



Biblical Discipleship
Foundations Course

Selah Mountain Ministries: Biblical Discipleship Foundations

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A Christianity Every Day™ Resource

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Selah Mountain Ministries is a Biblically foundational church outreach that provides in-person and web-based services, counseling, education, and training. Learn more on the web at www.selahmountain.org

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Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, King James Version. Printed in the United States of America.

Course Introduction and Overview

The ***Biblical Discipleship Foundations Course*** is a foundational course that teaches the practical elements of Biblical discipleship. It is designed to equip any born-again believer with the Biblical training, skills, and knowledge necessary to grow closer to Christ and minister to others to do the same so that they may have victory in their life for His glory.

Course overview: This course is designed to introduce the Christ-centered Biblical foundation of discipleship. It examines how it differs in theory and practice from psychological, spiritual, and life coaching. It presents the essential elements of the discipleship process, the role of the Holy Spirit; and the sufficiency of Scripture to learn and minister to others in informal settings. (See also 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Course setting: This course is usually taught live in a classroom or church setting and lasts about one hour per session. However, it can also be taught using the online course located at the Selah Mountain Ministries website. In the case of the online course, questions may be submitted by email to the ministry office.

Course materials: For the online course, a book is available for purchase as a printed hardcopy for a nominal price (See website for details). In the case of the live classes, hardcopy versions are also available (we may also make special arrangements for groups or bulk orders).

Note: This course includes references from the King James Version of the Bible. However, we encourage students to bring their own Bible for use during the class and for completion of the additional reading assignments. Likewise, students are encouraged to bring any other Bible study tools they desire such as a concordance, notebook, etc.

Target Audience: This course is open to anyone that has a desire to learn and help bear one another's burdens by using the Word of God, the Bible (See also Galatians 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:1-2). Those considering attending should be at least of high school age, committed to faithful attendance, and dedicated to completing any assignments.

Course prerequisites: To be successful in this course, there are several prerequisites:

- First, the student and instructor must seek time in prayer. Prayer for wisdom, discernment, and guidance from God to do what is needed to gain the most from the course.
- Second, the student should set aside the time for class and study throughout the week. Every effort must be made to not allow other things to interfere with this time. Likewise,

the place of study should be one that is away from distractions, comfortable, and well lit.

- Finally, the student and instructor must make every effort to be well rested. In doing so, they will be fresh and ready to take advantage of what God is going to teach them.

How do I enroll in this course?

This course and others like it are generally available online at the Selah Mountain Ministries website. It may also be taught live at local churches that have made arrangements to host this class. For those enrolled in the Selah Mountain Bible Institute, this course does not apply toward the completion of any programs offered at the time of this publication.

How Much Does This Course Cost?

At Selah Mountain Ministries, it is our desire to provide God honoring, Christ-centered, Bible based, practical, education and training for as little cost as possible. We accomplish this by relying on God's provision to cover our needs and expenses through the generosity of those who use and support this ministry. The applicable fees due at the time of registration for this course are as follows:

- Registration Fee (non-refundable):** **NONE**
- Materials Fee (non-refundable):** **See website for details**
- Class Fee:** **NONE (donations accepted)**

If you would like to sponsor a local class, support this ministry, or have any questions, please contact our ministry office. May God bless you in your studies.

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Session 1: What is Biblical discipleship and why do we use it?

Anyone that has spent time working or helping in a local church ministry knows there is a lot of work to do. Likewise, it seems like there are a lot of people in the local church that are at different levels of their spiritual walk with the Lord. Some seem to be spiritually mature while others seem to be always struggling with something in their life.

Unfortunately, everyone at one time or another struggles with something. This often leaves most people at a loss to deal with their own issues, much less help others with theirs. That being said, they often would not know where to begin to help them if they could. They may say a few kind words and offer to pray for them, but at the end of the day, those that are struggling need someone that will spend time with them.

Sadly, the church has all but abandoned helping people individually with their life issues, or if they do, they might have a support group that meets regularly. While support groups can help, what really needs to be done is to provide help on a one on one basis. However, without faithful servants willing to commit time to running these groups, people are left pretty much to fend for themselves.

What is Biblical discipleship?

Depending on whom you ask, the words “Biblical discipleship” often bring up different *opinions*. The internet is full of stories of people that have received help by what was called “Christian counseling” and how it turned out to be a disaster. In some cases, people even went to jail when it was discovered that what was called helping someone was nothing more than bad counsel or a means to take advantage of someone. Unfortunately, this has left a bad taste in the mouths of many social workers, mental health professionals, child protective agencies, and even legal professionals like lawyers and judges.

Sadly, a large number of people who provide what they call Christian counseling and discipleship tend to use the Bible like a *hammer* to pound people into what they think they should be. The results from this type of counsel often accomplishes nothing more than to make the situation worse. Worse yet, it makes the person to never want to have anything to do with Christianity again. Because of this, most outside of the church see Christian counseling and discipleship as worthless and ministry leaders are convinced that the church has no business doing counseling at all.

So, what is Biblical Discipleship? How does it compare to Christian counseling? As we will learn in this course, Biblical Discipleship is the process whereby we become a student, or disciple, of the Bible. More specifically, we become a student, or disciple, of Jesus Christ and learn from His counsel how to have life and have it more abundantly. We see

this in the fact that the root of the word discipleship is “disciple”, which is the same root of the word discipline as seen in Job 36:10: “He openeth also their ear to discipline, And commandeth that they return from iniquity”.

Christian counseling, on the other hand, is usually associated with a more formal process of ministry. Those needing help may have regularly scheduled sessions with those disciples that are more mature in their walk with the Lord and are trained to help others.

However, no matter if it is formal or informal day-to-day interaction with others, anytime knowledge is shared by a believer, it is considered to be a form of counsel. This counsel is rooted in the Word of God so that those receiving it may grow to be more like Christ and experience victory in their life (Read also Proverbs 1:1-9; Proverbs 12:15 and Proverbs 19:20-21).

Discussion

For those whom have experienced or know of Biblical Discipleship done the right way, they know it as being *Christ-centered*. Consider for a moment what Jesus did in John 8:1-11 when he had an encounter with a woman whom was caught in the act of adultery by the local religious authorities. They brought the woman to Jesus, knowing what the penalty was for adultery, but they wanted to see what he would say about the situation.

John 8:1-11. (1) “Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. (2) And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. (3) And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, (4) They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (5) Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? (6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. (7) So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. (9) And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? (11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”

Read verses 1-6 again. What was the life issue that this woman was facing and how was it affecting her? (Write your thoughts after the verse).

(1) "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. (2) And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. (3) And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, (4) They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (5) Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? (6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not."

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Now read verses 7-8 again. How did Jesus respond to the accusations of the crowd and what was the reason you think He responded the way He did? (Write your thoughts after the verse).

(7) "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground."

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Now read verse 9 again. What did the people in the crowd do in response to what Jesus said? Why do you think they responded that way? (Write your thoughts here).

(9) "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."

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Now read verse 10 again. What did Jesus say to the woman? Why do you think He asked her these questions? (Write your thoughts here).

(10) “When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?”

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Now read verse 11 again. How did the woman reply to what Jesus asked her? What was Jesus then able to say to the woman and why do you think He could say it?

(11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

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What have we learned from our discussion?

When we look closer at this encounter, we can see that there are several truths about how to Biblically handle life issues that we can learn from this passage of Scripture.

1. Every life issue will come with its own set of *circumstances* that will often result in more than just one person being upset. Sometimes the *reaction* to the life issue is worse than the issue (Verses 1-6)
2. How we *respond* to a life issue can either make a situation better or make it worse (Verses 7-8)
3. How everyone else responds to someone else’s life issue will depend on the conviction of their own conscience (Verse 9)
4. Establishing *trust* is necessary so that what is at the heart of the life issue can be openly discussed (Verse 10)
5. Teaching practical ways to deal with the life issue to prevent it from happening again must be done with *encouragement* (Verse 11)

Why should we use Biblical discipleship?

In John 10:10, Jesus said that “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.” By these words, Jesus described the fact that we live in a world where the entire creation *groans* and struggles from the satanic effects of *sin* (Read also Romans 8:22).

Because of this groaning and struggling, Jesus also said that He has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly. He went on to describe what having life and having it more abundantly meant in John 10:11-18 when He said how He, as the Good Shepherd, gives His life for the sheep, referring to how He would give us eternal life (Verse 11). Jesus also described how He, unlike a hireling, would not flee when the sheep are under attack, but will care for them so that the sheep know Him, which gives us life more abundantly (Verse 12-14).

Therefore, Jesus came to give us eternal life by dying on the cross for our sins. He also came to give us a better life through a close *relationship* with Him while we are on this earth through the power of God. It is this close relationship that is the *foundation* of Biblical discipleship and the reason why we should do it.

Consider for a moment what the Bible teaches about Jesus when it comes to counseling and discipleship in Isaiah 9:6 and Isaiah 11:1-2:

Isaiah 9:6. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 11:1-2. "(1) And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: (2) And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;"

From these two verses, written centuries before Christ was born, we see that He is the Counsellor and that His counsel is empowered by the Spirit of Counsel, which is one of seven manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is imperative that Biblical discipleship is rooted in the *gospel* of Jesus Christ through faith by the Word of God and that it is *empowered* by the Holy Spirit, not humanistic motivations and principles. (Read also 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Revelation 1:1-8).

