows is best for you. In other words, the waiting period between when you ask and when you receive is very beneficial.

The Asking:

Jesus told His disciples to ask (John 16:24) and James says we have not because we ask not (James 4:2) Asking demonstrates dependence and that is pleasing to God. He calls us His little children and as children, we need things from our Father. As our Father, He would not answer us in a cruel fashion or trick us, but loves to give good things to His children. (Matthew 7:7-11)

1. Things we should ask for: There are things that the Bible tells us we should pray for, and also ways that we should pray.
 - a. We are to pray continually. (without ceasing, I Thessalonians 5:17)
 - b. We are to cast our cares on Him. (I Peter 5:7) This means we are to ask Him for answers and help then leave the answer and outcome to Him.
 - c. We are to pray for others. (I Samuel 12:23, I Thessalonians 5:25)
 - d. We are to pray for wisdom. (James 1:5)
 - e. We should pray for those in authority. (I Timothy 2:1-3)
 - f. We should pray for courage. (Acts 4:23-32)
 - g. For our needs to be met. (Philippians 4:6)
2. How should we ask?
 - a. Ask like a son. The son is allowed to ask whatever he desires of the Father. That is one of the privileges of son ship. (Luke 15:11-12, John 15:7)

- i. Prayer is presented as a father/son relationship. (Matthew 7:7-11) There would be no way that God would allow an earthly father to better exemplify the relationship than Him.
 - ii. Sons have privilege. (Galatians 4:6-7) By the new birth and by the adoption of sons we have been made sons and placed into all the privileges of the Christian life. One of the greatest privileges is prayer.
- b. Ask on the basis of need: The Lord knows what we need before we pray for it. (Matthew 6:8) He still desires that we pray or He would not have told us to ask.
 - i. When we present to Him our needs it is the needy praying to one that has everything and needs nothing. (Psalm 50:12)
- c. Ask on the basis of friendship. The Lord calls us friends. (John 15:13-16) He tells us that we are to ask the Father for things on the basis of our friendship with Him (Jesus) and because of that friendship, the Father will answer our prayers.
- d. Ask with a belief that He will answer. (Matthew 21:22)
 - i. If we ask of Him we know that He hears us. (I John 5:14-15) We can have confidence that He will answer us.
- e. Ask with a boldness, or confidence that we will obtain mercy and grace. (Hebrews 4:16)
 - i. Notice that it is a throne of grace and not a throne of criticism or judgment. It is not a throne where we will be rejected for not praying exactly the right words, but it is the throne of our heavenly Father who delights in us because of Jesus.
- f. Ask on the basis of promise. Many great and precious promises have been made to us in the Bible by our heavenly Father.
 - i. Where two or three agree. (Matthew 18:19)
 - ii. He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)
 - iii. Askers become receivers. (Luke 11:10)
 - iv. Things we don't know will be revealed to us. (Jeremiah 33:3)

What are some things you would like to ask God for, or thank God for?

The Waiting:

Waiting times are difficult times. It seems like God did not hear and the answer is not coming. It seems as if God has forgotten about you and your prayer and that He does not care. Nothing could be further from the truth. The waiting time is an important time to trust God and get closer to Him. It is also a time of examination to see if there are hindrances to prayer in your life. There are no formulas in the Bible to know how long you have to wait on the answer to a prayer, just know that it is God that is at work in you in the way that pleases Him. (Hebrews 13:21)

1. Hindrances to prayer: It may be that one of these things is causing a hold up in the answer to prayer.
 - a. Not asking in faith (James 1:5-7)
 - b. Asking for the wrong things (James 4:3)
 - c. Not keeping a good relationship with your spouse (I Peter 3:7)
 - d. Un-confessed sin in our lives (Psalm 66:18)
 - i. Bitterness or un-forgiveness. (Hebrews 12:15, Mark 11:25-26)
 - ii. Willful disobedience.
 - e. Not asking in Jesus name or authority.
 - i. It is not a magic word or formula but its knowing what He authorizes you to pray for. (John 14:13-14) His name and authority are the basis for our relationship with God. It must be according to His will. (I John 5:14-15)
 - f. Not delighting in Him and what He wants and allowing that to control the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4)
2. Waiting is a good time to examine ourselves to see if there may be things in our lives that God wants us to deal with before we can receive the answer to prayer. It is also a time to learn to trust God.
 - a. God is truth and does not lie. (Numbers 23:19)
 - b. The adversary will attack and make you think God has forgotten you. Remember that he (the devil) lies and cannot tell the truth. Do not believe him. Cast your care on the Lord and allow Him to control the outcomes. (I Peter 5:7-10)

What things has God taught you in the past while waiting on an answer to prayer?