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, we can understand what Biblical discipleship is and why we should use it. Hopefully, you will take away the following understanding of Biblical Discipleship:

1. Biblical discipleship is used to identify and understand the *thinking, feelings, and behaviors* that God wants to change
2. Biblical discipleship uses God's *Word* to *change* our thinking and behaviors
3. Biblical discipleship is motivated by the *love* of others and for the *glory* of God

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. Depending on whom you ask, the words "Biblical Discipleship" often brings up different _____.
2. Sadly, a large number of people who provide what they call Christian counseling and discipleship tend to use the Bible like a _____ to pound people into what they think they should be.
3. For those whom have experienced or know of Biblical discipleship done the right way, they know it as _____ - _____.
4. Every life issue will come with its own set of _____ that will often result in more than just one person being upset. Sometimes the _____ to the life issue is worse than the issue.
5. Establishing _____ is necessary so that what is at the heart of the life issue can be openly discussed.

6. Teaching practical ways to deal with the life issue to prevent it from happening again must be done with _____
7. According to John 10:10, Jesus described the fact that we live in a world where the entire creation _____ and struggles from the satanic effects of _____.
8. Jesus also described in John 10:10 how He also came to give us a better life through a close _____ with Him, which is the _____ of Biblical discipleship and the reason why we should do it.
9. It is imperative that Biblical discipleship is rooted in the _____ of Jesus Christ through faith by the Word of God and that it is _____ by the Holy Spirit.
10. Biblical discipleship is used to identify and understand the _____, _____, and _____ that God wants to change.
11. Biblical discipleship uses God's _____ to _____ the thinking and behaviors.
12. Biblical discipleship is motivated by the _____ of others and for the _____ of God

[END OF SESSION]

Session 2: What makes a good Biblical disciple?

In our last session we discussed what is Biblical discipleship and why we use it. We learned that Biblical discipleship is the process whereby we become a student of the Bible and more specifically, a disciple or student of Jesus Christ. We also discussed the encounter that Jesus had with a woman whom was caught in the act of adultery and the truths that the encounter showed us about handling life issues Biblically.

We discussed why we should use Biblical discipleship in light of Jesus dying on the cross to give us eternal life and a better life while we are on this earth. Finally, we considered what the Bible teaches us about Jesus when it comes to counsel and discipleship. We saw that He is the Counselor and His counsel is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Likewise, it is imperative that Biblical discipleship is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ so it will also be empowered by the Holy Spirit

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 9-10. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

What makes a good Biblical disciple?

We have discussed the foundations of Biblical discipleship and why do we use it. However, we have not made much mention about what is necessary to be a good Biblical disciple and how to effectively help others to do the same. It should make sense that if we hope to help someone make *positive change* in their life then we should be able to do it in our *own lives*. Likewise, if we seek to help others to *grow* to be like *Christ*, then we must also be striving to *grow* to be like *Christ*. Finally, we must carefully consider the methods and practices we use to help others.

This does not mean that the person who wants to use God's Word to help others has to have all the answers and never struggle with life issues. It also does not mean that they must have years of training in counseling philosophies and methodologies. Instead, they must have the faith, desire, and willingness to maintain a proper orientation in their own areas of ministry, problem solving, and Spiritual growth. Consider the following when it comes to the orientation in ministry of a good disciple:

Ephesians 4:11-16. (11) "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto

a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (15) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: (16) From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

We see six areas of orientation in ministry of good Biblical discipleship:

1. A good Biblical disciple sees God's *provision*: ministering as a *gifted servant* (v11)
2. A good Biblical disciple sees God's purpose: ministering to equip the saints (v12)
3. A good Biblical disciple sees God's *pattern*: ministering with the *mind* of Christ (v13)
4. A good Biblical disciple sees God's protection: ministering to stop the deception of men (v14)
5. A good Biblical disciple sees God's procedure: ministering by speaking the truth in love (v15)
6. A good Biblical disciple sees God's *plan*: ministering to strengthen the *body of Christ*, to make the body more *efficient*, and to increase the body by encouraging the *love* of one another (v16)

When a person orients their life and ministry to God's provision, purpose, pattern, protection, procedure, and plan, then they have a firm foundation to effectively carry out what God has called them to do in their own life in problem solving and Spiritual growth. Likewise, they have a foundation from which to effectively help others to do the same.

Discussion

Problem solving

Once we have a proper orientation of our life, we can then orient our approach to recognizing and addressing problems. Previously, we looked at the interaction between Jesus and a woman that was caught in the act of adultery as found in John 8:1-11.

John 8:1-11. (1) “Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. (2) And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. (3) And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, (4) They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (5) Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? (6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. (7) So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he

stooped down, and wrote on the ground. (9) And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? (11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

In this passage we not only can see how Jesus dealt with this delicate situation, but we can also see that the woman was not the only person that had a problem. Consider the following questions when reviewing this passage:

1. John 8:1-2. What did Jesus set out to do that day? Did He encounter any problems?

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2. John 8:3. What did the scribes and Pharisees do that interrupted what Jesus was doing? Do you see any problems it caused?

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3. John 8:4-5. What did the scribes and Pharisees say to Jesus? Do you see any problems with what they said?

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4. John 8:6-8. What did Jesus do and what did He say to the scribes and Pharisees? Do you see any problems revealed in the exchange?

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5. John 8:9. What was the reaction by the scribes and Pharisees to what Jesus said? Do you see any problems that were revealed by what Jesus said?

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6. John 8:10-11. Once the scribes and Pharisees left, were there any problems identified that needed to be resolved in the interaction between Jesus and the woman?

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What have we learned?

The point of this discussion was to look at a real-life situation and try to identify as many problems as we can that were part of this event. Some of the problems we see are:

1. John 8:1-2. Jesus set out that morning to go teach in the temple and had no warning that he would encounter any problems. We can learn that many times we encounter problems and situations that we did not expect. It could occur during the most routine part of our day and can cause a great disruption and even create a public spectacle. Therefore, problems should be expected at anytime and anywhere.
2. John 8:3. Jesus was teaching a large group of people when His class was interrupted by the scribes and Pharisees by putting a woman caught in adultery right in the middle of the group. The woman was probably embarrassed and terrified. At the same time, the people that had come to the class were now confronted with not only the interruption of the class, but probably thought there might be trouble because of the actions of the scribes and Pharisees.
3. John 8:4-5. The scribes and Pharisees brought the woman there not because they wanted His advice on what should be done. They brought the woman there because they wanted to put Jesus in a situation where they can put Him on the spot and tempt Him to say or do something wrong so that they can publicly discredit Him. When we are encountering problems, how we handle them may or may not publicly discredit us as Christians.
4. John 8:6-8. Jesus did not react adversely to their actions nor fall into the trap of making a rash decision about what should be done. His answer did not violate the law, but instead made them consider how the law also applied to anyone that wanted to be the judge and executioner in this situation. Likewise, He challenged them to examine themselves to see if they were worthy to carry out the sentence that they wanted. We

must always consider what position God has placed us in and examine our own lives in light of Him.

5. John 8:9. The scribes and Pharisees realized that none of them met the qualifications of being a righteous judge. We see that there was no anticipation of a trial because the mob already had stones in their hands before any trial could take place. When they dropped their stones and left, it was an admission of their own guilt. Likewise, it was the eldest of the group that left first, which testifies to the fact that even the most mature people in the group were unable to claim their own sinlessness. This fact had an impact on the younger members of the mob in that they dropped their stones and left also. As mature Christians, we must be aware of how our actions, or testimony, will influence others less mature in the faith.
6. John 8:10-11. Once the crowd left, Jesus could then turn His attention to the woman that was accused. Once she saw that immediate danger was resolved, then Jesus could challenge her to leave as a free woman, illustrated by the fact that Jesus said He did not condemn her and to “go and sin no more,” His act of love enabled her to grow Spiritually so that she was motivated not to commit adultery any more. We must remember how what we do to help someone should show our willingness to demonstrate the love of Christ, which will motivate them.

We learn from this passage that *problems* should be *expected* at any time. Problems often reveal *sinful thinking* and behaviors as well as *Godly* thinking and behaviors. However, they also provide opportunities to *teach* and *mold* us to be more like *Christ* (Read also Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-27; 1 Peter 1:6-9; 1 Peter 4:12-19; 1 Peter 5:6-11;).

Orientation to growth

A good Biblical disciple does not just see problems as mere difficulties in life. Instead, they see problems as opportunities for growth where God will make us stronger. Consider the following passages:

Romans 5:1-5. (1) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

James 1:2-4. (2) “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; (3) Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. (3) But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

One way to understand growing as a disciple is to look at a Decision Tree. We can then see that changing our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors require us to actively fill our hearts with the *Word of God* and make sure that we are in an *environment* where we can *grow* (See the Decision Tree in Appendix A).

Likewise, we must purpose to have the change of mind that enables us to put off the old ways of doing things and put on the new ways of thinking that will result in changed feelings and behaviors and victory over life issues. Consider the following passage:

Ephesians 4:20-25. (20) "But ye have not so learned Christ; (21) If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: (22) That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (25) Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."

Also, the experience we have gained in our trials must be shared with others so that they can grow and have victory over their life issues. We do not share our sins and trials to glorify the sin or ourselves, but instead to glorify God and to use it as an opportunity to help others that may be experiencing what we have experienced. Consider the following passages:

2 Corinthians 1:3-7. (3) "Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; (4) Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (5) For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. (6) And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. (7) And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation."

Galatians 6:1-7. (1) "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (3) For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. (4) But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. (5) For every man shall bear his own burden. (6) Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. (7) Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Finally, we must keep in mind where we stand in light of God's *grace* and our position in His *plan* when considering our discipleship *methods* and *practices*. Consider the following:

1. Are we learning from Christ's methods of teaching?

We should not only learn as an individual but should also participate in learning in small groups and during public ministry activities (Read also Matthew 4:23-5:2; Mark 4:33-34; 2 Timothy 2:24-26).

2. Are we learning from Christ's philosophy of education?

We should be learning the importance of our *words* and demonstrating by our *actions*. We should also be proving the *wisdom* of God through our *results*. Ultimately, our example will help others learn about Christ's philosophy of education (Read also Mark 3:14; Luke 6:40; Acts 4:13-14).

3. Are we learning from Christ's example of how to handle our situation when we have failed to have victory over life issues?

We should be alert to when trouble is coming and look to Christ as our Victor. At the same time, when failure happens, we must lovingly remind ourselves of the warning signs we saw and why it was important to follow the instructions that God gives in His Word. Finally, we must challenge ourselves to learn from our mistakes and continue to serve in faith (Read also Proverbs 9:8-9; Luke 22:31-34; Luke 22:61-62; John 21;).

Wrapping it up

Considering what we have learned we should now know what is necessary to be a good Biblical disciple to manage our life issues. We should be able to demonstrate our hope to make positive change in our life. Likewise, as we strive to grow to be like Christ, we can use our experience to help others to grow to be like Christ. Finally, we must carefully consider the methods and practices we use in discipleship.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. It should make sense that if we hope to help someone make _____
_____ in their life then we should be able to do it in our _____
_____.
2. Likewise, if we seek to help others to _____ to be like _____, then
we must also be striving to _____ to be like _____.
3. A good Biblical disciple sees God's _____: ministering as a
_____.
4. A good Biblical disciple sees God's _____: ministering with the
_____ of Christ.
5. A good Biblical disciple sees God's _____: ministering to strengthen the
_____; to make the body more _____; and to
increase the body by encouraging the _____ of one another.
6. We learned from Jesus' encounter with the woman in John 8:1-11 that
_____ should be _____ at any time.
7. Problems often reveal _____ and behaviors as well as
_____ thinking and behaviors.
8. Problems can provide opportunities to _____ and _____ us to be
more like _____.
9. Changing our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to what God says we should do
requires us to actively fill our hearts with the _____ of _____ and make sure
that we are in an _____ where we can _____.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 3: How Biblical discipleship differs from other methods

By now, you should have an understanding of what Biblical discipleship is, and why we should do it. When ministering to others through Biblical discipleship or coaching, we will often encounter those who have had non-Biblical counseling, or they have been told that their problems are a result of something that is a medical or psychological illness. Because of this, it is important to understand how non-Biblical counseling and coaching methods may differ from Biblical discipleship. In this session, we will make a comparison of counseling philosophies.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on page 18. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Understanding and evaluating non-Biblical counsel and coaching

It is important that we have a basic understanding of non-Biblical counsel and coaching so that we can make *informed* decisions. Too often, those whom support Biblical counsel criticize other counseling and coaching practitioners and methods without really knowing what they are. If we think about it, how often do we hear someone making wild assumptions and misstatements about Christians and what the Bible teaches?

If we are honest, we would admit that when someone says these things it bothers us. Furthermore, we tend to write off the person making such statements as just another example of an ignorant lost person that does not know Christ as their Savior. This does not mean that we need to go get college degrees in psychology or philosophy to understand non-Biblical counsel, but it helps to have a basic understanding of the same.

No matter what your level of understanding of non-Biblical counsel or coaching is, there is one very important Biblical truth that must be kept in mind: When you know the *normal*, the *abnormal* stands out. Practically speaking, it is very important that we know what the Bible teaches and compare anything we encounter to what the Bible says. If we fail to keep this perspective in mind, we could be easily seduced into believing the philosophies and methods at the expense of the truth of God's Word. This is also important because many of the non-Biblical philosophies and methods of counseling and coaching are very close, but not in the same reasoning and practice. We should also keep in mind that Satan is a master at using seemingly well-reasoned, worldly philosophies and methods to deceive us.

Survey of counseling methods

Basic Psychology

Leader: Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Freud viewed man as an instinctual animal with a three-part mind. One part, which he called the Id, he defined as a part of our personality that produces desires to seek pleasure and satisfy our needs (pleasure principle), The second part, the Ego, he defined as the part of our personality that seeks to control our inner desires to avoid social conflicts and make our behaviors efficient (reality principle). Finally, the third part, the Superego, he defined as the value system or moral beliefs by which one lives their life.

Freud believed that man's problems resulted from a conflict between Id (desires) and the Superego (morals). He certainly had that right. However, he also thought man was not responsible for *behaviors* because he is by nature an *animal*. Because of this he thought guilt was nothing more than a faulty value system or moral beliefs.

From this philosophy, Freud thought the goal of counseling should be to free the desires of the Id, nurture the Ego so you are acceptable to society, and find an acceptable value system. When a person experiences troubling life issues, they must then find an acceptable source of truth or expert to guide them whom will not impute guilt because they were simply a victim of not knowing how to cope.

Behaviorism

Leader: B.F. Skinner (1904-1990)

Skinner viewed man as a conditioned animal whose mind is a blank slate molded by experience, which made man an unknowing observer. He believed that man's problems result from *environmental* failure and lack of *rewards*. Man is not responsible for his behaviors because he is a victim of bad experiences or environment. Feelings of guilt are not important.

From this philosophy, Skinner thought the goal of counseling should be to restructure or provide a better environment for man. Likewise, when the environment changes, the standards should change to match the environment. The counselor is simply a technician to help the person get to a better situation in life.

Humanism (New Age)

Leader: Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

Rogers viewed man as basically *good* with the *potential* within himself to do or be anything he wants to be. When man has good feelings about himself, it unleashes his potential for greatness.

Rogers believed that man's problems were a result of a lack of training and encouragement to prepare him how to manage different environments or situations. Man

is not responsible for his behaviors because he was not adequately prepared to deal with life's issues.

From this philosophy, Rogers thought the goal of counseling was to help man embrace creative and self-empowered forces so that he can use them as a basis to focus on positive thoughts that will create a comfort with himself. The counselor is simply a mirror that reflects back to the person what he needs to see.

Biblical (Christ-Centered)

Leader: Jesus Christ (eternity past – eternity future)

Jesus' view of man is that he was created by God (Genesis 1:26); Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27); and man was created for God's pleasure (Revelation 4:11).

Jesus believes that man's problems are a result of him being a *fallen sinner* by choice and that he is drawn away by his own *lusts* from being what God wants him to be (James 1:13). Man is responsible for his behaviors and guilt is the result of sin, which violates God's standards.

From this philosophy, Jesus taught that the goal of counseling and discipleship is to share the truth of salvation by grace through faith so that man sees his own sin and its penalty. Then once man realizes he is a sinner and there is only one Person that can remedy his situation, he accepts the gift of salvation by grace through faith. At that moment man is given the power to overcome all life issues through the wisdom and power of Christ (1 Corinthians 2; Philippians 4:13; James 1:2-7). The focus of discipleship is then to progress in holiness (grow in Christ) by using the Word of God as the source of truth and the Holy Spirit for the power to change. This then enables man to deal with sin and his response to events Biblically (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 2:1-5).

It does not matter whom it is, we humans have three basic motivators for our behavior that are selfish in origins: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (Genesis 3:6; 1 John 2:15-17). No one is immune to these motivators and to say otherwise is prideful. Therefore, Biblical discipleship breakthroughs occur when the person Biblically examines their heart in a way that exposes their motivation for how they are handling their life issues (Galatians 5:14-23; 1 John 1:6-2:10).

A disciple helping others must then take the time and patience to build trust so that the person needing help knows that you are there to understand their experience and help. When the person is taught to see the connections between their behaviors, their feelings, and their thoughts, great progress is made. This is provided that they have a belief system that includes personal guilt and shame toward sin with respect for others and God. If not, their motivation for change is only fear of what may happen if they do not change. To break the cycle and root cause thinking of the harmful behaviors generated from feelings,

you must show them a way to be inspired to change without intimidation. That inspiration comes from our love of Christ because of what He did for us (Read also 1 John 4:19).

Examples of counseling and Biblical discipleship differences

In practice, depending on which technique is used, the following real-life examples were reported by people that had unsuccessful outcomes with non-Biblical counseling. Read each example and discuss what Biblical advice we could give.

Discussion

1. Resolving marriage issues and headed toward divorce:

The non-Biblical counselor advised a patient that when his wife left him, he needed to vent his frustration and forgive himself because his wife, whom the counselor never met, was at fault so she should be blamed. (Read also Proverbs 18:13, 15; Ephesians 5:25-28; James 1:19-26; 1 Peter 3:7-12).



2. Stress, anxiety, and panic attacks:

After one visit, the non-Biblical counselor advised a patient that her panic attacks were part of a fear she had hidden from when she was a child that she could not remember. He prescribed anti-anxiety medications and had her meet weekly to talk about her childhood fears, which she could not ever identify. After several months she gave up and resolved herself to learning to live with her condition. (Read also Psalms 56:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:7; Philippians 4:4-9).



3. Unfaithfulness in marriage:

A woman was cheating on her husband and felt overwhelming guilt because of what she was doing. She went to see a non-Biblical counselor that told her on her first visit that she should not feel guilty because it was obviously something she needed that her husband was not providing. He had her follow up each week to see how she was doing. During their sessions, he wanted to know the details of each affair and made comments about how it was okay to satisfy her desires. She reported that she was really feeling very guilty about what she had been doing so the doctor gave her a prescription to make her feel better. He then told her that the problem was that she had been raised to think what she was doing was wrong. He advised that she needed to have more affairs until she no longer felt guilty. She increased her affairs to about

3-5 different men a week and was experiencing a deep remorse and desire to end her own life. (Read also Matthew 5:27-30; Matthew 18:15-22; Luke 17:3-4; James 5:16).



What have we learned from our discussion?

1. Resolving marriage issues and headed toward divorce:

The Biblical approach to this person's life issue was to identify the sinful roots of his own behaviors that may have contributed to the problems and invite his wife to come for discipleship. She refused but was willing to come in separately one week and talk about her husband's issues. Because she was able to tell her side of the story, was treated with empathy and was not blamed for everything going wrong in the marriage, a greater appreciation for what went wrong was gained. She later agreed to come in to work out some issues that really bothered her and she eventually began Biblical counseling with her husband and Christ saved their marriage.