The Answer:

The answers will come in the Lord's timing and there is nothing we can do in the meantime except trust Him. The only immediate answers promised in the Bible happen in Hebrews 4:16 where He promises mercy and grace when we go to the throne. Mercy is what has allowed us to come to the throne and be welcomed when we should be judged. Grace is the favor of God that we receive and what helps us wait on the answer. Paul asked that God remove a thorn from his flesh but was satisfied rather with the grace of God to endure the thorn. (II Corinthians 12:8-9)

1. The answer will come. It may come when you get to heaven, such as the healing of a very sick family member, or relief from difficult living conditions, but it will come. (Numbers 23:19)
 - a. He will not leave us or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)
 - b. He knows what we need even before we ask. (Matthew 6:8)
 - c. He says he will answer. (Jeremiah 33:3)
 - d. He is for us. (Romans 8:31)
 - e. He gave us Jesus which was His greatest gift. All other things are of lesser value and He would not withhold them from us. (Romans 8:32)
2. We should learn gratitude for all that God gives us daily that we overlook. We should praise Him daily for His blessings.
 - a. Whether things are good or bad. (Philippians 4:11-13)
 - b. In all things give thanks. (I Thessalonians 5:18)

What daily things does God provide that often go unnoticed?

What special prayers has God answered in the past and did you publicly praise Him?

Personal study time:

Review the model prayer found in Matthew 6:9-13. Break the prayer down in sections and consider what each section indicates about God, our relationship to Him and how we should pray. Use the spaces below for notes.

Our Father (what does this say about our relationship with Him?)

Which art in heaven (our position relative to His?)

Hallowed be thy name (what does this say about who He is?)

Thy Kingdom come (what does this indicate about who's purpose should be in focus?)

Thy will be done (who's will should we want for our lives?)

In earth, as it is in heaven (who is to do His will on this earth?)

Give us this day our daily bread (what does this say about our wants?)

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (could we avoid a hindrance to prayer if we really meant this?)

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: (what does this say about our direction and His protection?)

For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen (This looks like it is all about God and not about us. Would that make a great prayer attitude?)

The Holy Spirit

Key verse: John 14:26 “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

Biblical truth: The Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit) is also called the Comforter and was sent to us from God to teach us about Jesus and to bring His Words to our remembrance. The Holy Spirit is a person and not a thing. He is not just a bundle of spiritual energy, He is God. The Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus and not of Himself. He also does some very special things in the life of the believer and is, as the verse above says, our Comforter. The word comforter signifies one who comes along side of us to help us in our Christian life.

The Holy Spirit and our Salvation

The Holy Spirit is involved in our lives before and after we get saved. It is His job to convict us of our sin, seal us in Christ after we believe, then teach us about Jesus and help us live for Him daily.

1. The Holy Spirit is God. Jesus promised that even after He left, He would be with us always. (Matthew 18:20) Jesus would do that by indwelling us through His Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
 - a. The Holy Spirit was in heaven before the Father sent Him to this earth.
 - i. The Father gave Him. (John 14:26)
 - ii. Jesus sent Him. (John 16:7)
 - iii. The Holy Spirit came. (John 16:7)
 - iv. This is how the trinity acts in unison with each member doing what they do but all members being in agreement. The Holy Spirit is a member of that trinity which makes Him God. (John 4:24)
 - b. The Holy Spirit was present in the creation. (Genesis 1:1-2)
 - c. It was the Holy Spirit that birthed Jesus in the womb of Mary and thus it was the manner in which in Jesus body was the blood of God. (Luke 1:35, Hebrews 9:14)
 - d. The Holy Spirit is the breath of God that gave us the Holy Scriptures. (II Timothy 3:16)
 - e. When people accept Jesus Christ, they are to be baptized in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - f. The Holy Spirit lives inside every believer that accepts Christ. That makes Him omnipresent, an attribute of God. (John 14:17, Romans 8:9)

2. The Holy Spirit strives with (brings conviction upon) men. (Genesis 6:3-7) speaking to them and heaping on their conscience the understanding of the weight of their guiltiness and the punishment that must occur because of their sin. This is called conviction. (Romans 2:15)
 - a. Conviction is a legal term that means to prove a person's guilt then hang the responsibility on them. This is pictured by the story of the woman taken in adultery. (John 8:7-9)
 - b. It is under this pressure for the Holy Spirit that a person reaches for the Savior for a rescue from the wrath of God. (John 16:8-11)
 - i. He reproves (scold or disapprove) men of their sin. Points out how it is wrong and the punishment it carries. (John 16:9 Romans 6:23)
 - ii. He reproves men of righteousness in place of Jesus. He does this through the Word of God. (John 16:10)
 - iii. Of the fate and final judgment of the devil. John 16:11
3. The Holy Spirit enters us in salvation and revives us (quicken, or brings to new life). We change from being dead in trespasses and sins to being alive in Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1)
 - a. We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, or made a new creature. (Titus 3:5, II Corinthians 5:17)
 - b. We make a profession of faith under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 12:3)
 - c. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30) This means that we cannot lose or undo our salvation but we are sealed into everlasting life by the Holy Spirit.
 - d. The Holy Spirit becomes the earnest of our inheritance. (Ephesians 1:14) He is the down payment, not against the redemption of our soul, but against the promise of the future return of Jesus. He has placed His Holy Spirit in us as the evidence that He must return for us.
 - e. We are comforted and helped by Him. (John 14:16)

In what way can you see the work of the Holy Spirit in your life now or in the past?

The Holy Spirit and our Christian Life

The Holy Spirit was not just given to us to comfort and seal us, but is the divine power of God alive in us. He wants to guide us into righteousness and godliness and to yield our lives as instruments of the same to bring glory and honor to Jesus.

1. The Holy Spirit immediately begins working in us after salvation to bring about fruit in our lives. (Galatians 5:22-26) He continues to convict us of sin in our lives as we should not practice the ways of the old man that is now perished. (II Corinthians 5:17)
 - a. These verses in Galatians instruct us that we should walk in the Spirit so that the fruits of the Spirit may be in abundance in our lives.
 - b. We should not walk in the works of darkness or as the children of disobedience (which we were) but as children of the light (which we now are) showing the fruit of the Spirit.
 - c. Walking in the Spirit should be the natural thing for us now. (Romans 8:1)
 - d. The indwelling Holy Spirit wants to fill us up (as we make room for Him to do so) with His power. (Ephesians 5:18)
2. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to be witnesses of Jesus and testify of the resurrection of Christ. (Acts 1:8)
 - a. Jesus sent them out as witnesses in the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 20:21-22)
 - b. The evidence of a Spirit filled life is a person who walks in the Spirit, doing the things that the Spirit wants to do. Not fulfilling the lust of the flesh, but the will of God. (Galatians 5:16)
 - c. Peter was bold because of the power of the Holy Spirit in him. (Acts 4:8)
 - d. The Holy Spirit gave them all boldness in Acts 4:31 after they had prayed.
 - e. The Holy Ghost guides men into the different ministries. (Acts 13:2-4)
3. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to understand the Scriptures
 - a. The Bible is a spiritual book and is spiritually discerned. (I Corinthians 2:14)
 - b. The Holy Spirit teaches us the Bible by letting us see things in the verses that He compares with other verses as He brings them to our remembrance. (I Corinthians 2:10-13) We don't even need to be taught by someone else if we have the Holy Spirit. (I John 2:27)
 - c. The Holy Spirit truth, as He is called, will guide us in the truth, interpret the truth for us and teach us of the things to come. (John 16:13)
4. We can grieve Him (Ephesians 4:30) and quench Him (I Thessalonians 5:19) which speak to the fact that He is a person and has feelings.
 - a. Grieving the Holy Spirit happens when we walk in the flesh and not after Him.

- b. Quenching the Spirit happens when we smother His voice in our life. It is not a loud voice as the prophet found out, so we must be listening. (I Kings 19:11-12)
- c. We can hear His voice in the Scriptures primarily but also in our conscience.