2. Stress, anxiety, and panic attacks:

The lady decided to call and set up an appointment for Biblical counseling, On the first visit, it was discovered that she could not identify anything in her mind that she was thinking about when she had the feelings of fear. It was also noted that it had been several years since she had a routine physical. She was advised to get a checkup to see if there might be a medical issue and it was discovered she had a bowel disorder and an overactive thyroid, which produced the feelings of fear. With medical treatment and Biblical counseling on how to recognize and address fear, her "fear" went away.

3. Unfaithfulness in marriage:

The woman whom was cheating on her husband realized it was just a matter of time before she contracted a sexually transmitted disease. She contacted a local church counseling ministry and made an appointment. On her first visit, she told the counselor everything that had happened and begged for their help because she could not continue to live with the guilt. The counselor responded by telling her that her guilt was caused because she was sinning against her husband by committing adultery. He added that God can restore their marriage and deliver her from the lifestyle and behaviors that were weighing heavily on her mind, but that she had to do it on God's terms. He then presented the gospel to her and explained how Christ could deliver her from her sinful guilt and give her the power to have a wonderful marriage. She trusted Christ as her Savior. After a few weeks she agreed that she needed to confess her sin to her husband. With the advice and guidance of the Biblical counselor, she had her husband come to her next appointment where she humbly confessed her sin

and asked for his forgiveness and help to be faithful. He agreed and with time their marriage was restored. She used her story as a testimony of God's power and grace, then devoted her life to learning and working as a Biblical counselor for ladies struggling with sexual sin.

Psychological drug treatment

There is a great amount of controversy when it comes to the use of psychological drugs to deal with mental and behavioral health issues. Each medication comes with its own reason for use and the effectiveness varies greatly. This has resulted in such bodies as the European Union to place more focus on the counseling delivered and decreased use of medication in many situations. At the same time, many mental health professionals in the United States regularly prescribe medication for the treatment of their patients.

We are in no position to give any *advice* or *instructions* when it comes to the use of *medications* to treat mental illnesses other than to tell whomever they are helping to follow the advice and direction of their health care professionals. Furthermore, if someone on psychological drugs describes any potential *desire* to *harm* themselves or others, strongly advise that they talk to their health care provider. If they appear to be struggling with coping and there is any thought in your mind that they need help, encourage them to call their health care provider or even offer to take them to a hospital. The bottom line is that the Biblical disciple's role is not to make a *diagnosis*. Instead, the Biblical disciple should be an advocate for the *health* and *safety* of any person that needs immediate help no matter who it is.

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, we should have an idea how Biblical discipleship differs from other methods of counseling. This will provide us with some of the knowledge we may need to make informed decisions. At the same time, we will be better prepared to recognize when we may need to encourage the person, we are trying to help to seek the advice of their health care provider or engage emergency medical personnel.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. It is important that we have a basic understanding of non-Biblical counseling and coaching so that we can make _____ decisions.
2. When you know the _____, the _____ stands out.
3. Freud thought man was not responsible for _____ because he is by nature an _____.
4. Skinner believed that man's problems result from _____ failure and lack of _____.
5. Rogers viewed man as basically _____ with the _____ within himself to do or be anything he wants to be.
6. Jesus believes that man's problems were a result of him being a _____ by choice and that he is drawn away by his own _____ from being what God wants him to be (James 1:13).
7. We are in no position to give any _____ or _____ when it comes to the use of _____ to treat mental illnesses.
8. If someone on psychological drugs describes any potential _____ to _____ themselves or others, strongly advise that they talk to their health care provider.
9. The Biblical disciple's role is not to make a _____. Instead, the Biblical disciple should be an advocate for the _____ and _____ of any person that needs immediate help no matter who it is.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 4: Biblical study and interpretation

In our last session we learned about counseling methods. We saw the importance of having a basic understanding of Biblical counsel and coaching so that we can make informed decisions. We learned that no matter what your level of understanding is, it is important to keep in mind the concept that: when you know the normal the abnormal stands out.

We also surveyed different counseling methods and looked at a few examples of people that were given non-Biblical counsel. We then considered what Biblical advice to give. In addition, we discussed psychological drug treatments and how we are in no position to tell anyone what to do about medications and what to do if we think someone may do harm to themselves or others. Finally, we learned that a Biblical disciple's role is not to make a diagnosis, but only to be an advocate for the health and safety of anyone needing help.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on page 25. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Biblical study and interpretation

In order to help others using the Word of God, it is important that we have a solid *foundation* when it comes to Biblical study and *interpretation*. There are two reasons for this. First, so that we have the skills necessary to study the Bible and discern its truth and life application. Second, so that we can take what we have learned and use it to teach those needing help. (Read also 2 Timothy 2:2). Consider the following:

Isaiah 50:4-9. (4) "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is weary*: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. (5) The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. (6) I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (7) For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. (8) *He is near that justifieth me*; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is mine adversary*? let him come near to me. (9) Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who *is he that shall condemn me*? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up."

Although these words were part of a prophecy concerning the teaching ministry of Jesus, they apply to each one of us as we take what God has taught us and share it with others. There will be times when we are tempted to quit sharing what we learn. There will be times when we suffer the *persecution* of those whom *belittle* what we have to say and may even do things to hurt us. However, we must remember that God will help us to *think* clearly. He will give us the assurance we need to be confident and not shy away from sharing His truth.

Remember, in light of eternity, it is through God that we can be assured that no one will have victory over the Word of God that we have shared. It is God that has called us to minister to others with His Word and no one can condemn it. It is God that will not allow us as His children to be eternally mocked and no one will persevere in their efforts to mock God. However, to have this assurance and the tools we need to represent God's Word to the world, we must have His Holy Spirit in us as believers. Likewise, we must study and take upon us the whole armor of God (Read also Ephesians 1:1-14; Ephesians 6:10-20). We must be engaged in private and public studies; be open to comfort and encourage one another not to be hindered by the failures of the past; and work together to take what we have learned and use it to help change the lives of others.

Discussion

1. What does Nehemiah 8:1-18 teach us about the prominence and practice of public preaching and teaching, reading, and learning from the Bible?

Nehemiah 8:1-8. (1) “And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. (2) And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. (3) And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. (4) And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. (5) And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: (6) And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. (7) Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah,

Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. (8) So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.”

2. What does Nehemiah 8:9-12 teach us about how teaching the Bible to those with life issues who can have various emotional results that require us to help comfort and encourage them to not be hindered by the past?

Nehemiah 8:9-12. (9) “And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. (10) Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength. (11) So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. (12) And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.”

3. What does Nehemiah 8:13-18 teach us about how people with changed lives will go forward to help change the lives of others?

Nehemiah 8:13-18 (13) “And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.(14) And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: (15) And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. (16) So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. (17) And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. (18) Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.”

What have we learned from our discussion?

1. Nehemiah 8:1-8. The people gathered themselves together as one body. The time spent in study was no short session. It involved everyone of all ages that had the ability to understand what was being taught. The people listened intently to what the Word said. The teachers stood in a place where everyone could see and hear them. There was a blessing of the Lord. The people responded openly to what was being taught

and humbled themselves and worshipped the Lord. There were others that reinforced the reading and helped the people to understand so they could see the sense of why it applied to their lives.

2. Nehemiah 8:9-12. Several teachers were involved in teaching the people. They stressed how what God was doing that day was holy and that they should not mourn nor weep because of what they heard. Instead, they should use what they had learned and celebrate what God had done. Likewise, they should share the blessing they had received with others. They should also not look back and dwell in the sorrow and grief of their broken past but use their new-found joy as a strength to go forward together to do great and wonderful things demonstrating that they understood what God had done.
3. Nehemiah 8:13-18. After the conviction and conversion of the hearts of the people, they followed up by seeking what God wanted them to do with their changed lives. They discovered what God wanted them to do and they went out to do the work of the Lord. They served as missionaries, imbedded with the people to share in their victories and establish preaching, teaching, and opportunities for others to learn.

Principles to use when studying and interpreting the Bible

Too often, we approach our difficulties in life by getting some book or study guide and following along with the steps laid out to come to what should be a successful resolution. However, *outside* of the Bible, no book can see where your *heart* is in that moment of time when you are *struggling*. Likewise, we all have different experiences and opinions that are a big part of who we are that might need to be resolved before we can move forward.

Therefore, we need something that is dynamic — something that can go off the beaten path of the outline when a roadblock is encountered, and a detour must be made. We need something that can apply just the right words and just the right wisdom at just the right time, right when it is most needed, to make just the right changes. That something is the Bible. However, to learn how to use the Bible we must do certain things.

First, we must trust that God will provide the *wisdom* we need as well as the *results* when we apply His *Word* to the situation at hand. Second, we must make the effort to invest the *time* and energy into *studying* the Bible so that we are *familiar* with what God says and how it applies in certain scenarios and situations.

Likewise, we must take what we have learned and apply it to our own lives so we can see firsthand how God is faithful in handling every situation. Then, when we are trying to help someone and we encounter their unique situation, the *Holy Spirit* will bring to mind the *Scripture verses* that *apply* at the time they are most needed (Read also Psalms 1:1-6;

Psalms 119:9-16; Psalms 119:97-105; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 2 Timothy 2:1-7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:5-8).