How do you respond to the voice of the Holy Spirit?

Personal study time:

Reading: Galatians 5:22-26 presents the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. It makes sense that these things should be present in our lives if we are truly born again. If they are not its either because we are not saved or because the Holy Spirit is grieved or quenched in our life. Study these fruits of the Spirit and consider how they are present or lacking in your life. Record any thoughts you have about them below.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

In what ways do I rely on my own power and not the power of the Holy Spirit to live my Christian life?

The New Testament Church (Part 1)

Key verse: Matthew 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Biblical truth: Jesus is the founder and builder of the church. The word “church” means a body or a group of believers, called out or together to worship the Lord and carry out the great commission. As far as assemblies go, the Bible teaches that they assembled often in the Old Testament in for the reading of the Bible and for the messages from the prophets of God to be heard. This was specifically for the nation of Israel. The New Testament church will not be a Jewish or Gentile organization, but the body of Christ on this earth made up of all saved, baptized and assembled believers that will carry out the work of the great commission.

The Nature of the Church

The church is at the center of everything that Jesus is doing in the New Testament. It would be impossible to be involved in the work of God in this age without being a part of a New Testament church. The ordinances, offices and instructions given to the church convey the plans and the methods that Jesus has laid out for the redemption of the world and the glory and worship of God.

1. The formation of the church in the Bible is seen first in Matthew 16:13-18.
 - a. Jesus is its founder, and it is central in every teaching of the New Testament.
 - b. The word “church” or “churches” is found in 114 verses in the New Testament.
 - i. The book of Acts is written about God’s working in the church.
 - ii. Romans through II Thessalonians are 9 letters written to churches.
 - iii. I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus are letters written to church leaders.
 - c. The only other gospel mentioning of the church is Matthew 18:17 and there they get instructions on church discipline.
 - i. He placed great value on the church. It is His church. (Matthew 16:18, Acts 20:28)
 - ii. He empowered and authorised the church to do His work.
 1. Wait on the Holy Spirit to be endued with His power. (Luke 24:49)
 2. After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. (Acts 1:8)
2. The Purpose of the Church
 - a. He commanded the church to fulfil a certain ministry.
 - b. He gave the Great Commission to His church. (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-48, John 20:21, Acts 1:8)

- c. Jesus plainly taught the great commission.
 - i. We are to take the gospel to Every Creature. That means that we will have to reach more than 7,000,000,000 people with the gospel message! (Mark 16:15)
 - ii. We are to take the gospel (repentance and remission of sins in His name) to All Nations. Nations refers to people groups and not entire countries. We have the Cherokee nation in the nation of the USA. (Luke 24:46-49)
 - iii. We are to teach all nations. (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - 1. “Teach or teaching” means “to show how to do something, to give instructions to, to train, give lessons to (a student or pupil), to guide the study of, to instruct, to hold classes in, to provide with knowledge, insight.” Synonyms: impart, direct, instruct, informer, counsel, admonish, educate, inculcate, enlighten, advise, indoctrinate, and train.
 - 2. The word “teach” makes it clear that I must disciple or train all nations. It is not enough to get them to pray a prayer. They must be taught enough to be saved, then baptized, then trained to live the gospel. (Romans 10:13-15)
 - iv. We are to go “both” to our area and to the uttermost, or furthest part of the world. Every country is to hear the gospel. (Acts 1:8)
 - v. We are sent as He was sent. This is the incarnation. This is becoming one of them to reach them in the context of where they live and the language they speak. (John 20:20-21)

How should I view the church? Is it to be a place for me to get my needs met or as a place to serve?

The Critical Nature of the Mission of the Church

It can be plainly seen that Jesus formed the church, but why did He do so? The purpose of the church is to carry out the great commission. The church bears that responsibility and we as believers and church members must be concerned about the lost like Jesus is.

- 1. Along with the great commission should come a great concern.
 - a. Those without Christ are condemned already. (John 3:18)

- i. The Creation leaves them without excuse, because it shows them that God does exist. (Romans 1:20)
 - ii. Their Conscience shows them that they need this God. (Romans 2:15)
 - iii. The Church fulfilling its Great Commission will show them how to get to know this God. (II Corinthians 5:18-20.)
 - 1. “the ministry of reconciliation”
 - 2. “the word of reconciliation”
- b. Our conviction that we are responsible before God to get the gospel to all the world.
 - i. The blood of the uninformed is required at the hand of the watchmen. Bloody Hands. (Ezekiel 33:6)
 - ii. Paul felt that responsibility because he said that he was free from the blood of all men. (Acts 20:26)
 - iii. It is our shame if there is someone in the world that doesn’t have the knowledge of God. (I Corinthians 15:34)
 - iv. Tears will be wiped away after having seen the horrible Great White Throne judgment. (Revelation 21:4, I Thessalonians 4:17)
- c. The continual sorrow that we should feel. (Romans 9.1-3, 10:1-3)
 - i. The horrible condition of man.
 - ii. The Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15)
 - iii. Deceived by religion (Matthew 7:21-23)
 - iv. Dead in Sin (Ephesians 2:1)
 - v. A literal burning eternal hell (Luke 16:19-31)
 - vi. Blinded and deafened
- d. The compassion of God. (John 3:16, Romans 5:8, II Peter 3:9, I Tim. 2:3-6, Hebrews 2:9, I John 2:2, John 10:11-18)
- e. The church must realize that it is personally responsible for the world. It must then pass this burden on to its people so that all will feel responsible to get the gospel to the world

In what way am I responsible for getting the gospel to my area and the world?

Personal study time:

Reading: Read Matthew chapter 9 and 10. Notice the prayer request that Jesus makes at the end of Chapter 9 and write any devotional thoughts about that in the space below. Read chapter 10 about how they went out and the experiences they had witnessing. Write your thoughts below.

Devotional thoughts from my reading:

Read these quotes from men that felt the full responsibility of the Great Commission on their lives.

"People who don't believe in missions have not read the New Testament. Right from the beginning Jesus said the field is the world. The early church took Him at His word and went East, West, North and South."-- J. Howard Edington

"There is nothing in the world or the Church, except the church's disobedience, to render the evangelization of the world in this generation an impossibility. - Robert Speer

"The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed" - Hudson Taylor

"Christ's last command should be our first concern"

"The unfinished task is to evangelize all individuals, to proclaim the gospel to all peoples in all the geographical regions of the world and to disciple them."- Avery T. Willis, Jr.

Record your thoughts about these quotes.

The New Testament Church (Part 2)

Key verse: Matthew 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Biblical truth: Because Jesus formed it and because of the Great Commission that He gave it, every born again believer should want to be an active member and participant in a local New Testament church. It is the body of Christ and it is His organism for carrying out His work in this world.

What is a New Testament Church?

The church is a group of called out believers that are organized to carry out the Great Commission. The study of how the church functions is a study of how Jesus led His disciples and how the New Testament church leaders and writers of the epistles instructed the churches what to do.

1. A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ has the following characteristics.
 - a. It is a local body of baptized believers.
 - b. This local body of baptized believers is associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel...
 - c. They observe the two ordinances of Christ.
 - i. Baptism (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:41) Baptism is part of the believer’s profession of what Jesus has done in his life. It pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and the believer. The believer now walks in newness of life.
 - ii. The Lord’s Supper (I Corinthians 11:23-34) The Lord’s Supper is a time of reflection on what Jesus did for us already (his death and shed blood are symbolized with the bread and juice) and also to recognize that He is coming again for us. It is also a time of self-examination.
 - d. The body is committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word.
 - e. They seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.
 - f. This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
 - g. In such a congregation members are equally responsible.
 - h. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. (1 Timothy 3:1-13)

2. According to Hebrews 10:25 the church is an assembly. We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.
 - a. A building is never a church. The New Testament church didn't even have dedicated buildings for their meetings. We are actually the temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
 - b. The church is referred to as the body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:27, 12-13, 17-27)
 - i. Each member (part) of the body of believers has a different function - each ministering to each other's needs as a whole.
 - ii. No one member can function alone - we need each other! When a Christian is not committed to others, especially to other believers, then they are hindering Christ's work in the world today.
 - iii. Each member's contribution is vitally important to the well-being of the entire body of believers - we can't go it alone!
 - iv. A properly functioning body operates as a single unit - unified.
 - c. Jesus is the Head of the church. (Ephesians 5:23)

How important is church membership? How important is church participation? How do I rate in both areas?