Third, it is critical that we are faithful to *study* in a way that we *learn* and can *remember* what we are *taught*. The following suggestions will help you remember the things that you are taught and cause you to gain the most from your study:

1. Deliberately schedule a specific time each day to do your study and read your Bible when you are mentally fresh and not in a hurry. If necessary, schedule your study time as an appointment on your calendar and make sure you are prepared to start on time. This includes adjusting your bedtime if needed so that you are mentally fresh. Even if you do not feel like studying, deliberately make the effort to study during the time that you have scheduled.
2. Set up a study space where you can do your study that is quiet and prevents you from being interrupted or distracted. Gather everything you need to study and keep these things together in your study space or a place where they are readily available when it is time to study.
3. Before starting, pray that God will give you the wisdom and discernment that you need to be mentally focused and fully alert so that you can understand and remember what you are learning. Pray that He will prevent any distractions that would stop you from making the best use of the time that you have scheduled.
4. If you are considering doing this course with someone else, ask that the person and/or others commit to God and each other that they will faithfully attend the sessions and earnestly pray and support one another as you go through the course.

Finally, we must keep in mind certain *rules* or *factors* of Bible study that will help us to make sure we are allowing God's Words and wisdom to apply and not *our own*. Consider the following 15 rules or factors of Bible study¹:

- Rule #1: The Context Factor. It is important that we study every *verse* and every *passage* of the Bible in light of its *context*. If we fail to consider the context factor, we will give a meaning to Bible verses that God did not intend
- Rule #2: The People Factor. It is important that we understand that the Bible is written to three types of people: Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God. Keeping these in mind as well as the divisions between the saved and unsaved will prevent us from misapplying Scripture to the wrong people
- Rule #3: The Time Factor. The Bible has divisions of time when certain passages applied to the people of that day. Therefore, we must properly consider these divisions to properly understand the message applying to that time

¹ First Baptist Church of Jackson "How to study the Bible course"

- Rule #4: The Application Factor. The Bible always has a life application. If it didn't, it would not change lives. Likewise, wrongly considering the application factor, will lead us to wrong application and counsel from God's Word
- Rule #5: The Individual Word Factor. God has chosen every event and every individual word in the Bible for a specific purpose. Therefore, we can also understand that every word of the Bible is needed to understand God's intended thoughts, message, concepts, and ideas. Failure to do so will result in us misunderstanding God
- Rule #6: The Comparison Factor. No part of Scripture is of any private interpretation. All interpretations are done by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Therefore, it is important that we compare the Scripture to other verses in the Bible to be clear about what God is saying (Read also 2 Peter 1:20-21)
- Rule #7: The Creation Factor. God has used creation to demonstrate to us things about God or other things related to creation and the Creator. This enables us to better understand the invisible things of God by the creation, which He made
- Rule #8: The Apparent Contradiction Factor. There are no *contradictions* in the Bible, only "apparent *contradictions*." Apparent contradictions do not mean the Bible is wrong, it means that you have not studied enough to understand what God is teaching
- Rule #9: The Consistency Factor. The Bible has to be understood in the light of God's consistency. In the Bible, what is true is always true, because God's truth is absolute
- Rule #10: The Literal Factor. This factor is a standard that makes sure that we always take a passage literally unless it is impossible to take it literally or we have clear instruction from the Bible that we are dealing with symbolism
- Rule #11: The Attitude Factor. If we have a predetermined attitude about what the Bible says and we encounter something that contradicts what we have been taught or believe, we might not be willing to accept what the Bible says. Therefore, we must examine what we have been taught in light of Scripture and change what we believe
- Rule #12: The Clarity Factor. Many times, people will approach a difficult passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they think it means. Comparing Scriptures with other passages is a good practice but discounting other passages that *contradict* or disagree with what we *think* a passage means is not a good *practice*. We should never violate a clear passage of Scripture when we are trying to understand an obscure passage of Scripture
- Rule #13: The Question Factor. If we take a passage of Scripture and assume it is presenting an answer to a question that is not true, it can lead some people to assume a truth that is not there
- Rule #14: The Confirmation Factor. We must never base doctrine on one verse or passage. We must confirm doctrine by finding other verses in the Bible that confirm the doctrinal truth
- Rule #15: The Maturity Factor. From the first moment we read the Bible until the last verse we ever read, we should be maturing in our understanding and wisdom in

applying God's Word to any situation. As we mature in our faith, we understand more through our faith

These 15 rules of Bible study will help to ensure that you are not *deceived* in your knowledge and *understanding* of God's Word (Read also Isaiah 55:8-9; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 3:1-2; Ephesians 4:13-15; 2 Peter 3:18).

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, we should keep in mind that in order to help others using the Word of God, the person doing the helping must have a solid foundation when it comes to Biblical study and interpretation. This is so that the helper has the skills necessary to study the Bible and discern its truth and life application and they can take what they have learned and use it to teach those they help.

Finally, we learned that we must study the Bible and practice in our own lives what the Bible calls us to do when dealing with our own issues. This way we can trust what the Holy Spirit brings to mind when we are ministering to others.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. In order to help others using the Word of God, it is important that we have a solid _____ when it comes to Biblical study and _____.
2. There will be times when we suffer the _____ of those whom _____ what we have to say and may even do things to hurt us. However, we must remember that God will help us to _____ clearly.
3. _____ of the Bible, no book can see where your _____ is in that moment of time when you are _____.

4. We must trust that God will provide the _____ we need as well as the _____ when we apply His _____ to the situation at hand.
5. We must make the effort to invest the _____ and energy into _____ the Bible so that we are _____ with what God says and how it applies in certain scenarios and situations.
6. When we are trying to help someone and we encounter their unique situation, the _____ will bring to mind the _____ that _____ at the time they are most needed.
7. It is critical that we are faithful to _____ in a way that we _____ and can _____ what we are _____.
8. We must keep in mind certain _____ or _____ of Bible study that will help us to make sure we are allowing God's Words and wisdom to apply and not _____.
9. It is important that we study every _____ and every _____ of the Bible in light of its _____.
10. There are no _____ in the Bible, only "apparent _____."
11. Comparing Scriptures with other passages is a good practice, but discounting other passages that _____ or disagree with what we _____ a passage means is not a good _____.
12. Rules of Bible study will help to ensure that you are not _____ in your knowledge and _____ of God's Word.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 5: The Heart of Biblical change

In our last session we learned about Biblical study and interpretation. We found that in order to help others using the Word of God, it is important that the person doing the helping has a solid foundation when it comes to Biblical study and interpretation. This is so that we have the skills necessary to study the Bible and discern its truth and life application. Likewise, it is so that we can take what we have learned and use it to teach those that need help.

We must also make the effort to invest the time and energy into studying the Bible. As we apply it to our own lives, we can see firsthand how God is faithful in handling every situation. It is critical that we are faithful to study in a way that we learn and can remember what we are taught. We can do this by being diligent about how, when, and where we study. Finally, we learned Bible study rules or factors that will help us to make sure that we are learning what God wants us to know and reduce the chance that we will misinterpret or misunderstand what is said.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 32-33. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

The Heart of Biblical Change

All counseling and discipleship requires an understanding of people. However, only the Bible addresses the *nature* of man at his most basic level, at his *soul* and *spirit*. While the world may attempt to define and guide man, ignoring his soul and spirit leaves any such definitions and efforts without foundation. However, when the *soul* and *spirit* of a person is understood, explaining man's *motivations* and *behaviors* becomes very clear.

In a previous lesson we learned how feelings influence the choices we make. We saw how the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride draw us away from what God wants us to be and do, which results in the conception of sin. The only way we can counter act these innate lusts and desires is to arm ourselves with something that is more powerful. This is where the Holy Spirit comes in. He enables us to overcome these innate lusts and desires so that we can live vibrant and holy lives (Read also James 1:12-15).

It is important that for anyone to have victory over sin they must have the Holy Spirit in them, and they must be willing to regularly study the Bible and prepare themselves to make the right choices. Without the *Holy Spirit*, we are powerless to overcome Satan's *tempting*, *deception*, and seduction to *live* for him. This is because Satan is a fallen angel

with supernatural powers that he uses to influence the world through lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride (Read also Genesis 3:6; 1 John 2:15-16; James 4:1-10). It is important that we also have the will to fight. However, this will to fight is used by committing ourselves to trust and allow the Holy Spirit to do our fighting for us (Read also Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-6).

We must always keep in mind that God has done a miracle in our lives by saving us from death in trespasses and sins. God saved us and gave us the power to no longer be subject to fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind. God saved us and removed us from being a child in the family of wrath and made us a child in His glorious family of blessing. God saved us and by His mercy and love He quickened us, or gave us a new life, being born again, not of the flesh, but by the Spirit. God saved us so that He might demonstrate to us the riches of His grace and kindness. God saved us so that He might demonstrate to us how by His power we have victory over death. God saved us!

When we fully realize what God did for us in our heart of hearts, it is a moving experience. It is a moment that we realize how pitiful and weak we were without Him. It is a moment that we realize the *darkness* of our *hearts* and how we need the power and a way to leave the darkness of the *past* and come into the *light* of the *future*. It is a moment that we realize that only by His grace we were saved, but through our faith that was formed the moment we realized the truth of Who He really is and what He really did for us on the cross. It is a moment that we cry out, Abba, Father, in our hearts to forgive us and take us into His family (Read also Galatians 4:1-7; Romans 8:10-17). It is a moment when He gives us a new Spirit and a new heart that gives us new desires to love and serve Him because He first loved us (Read also Ezekiel 11:19-20; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Ezekiel 36:24-28; 1 John 4:19).

It is also a moment when we realize that after what He did for us, it is our reasonable service that we give ourselves as a living sacrifice to Him, holy, pure, and acceptable in His sight. It is our reasonable service that we no longer conform to the lusts of this world. Instead, we allow Him to transform us, renewing our minds, so that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of our new Father (Read also Romans 8:10-17; Romans 12:1-2).

Discussion

In a previous session we mentioned the Decision Tree found in Appendix A. Let's take a few minutes to examine it and consider the following:

1. All humans make choices in life. What does the Decision Tree teach us about pleasing God and pleasing self when making decisions?