How Do I Become a Member?

The church is a group of called out believers that are organized to carry out the Great Commission. The study of how the church functions is a study of how Jesus led His disciples and how the New Testament church leaders and writers of the epistles instructed the churches what to do.

1. Membership in a New Testament church is clearly defined in the Bible.
 - a. You must be a born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ! (Acts 2:47, Colossians 1:1-2)
 - b. To be a member you must be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:41-42)
 - c. You must be determined to live out your new life in Christ. (Ephesians 5:15, Matthew 18:15-17)
 - d. Members covenant together to love God and to serve Him. Together they want to fellowship and to honour and obey God. With this membership come great privileges but also responsibilities!

- e. Membership in a local church is not permanent. A person must continue in the practice of the covenant and not return to the former way of life before He was saved. (Matthew 18:15-20)
2. What are the characteristics of the type of church (a New Testament Church) that you should join?
- a. Carrying out the Great Commission will be the main goal of this church both locally and around the world. (Acts 1:8)
 - b. There will be careful Bible preaching and teaching, caring for the flock, and not just a people pleasing ministry. (Acts 20:28-31, 2 Timothy 4:2-4)
 - c. There will be a marked separation from the world in attitudes and actions. (2 Corinthians 6:14-17, 1 John 2:15, Titus 2:13-14)
 - d. The Word of God will be central to everything, believed, preached, practiced, and not handled lightly. (2 Timothy 3:15-17, Acts 24:14, Luke 24:25)
 - e. Discipleship will be a primary ministry as new believers are taught and trained and God's people are carried on to a ministry that God would have them do. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)
 - f. They will practice Biblical baptism of believers only, by immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:36-38)
 - g. They will desire to meet together to encourage each other and to worship the Lord Jesus. (Hebrews 10:25)

How Do I Get Active?

Jesus said if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. (John 13:17) Being in the church is a greater blessing if you are also in a ministry. There are many ways to get plugged in and active in a church.

1. What is your role in the church?
 - a. Come and learn all that you can so you can grow and mature in your new life in Christ Jesus.
 - b. Get involved, participate don't just be a hearer. (James 1:22-25)
 - c. Learn so you can help and teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)
 - d. Everyone can be in a ministry. Here are some ministry ideas.
 - i. Teaching a Sunday School Class or helping another person teach it.
 - ii. Going out soul-winning regularly with other believers.
 - iii. Helping the pastor with secretarial tasks like sending out birthday cards, etc.
 - iv. Start up a Bible study at your workplace during lunch.

- v. Correspond with missionaries to encourage them and pray for them.
- vi. Singing special music and/or sing in the choir or play an instrument.
- vii. Holding Bible clubs and/or studies in your home.
- viii. Visiting people who are sick and in the hospital.
- ix. Helping in the children's ministry; a puppet ministry, etc.
- x. Picking up folks who need a lift to church.
- xi. Ministering to older folks by mowing their grass, or repairing their homes.

What ministries could I be involved in?

Personal study time:

Reading: The covenant is an important part of any church. Forming and agreeing to operate under a church covenant is important as it spells out the purpose and mission of the church and the unity with which the mission will be followed. Read the church covenant below and make any comments in the section provided.

OUR CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all drugs, drink, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church of like faith where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

Can you make and do your best to keep a promise like this based on what Jesus did for you?

Your Personal Witness

Key verse: Act 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Biblical truth: Those that have been born again will have a noticeable change in their life that should attract the attention of those around them. Our light (that Jesus placed in us) is to shine so that men will see it, the change in us and glorify God. (Matthew 5:16) We (as born again believers) have been give the Holy Spirit to indwell us and to give us power to witness of the things that Christ has done in our life. It is natural for a Christian to witness of his Savior.

Your Personal Testimony.

Your personal testimony is just that, yours. No one can tell it like you and no one knows the details of it like you. It’s not only the account of the time that you placed your faith and trust in Christ but of your daily walk and the growth of your relationship with Him. Giving your testimony should be a normal part of your life and conversation since it is the single most significant thing that has ever happened in your life.