2. Our choices in life cause consequences. What does the Decision Tree teach us about the consequences of our choices?



3. Over time making the same decisions becomes easier. What does the Decision Tree teach us about why it can be hard to make different choices?



4. Every time we come to a decision point it reveals something about our heart. What does the Decision Tree teach us about every decision we make?



5. Our decisions are influenced by feelings, lusts, and beliefs. What does the Decision Tree teach us about what God says and what man says that we believe in our hearts that is the foundation of our decisions?



6. What we do to make changes in our life requires us to take action to make the changes. What does the Decision Tree teach us about the actions we must take to make lasting changes in our decisions?



What have we learned?

1. Pleasing God and pleasing self in our decisions: Pleasing God is based on the logic of God's Word and what "He" says. Pleasing self is based on pleasing self and what "I" say.
2. The consequences of our choice: Choosing to please God is hard but gets easier with time and results in God's approval of our works and help. Choosing to please

self is easy but gets harder with time and results in God's rejection of our works and withholding of His help.

3. Why it can be hard to make different choices: Over time our decisions become habits, which are harder to break the longer we have been doing what we have decided.
4. Every decision we make: Our decisions are an act of worship and reveals what is in our heart.
5. What God says and what man says that we believe: God says our goal in life is to please "Him": man says our goal in life is to please "me". We please God by becoming like His Son and we please ourselves by becoming like the world.
6. Actions we must take to make lasting changes in our decisions: We become like Christ by hiding His word in our heart. We become like the world by hiding the world's words in our heart.

Deciding to make Biblical change

Now that we have an understanding of the role of the heart in making Biblical change we must consider what we can do when it comes to making the right decisions. Making the right *decisions* is more than doing the right thing: it is doing the right thing for the *right reasons*. In other words, we can do the right thing because we "know" it is the right thing to do. Or we can do the right thing because we are convicted in our heart to do the right thing to please the Lord. Biblically speaking, no matter what a person does, if it is not done in love, it is of no profit (Read also 1 Corinthians 13:1-3). Likewise, if it is not done in faith, it is sin (Romans 14:17-23).

Therefore, we should be motivated to demonstrate our *love* for *God* by loving, or esteeming, our *neighbor* above ourselves in a way that would *please* us if we were in their *situation* (Read also Mark 12:31). Likewise, our effectiveness in helping someone to make Biblical change means demonstrating a genuine love of Christ to them. To do any less would leave us trying to help by our own strength and our own motivations, which does not glorify God. We must always make it clear that it is Christ that has *inspired* us to *sacrificially* help them. This will help them to *trust* us to help them and *listen* to what we have to say about *Christ* (Read also Philippians 2:1-11).

As they respond to our Christ like love, we reinforce that it is Christ that motivates, enables, and empowers us to help them. When they become interested in what Christ did for us that makes us so kind and loving to them, we can patiently share what Christ teaches about what they are going through. If we have experienced having victory over the same life issue, we may even share how Christ helped us when we went through it.

In any case, we must always point them back to Christ and what He did for us. With time, it is our desire that their heart changes so that they want to have a relationship with Christ

that inspires and empowers them to live for him. We must also encourage those we help to get involved with *discipleship*, which involves studying, learning, fellowshiping with other believers and coming to church where they can meet others that *love Christ*. In time, they will grow in their ability to make good decisions (Read also Acts 2:26-47). With this foundation, we have the ability to make good decisions. However, it is in the midst of these decisions that our hearts are tested and revealed.

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, we should keep in mind that making Biblical change takes place in the heart. Therefore, a person needs a new heart received at salvation to even have the supernatural power to make change. Likewise, As Biblical disciples, we too must have the gift of salvation and be skilled at using the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit and the armor of God to fight our own Spiritual battles. We must also be motivated to help others by our love of Christ and readily demonstrate the same to others. Likewise, we must always point those we help back to Christ as their source of inspiration and power to make the right changes and decisions in their lives. Finally, understanding the details of making Biblical *decisions* should help us to *target* our efforts in making change in *our* lives as well as helping *others* to do the same.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. Only Biblical counseling addresses the _____ of man at his most basic level, at his _____ and _____.
2. When the _____ and _____ of a person is understood, explaining mans' _____ and _____ becomes very clear.

3. Without the _____, _____, we are subject to Satan's _____, _____, and seduction to _____ for him.
4. God made us realize the _____ of our _____ and how we need the power and a way to leave the darkness of the _____ and come into the _____ of the _____.
5. Making the right _____ is more than doing the right thing: It is doing the right thing for the _____.
6. We should be motivated to demonstrate our _____ for God by loving, or esteeming, our _____ above ourselves in a way that would _____ us if we were in their _____.
7. We must always make it clear that it is Christ that has _____ us to _____ help them. This will help them to _____ us to help them and _____ to what we have to say about _____.
8. We must also encourage those we help to get involved with _____, which involves studying, learning, fellowshiping with other believers and coming to church where they can meet others that _____.
9. Understanding the details of making Biblical _____ should help us to _____ our efforts in making change in _____ lives and helping _____ to do the same.
10. Every _____ is an act of _____.
11. We please God by becoming _____ His _____.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 6: Spiritual growth

In our last session we learned about the heart of Biblical change. We looked at how feelings influence the choices we make and how we must have the Holy Spirit in us and regularly study the Bible to have victory over sin.

We reviewed the Decision Tree and saw how our decisions are influenced by what is in our heart. We also learned that our actions result from feelings, which result from what we value and believe. Finally, we learned that making a Biblical change should be motivated by our love of God for the right reasons through faith, encouraging the same to others we help.

Previous session Checkpoint review

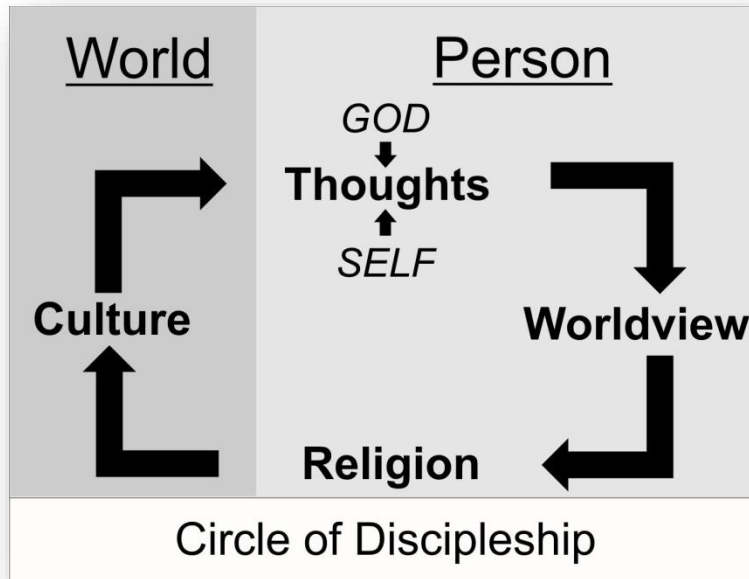
Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 38-39. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Spiritual growth

If you take a human anthropology course at most colleges, you will study human societies, cultures, and their evolution. However, they do not adequately address the beliefs of the culture other than to address how some of the cultural practices came from their beliefs. Likewise, there is little discussion about how many of these beliefs and practices have any *foundation* in a *moral code* such as the *Ten Commandments* or how they came to be in the first place.

Without a *moral code*, any *cultural* norms that are in keeping with current day practices are *embraced* and those that are not are *rejected*. For example, there was a time when there was a clear understanding about what makes a culture exceptional because of a moral foundation. However, today, many people will equate *greatness*, not with a moral *foundation*, but with *ideological* ones that have proven to be disastrous throughout history. Yet, the excuse is given that the reason they failed was not because it had no moral foundation, but because they were not smart or wise enough to make it work.

They ignore the truth that man was created in the image of God and was given the ability to think, formulate beliefs, adopt a standard of living, and live out his beliefs as part of the culture. However, if there is a different basis of thought, man's beliefs will change to produce a different standard of living, which will produce different practical and cultural effects. This process of *change* and *growth* in the nature and character of man is demonstrated in the Circle of *Discipleship*:



We see from the diagram that our thoughts are influenced by either **God** or **self** (Romans 8:5-7). Our thoughts form our **worldview, which is** our beliefs about right and wrong. Our worldview forms our **religion** or standards of behavior and how we will live our life. Our religion forms our **culture** both individually and collectively. Our culture then **reinforces** or changes our thoughts about God or ourselves. The completed cycle produces positive or negative Spiritual **growth**.

Previously, we learned that what lies at the heart of man is responsible for the decisions he makes and how he lives his life. The question then becomes, who rules the throne in the heart of man? Is it God or is it man? Which Scripture does man hold true in his heart, Romans 12:1-3 or Jeremiah 17:5-11?

Romans 12:1-3. (1) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (3) For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Jeremiah 17:5-11. (5) "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. (6) For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not

inhabited. (7) Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. (8) For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (9) The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (10) I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings. (11) As the partridge sitteth *on eggs*, and hatcheth *them* not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.”

How do we grow Spiritually?

When we are born as human babies, we need someone to care for us, teach us, feed us, and help clean up our messes. It is the same when we trust Christ as our Saviour, we are born again into His family as babies in the faith. We also need someone to care for us, teach us, feed us, and help us clean up our messes. This help is needed so that we grow up into the maturity of Jesus. This *Spiritual* growth then *enables* us to be *victorious* in life and to be prepared to help others *grow*.

Discussion

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and consider what Paul is saying about Spiritual growth and the effects of it being hindered.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4. (1) “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. (2) I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. (3) For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? (4) For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?”

1. What does 1 Corinthians 3:1 say about those whom are not Spiritually mature and how we should minister to them?



2. What does 1 Corinthians 3:2 say about how those whom are not Spiritually mature need to be fed?



3. What does 1 Corinthians 3:3 say about the condition of those whom are not Spiritually mature and what their condition leads to?



4. What does 1 Corinthians 3:4 say about those whom are not Spiritually mature and their choice of leadership?



What have we learned?

1. 1 Corinthians 3:1. Those that are not Spiritually mature cannot understand sermons that go into deep theological or abstract ideas. Therefore, they need preaching that uses examples and connects life application principles in ways they can understand.



2. 1 Corinthians 3:2. Those that are not Spiritually mature cannot understand teaching that does not meet them where they are at no matter what level. Therefore, they need discipleship training that can address their Spiritual maturity at all levels using differing methods.

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3. 1 Corinthians 3:3. Those that are not Spiritually mature do not know how to live a changed life for Jesus Christ. Therefore, they need someone that will help them learn how to mature in their walk and testimony as a Christian.

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4. 1 Corinthians 3:4. Those that are not Spiritually mature will tend to have favorite human teachers as their source of wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, they need a variety of teachers and adoption by the whole church to reinforce a need to seek Christ as their source of wisdom and knowledge (Read also 1 Corinthians 3:18-23).

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If we think about it, what happens when a baby does not grow? In pediatrics, a baby that stops growing is often diagnosed with “Failure to Thrive.” This is usually discovered when their physical growth is lagging behind others their age. There is often a deficiency in mental and motor skills identified, which limits their ability to do the normal things other children their age should be doing. This calls for extra care and attention so that they can develop normally and live a fully functional and productive life.

In the same way, *babies* in Christ can have a “*Failure to Thrive.*” They will often exhibit the same tendencies we saw in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and will need attention so that they can develop Spiritually to live fully *functional* and productive lives for *Christ*. Without intervention, they will have limits on their understanding of doctrine; knowing right from wrong; recognizing their own faults; getting along with others; having victory over sin; and living in ways that please God (Read also 1 Corinthians 3:5-23; 2 Corinthians 4).

The process of Spiritual growth is often called progressive *sanctification*. Sanctification is a term that describes a change toward holiness that takes place in the believer as they strive toward becoming like Christ. Describing it as *progressive* sanctification means that the person should be progressing toward being *holier* with each passing day. Practically

speaking, this involves making certain *practices* like Bible study, prayer, fellowship, church attendance, serving in local church ministries, and sharing the *gospel* part of our routine each *week* (Read also Romans 8:26-30; 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; 2 Peter 3:17-18).

Since this is what believers should be doing, then it is important that the local *church* considers how to integrate *Spiritual* growth into all of their *ministries*. Unfortunately, many churches today think that all they need to do is offer a Sunday School class and maybe a prayer meeting sometime during the week so that people will grow. These certainly can help, but there needs to be more than just a passive approach to Spiritual growth. There needs to be a personal approach whereby each person in the local church has the opportunity to be *paired up* with others that will help them *grow* or to help others grow. This process is referred to as *discipleship* in that there is a teacher and a disciple, or student.

This is because the intervention needed to enable a person to have Spiritual growth is part of the mission of the church. It is a very important part of helping believers of all maturity levels not only grow in their own maturity, but also to train them up so that they may train others to do the same (Read also Acts 2:41-47; Acts 11:19-30; Ephesians 4:1-16; Hebrews 5:12-6:1; 2 Timothy 2:2). Biblically, we see in Luke 2:25-52 that even Jesus grew physically, Spiritually, in wisdom, and favour in God's grace, which enabled Him at the tender age of 13 to teach the Doctors of the Law in the Temple.

With all of these things in mind, there are several things to consider about progressive sanctification. While progressive sanctification results in Spiritual growth, it is a never-ending process that continues until the moment that we are finally standing before the Lord in person. Unfortunately, some have taken liberty to teach other variations of this that are unscriptural:

1. Stair step works-based salvation approach

Seeking God's approval begins with doing good works. In turn, God gives grace, which encourages the person to sacrifice more to do good works. More good works results in more approval from God. More approval from God encourages more sacrifice, which results in more grace. This continues until the person dies, then their loved ones pray they made it to Heaven (Read also Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5).

2. Perfectionism

Salvation through faith occurs. The believer grows in faith and knowledge until one day when he surrenders all to reach an instantaneous completion of perfection through an act of the Holy Spirit. The person can then claim that they are without sin. Perfection at death then qualifies them to be part of the rapture (Read also 1 John 1:5-10).

3. Lordship salvation

Salvation through faith occurs. Works are expected because of salvation. If habitual or major sin is committed, salvation is lost. "Getting our heart right" and turning from sin results in regained salvation (Read also Ephesians 4:30; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

The proper view of progressive sanctification (Spiritual growth) contains several *Scriptural* truths:

1. The Godhead of the *Trinity* has several roles

The Father purges the fruitful vine so that it produces more fruit. The Son washes by the water of the Word and the Spirit matures us and changes us to be more like Christ (Read also John 15:1-5; Ephesians 1:15-19; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 2:1-5).

2. We must be *active* in doing our part

We must examine ourselves. We must be diligently seeking God's wisdom. We must devote time to study. We must be a doer of the Word, not just a hearer. We must put off old behaviors and put on new ones. We must devote time to prayer (Read also Romans 8:26-27; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 4:22-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:5; James 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:21-25; 1 Peter 4:16-17).

3. We must accept that Spiritual growth is a *life-long gradual* process

Growth is a marathon, not a sprint because it is a constant fight. Therefore, we must look to the Holy Spirit to lead us in our growth and how to master our behaviors by His power for the glory of God (Read also 1 Corinthians 9:24-25; Galatians 5:16; Philippians 3:13-14; Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:6-7).

4. Biblical disciples need a specific approach

We must always stick to Biblical truths and take what we hear about handling life issues and compare it with what God says. We must also not try to "force-feed" growth. We must realistically recognize what we have learned and need to learn. We must not shy away from calling sin by its name or shifting blame elsewhere (Read also Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 15:22-23; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 20:27-32)

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, Spiritual growth is something that each believer should be striving to attain. Therefore, the local church should include discipleship as part of their ministry to individuals. As the believers grow Spiritually, then they can become disciples, or teachers of disciples. Their goal is helping others to grow in Christ so that they too may become a disciple of Christ and can teach others the same. This accelerates Spiritual growth in the local church through the process of multiplication.

Spiritual growth eventually results in practical perfection, but not until we stand before Christ after we take our last breath on earth. Therefore, it is a lifelong process whereby we must always seek to become like Christ until He calls us home to be with Him in His perfect presence. Until then, we must stand firm in declaring the whole counsel of God.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. If you take a human anthropology course at most colleges, there is little discussion about beliefs and practices of cultures that have any _____ in a _____ such as the _____.
2. Without a _____, any _____ norms that are in keeping with current day practices are _____ and those that are not are _____.
3. Today, many people will equate _____, not with a moral _____, but with _____ ones that have proven to be disastrous throughout history.
4. The process of _____ and _____ in the nature and character of man is demonstrated in the Circle of _____.
5. _____ growth _____ us to be _____ in life and to be prepared to help others _____.
6. _____ in Christ can have a “_____ to Thrive” and will need attention so that they can develop Spiritually to live fully _____ and productive lives for _____.

7. The process of Spiritual growth is often called progressive _____.
8. Progressive _____ means that the person should be progressing toward being _____ with each passing day.
9. Practically speaking, progressive sanctification involves making certain _____ like Bible study, prayer, fellowship, church attendance, serving in local church ministries, and sharing the _____ part of our routine each _____.
10. It is important that the local _____ considers how to integrate _____ growth into all of their _____.
11. A personal approach whereby each person in the local church has the opportunity to be _____ with others that will help them *grow* or to help others grow is referred to as _____.
12. The proper view of progressive sanctification (Spiritual growth) contains several _____ truths: The Godhead of the _____ is involved; we must be _____ in doing our part; and it is a _____ - _____ process.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 7: Feelings and guilt in Spiritual growth

In our last session we learned about Spiritual growth. We saw the importance of a moral code and how ignoring the truth that man was made in the image of God will lead to ungodly practical and cultural effects.

We studied the Circle of Discipleship, which demonstrates how the culture and our thoughts influence our worldview, our religion and others. Then we considered how like babies, we need the proper “nutrition” to progress in our growth to be like Christ.

We discussed how the local church has a role in helping people to progress in their sanctification or living a holy life for Christ. Finally, we looked at proper and improper views of sanctification to include its relationship to salvation.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let’s take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 47-48. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Feelings & guilt in growing Spiritually

If you ask different people where do feelings come from, they will often give you examples. For example, they may say that feelings of grief come from the loss of a loved one. Or, they may say that anger comes from something wrong that you or someone else experiences that is not right. They may say that happiness comes from the laugh of a child or having all their needs met. In each case, a general sense that *feelings* are caused by something is a *common* belief.

Feelings

When it comes to feelings, the Bible gives us several references to their origins. For starters, we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Since we are made in God’s *image*, that means that we can possess some of His attributes and *feelings*. Likewise, God is a person and some of his attributes are personal. Therefore, as people made in the image of God, we have the ability to possess some of His personal attributes.

- God is Loving (Read also John 3:16, Ephesians 2:4; 1 John 4:8.).
- God is Joyful (Read also Zephaniah 3:17; Romans 15:13).
- God is Peaceful (Read also Psalms 109:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- God is Longsuffering or Patient (Read also Numbers 14:18; 2 Peter 3:9).
- God is Gentle (Read also 2 Samuel 22:36; Psalms 18:35; Galatians 5:22).