1. Paul was very vocal about his testimony
 - a. His salvation experience (Acts 22:1-15)
 - b. Where God brought him from (I Timothy 1:12-15, Galatians 1:13-14)
 - c. What God did with his life (Galatians 1:15-24)
2. The story in John chapter 9 gives us great comfort in the fact that we do not have to have deep theological training to give our testimony.
 - a. His testimony was simply, I used to be blind and now I see. (John 9:11, 21, 25) He gave this testimony the same day he was saved.
 - b. When questioned about theological issues, the man simply said, I used to be blind and now I see.
 - c. When questioned about their power or authority and their intelligence, Peter (speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit) gave this witness. (Acts 4:8-17)
3. A witness is a person who has seen, heard or experienced something and is called on to give testimony or testify about it. Many Samaritans believed because a woman accused of adultery became a witness of the grace of God that day. (John 4:39)
 - a. The truth has been revealed and entrusted to us. (I Thessalonians 2:4)
 - b. We know the truth about who Jesus is and are obligated to tell others. (Romans 1:14-16)
 - c. The Holy Spirit gives us power to witness. (Acts 1:8)

What is your personal testimony of salvation?

Why Should I Witness?

There are many reasons in the Bible for the Christian to witness. Not the least of these should be that he is excited about what Jesus has done for him and in him. (I Timothy 1:11-12, 15) It has also been clearly stated by Jesus in His ministry that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10) Other reasons that I should witness include;

1. Because God loves man: John 3:16
2. Because man is condemned already: John 3:18
 - a. They don't see that just as we didn't see that. The light of the Gospel can open their eyes. John 3:19
 - b. They do not know that sin desires to ruin them. Romans 5:21
 - c. They must be made conscious of their sin and guilt before God as well as its consequence. Romans 6:23
 - d. It is the Holy Spirit that brings the conviction upon them. John 16:8-11.
3. Because we love God: I John 4:19
4. Because it is God's mission to win this world: II Peter 3:9
5. Because we owe our lives to God: Romans 12:1-2
6. We have been given the ministry of reconciliation by God. II Corinthians 5
 - a. The Word of reconciliation has been committed to us.
 - b. We go in Christ's stead since He has gone back to heaven.
 - c. Logically if Christ died for all then all need a Savior.
7. Because we have the truth, we have become debtors to all those that do not have the truth. We owe it to them and to Christ. (Romans 1:14-16)
8. So that Christ will be admired by multitudes. (II Thessalonians 1:10)

9. To show them the standard of truth.
 - a. The Word of God is the standard of truth. (1 Peter 1:23, Psalm 119:160, John 17:17)

What are some things that you have faced that God has brought you through that would make a good story to tell someone?

Things I cannot do.

It is our responsibility to witness to those who have not heard about Jesus Christ. It is required of a witness that he testify of what he has seen and heard. That is what we can and should do. What we cannot do is save or change anyone. Only God can change hearts.

1. I cannot change anyone's heart or mind.
 - a. I can let my good works glorify God. (Matthew 5:16)
 - b. I can invite my friends and family to hear about God. (Acts 10:24, 10:33-35)
 - c. I can be salt and light. (Matthew 5:13-16)
 - d. I can plant seeds, water and cultivate. I Corinthians 3:6-7)
 - e. Only God can give the increase. (I Corinthians 3:5-7)
2. I cannot live a sinless life and never let anyone down.
 - a. A personal witness is not, nor ever can be, perfection. (I John 2:1-2, I John 1:7-9)
 - b. I cannot model a perfect life in front of someone, just a life of faith.
 - c. I can show them how a Christian deals with sin, disappointments, tragedy as well as success and prosperity.

How does an understanding of the things I cannot do change my thoughts about my personal testimony?

Key Verses

The Bible and Discipleship: I Thessalonians 2:13 “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

God the Father: John 4:24 “God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Jesus the Eternal Son of God: John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Sin and the fall of mankind: Romans 5:12 “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”

Biblical salvation: Acts 4:12 “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Eternal security and assurance: John 5:24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

Baptism: Romans 6:3-4 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

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

Prayer: Matthew 21:22 “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

The Holy Spirit: John 14:26 “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

The New Testament Church part 1& 2: Matthew 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Personal witness: Act 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”