- God is Good (Read also Psalms 73:1; Philippians 2:13).
- God is Faithful (Read also Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Corinthians 1:9).
- God is Meek (Read also Psalms 4:3-4; Matthew 11:29).
- God is Temperate or Self-controlled (Read also Psalms 145:8; Titus 2:11-12; James 1:17).

If you notice, these attributes are described as the fruit of the Spirit seen in Galatians 5:22-23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." They are a result of God the Holy Spirit writing His law on our hearts as His children (See also Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 10:15-17). They serve to enable and motivate us to produce Godly behaviors because of our love of Christ because of what He did for us on the cross (Read also Romans 12:1-2; 1 John 4:19).

Those that do not have the Holy Spirit in them may still experience these attributes and the feelings they produce because they are still made in the image of God. However, as humans we all have three foundational human *lusts* or desires that produce feelings and motivate us to do ungodly things: lust of the *flesh*, lust of the *eyes*, and the *pride* of life.

1 John 2:15-17. (15) "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

If you notice, this verse says that all that is in the world, referring to the three lusts, are not of the Father, but of the world. These three lusts are defined as follows:

1. Lust of the flesh: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to please our earthly bodies
2. Lust of the eyes: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to accumulate earthly possessions
3. Pride of life: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to make ourselves look better than others or God

All humans are subject to these lusts because we are born with them (Read also Romans 5:12-15). These lusts are known to lead people *astray* because they produce *thinking* and *emotions* that make the lusts and desires *feel* right (Read also Genesis 3:6; Jeremiah

17:9). When they feel right and there is nothing to tell them not to act on them, then ungodly thoughts and behaviors are the result.

These attributes are described as the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:16-21. They are a result of the works of the flesh and not the fruit of the Spirit. Knowing the difference between the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh is very important in understanding the roots of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. For example, if you look at a behavior and identify the feelings or thoughts that inspired that behavior you can determine where it came from based on which list it is on. Those listed under the fruit of the Spirit come from God. Those listed under the works of the flesh are not of God but are of the world and the prince of this world whom is judged (Read also John 12:31; 16:11).

Discussion

1. What emotions or behaviors do you think are produced by the lust of the flesh? (Write down your answers)

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2. What emotions or behaviors do you think are produced by the lust of the eyes? (Write down your answers)

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3. What emotions or behaviors do you think are produced by the pride of life? (Write down your answers)

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What have we learned from our discussion?

1. Lust of the flesh: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to please our *earthly bodies*
2. Lust of the eyes: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to *accumulate* earthly *possessions*

3. Pride of life: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to make ourselves to be in a higher *standing* or *importance* over God or others

What is guilt?

Guilt is one of many emotions. However, it is unique to God's *plan* of *salvation* for humanity. The common definition of guilt is: 1. (Noun) "The fact of having committed a specified or implied offense or crime." 2. (Verb) "Make (someone) feel guilty, especially in order to induce them to do something" (<https://www.google.com/search?q=guilt>).

Simply stated, the emotion of guilt is the result of us being aware of not doing something we think we should have done or doing something we think we should not have done. It is an awareness of failing to meet some sort of expectations, rules, or laws that should result in the feeling of doing something wrong.

What is the purpose of guilt?

Since guilt is the result of us being aware that we did not do the right thing, guilt has a useful purpose. It lets us know when we are wrong and that we need to make things right. The Bible tells us that God gave humanity the law to produce guilt.

Romans 3:19. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

James 2:10. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Biblically speaking, guilt is an indicator to us that our *beliefs* and *lifestyles* are not in keeping with God's Word. It is an indicator that we have sinned against God. Because of our sin, we are guilty before God and are subject to the wages of sin, which is death (read also Romans 3:10; Romans 6:23). However, God enables us to experience the emotion of guilt so that we are motivated to change what we believe about God and our condition before Him. The question then becomes, what do we do with our guilt (Read also John 16:8-11)?

Since the emotion of guilt has such an important purpose, what we do with it has great consequences in our eternity and our lives on earth. Some people say that guilt is unimportant because we should be able to live the way we want to live and not according to somebody else's rules. Likewise, they add that no one should feel guilty about not following rules they disagree with. If we remember the other counseling methods in

Session 3, we can see how worldly views about man can lead to different opinions about guilt.

1. If the God of Scripture does not exist, then man can refuse to recognize any guilt being caused by offending the standards of right and wrong by a non-existent God
2. If there is no standard of right and wrong by a non-existent God, then man can also refuse to recognize any guilt being caused by a conviction of right or wrong outside of his own beliefs
3. If man has no conviction of right or wrong even in his own beliefs, then man can refuse to recognize any guilt as being an indicator of any wrongdoing
4. Without a proper understanding of guilt, false guilt can lead to an incorrect understanding of how to resolve it

We can see where this is headed. Without guilt, man is left to thinking and behaving in a way much like the other animals which is in line with the teachings of the world. In the end, when man cannot manage problems, he is left with needing someone to teach or tell him how he needs to act or behave to get along with the rest of the human pack.

Likewise, when worldly views of guilt do not acknowledge any accountability to a higher power than humans, then whatever needs to be said or done to get rid of it is acceptable. Unfortunately, over time the guilt is minimized. Masking of the remaining feelings through blame-shifting, making up excuses, or the use of drugs or alcohol to feel better then becomes the way people deal with guilt and other feelings.

What is the Biblical view of handling guilt?

As believers, we are called to be like Christ. This means that when we do un-Christlike things that result in our guilt, we should handle it *Biblically* and not according to our *feelings*. We should see our guilt as something that does not model Christ or demonstrate our love for God or our neighbor. We must always keep in mind that guilt should point us toward Christ (Read also 2 Corinthians 7:8-12; Romans 5:8).

When helping addressing issues Biblically, we must remember that guilt is universal (Read also Romans 3:23; John 16:7-11). It holds us accountable (Read also Deuteronomy 6:13; Romans 1:20; Romans 3:9-12, 19, 23). If someone is not aware of any standards, they may not have any feelings of guilt. On the other hand, if they have a wrong understanding of the standards of God, they may have a false guilt. In any case, the feelings of guilt are real.

What we do with guilt is what is important. When we encounter someone that has no conscious awareness of guilt, it may be because they have ignored it or do not care about the consequences (Read also 1 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:15-16; Ephesians 4:17-19).

God gives us instruction on how we should handle and help others with guilt:

1. Guilt needs to be *acknowledged* (Read also Proverbs 27:1; Psalms 51:4; 1 John 1:7-9)
2. Guilt needs to be *confessed* (Read also Psalms 32:5; Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16).
3. Guilt should lead to a desire to make restitution or necessary changes (Read also Matthew 3:7-9; Matthew 5:23-26).

God also gives instruction on how we should not handle guilt:

1. We need to forgive *God* (Read also Isaiah 55:8-9; James 1:13-18).
2. We need to forgive *ourselves* – only God can forgive sins (Read also Acts 5:29-31).
3. We need to *feel* forgiven – feelings do not validate truth (Read also 1 John 3:20-21).

In all cases, we must validate the guilt or lack of guilt against Scripture. As we mentioned earlier, we must approach guilt in a way that demonstrates the example of Jesus while ministering to the woman caught in adultery. For more information about guilt, see The Family Tree of Resolving Guilt in Appendix B.

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, we should have an idea how human lusts are the natural foundation of our feelings and behaviors. We found that without the Holy Spirit of God, we do not have the power and wisdom to successfully handle all life issues. We examined the emotion of guilt and its importance in helping us to see our need for a Savior. Finally, we learned what God says about what we should and should not do when it comes to dealing with guilt.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. A general sense that _____ are caused by something is a _____ belief.
2. Since we are made in God's _____, that means that we can possess some of His attributes and _____.

3. As humans we all also have three foundational human _____ or desires that produce feelings and motivate us to do ungodly things: lust of the _____, lust of the _____, and the _____ of life.
4. Lusts are known to lead people _____ because they produce _____ and _____ that make the lusts and desires _____ right.
5. Lust of the flesh: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to please our _____.
6. Lust of the eyes: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to _____ earthly _____.
7. Pride of Life: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to make ourselves to be in a higher _____ or _____ over God or others.
8. Guilt is one of many emotions. However, it is unique to God's _____ of _____ for humanity.
9. Biblically speaking, guilt is an indicator to us that our _____ and _____ are not in keeping with God's Word.
10. When we do un-Christlike things that result in our guilt, we should handle it _____ and not according to our _____.
11. Guilt needs to be _____ and _____.
12. We should not handle guilt by forgiving _____ or ourselves.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 8: Handling the past Biblically

In our last session we learned how human lusts are the natural foundation of our feelings and behaviors. We found that without the Holy Spirit of God, we do not have the power and wisdom to successfully handle all life issues. We examined the emotion of guilt and its importance in helping us to see our need for a Savior. Finally, we learned what God says about what we should and should not do when it comes to dealing with guilt.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 54-55. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Handling the past Biblically

Everyone that has been born has a past and a future. However, too often the things we have experienced in our past adversely affect our future. Unlike the world, which embraces the *past* to explain human *behaviors*, it is important that we do not let *events* of the *past* *define* who we are. Therefore, handling the past *Biblically* is important and necessary to remove any *barriers*, which might prevent us from being who *God* wants us to be.

Likewise, we often find that those struggling with life issues can suffer in a variety of ways. Things people hear can affect their confidence. Things people experience can affect their ability to trust. Things people have been taught can affect their understanding. Therefore, knowing about a person's past can be very beneficial for many reasons. However, we must be careful not to fall into the trap of trying to psychoanalyze someone's subconscious past as the key to them being delivered from their current life issues. Remember, the Holy Spirit provides us the mind of Christ. This enables us to handle any problems with our past Biblically (Read also Isaiah 26:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2; 16-17).

Unfortunately, many of the worldly teachings have even crept into Christian circles. Teachings such things as how your past must be examined to explain who victimized you and subconsciously are repressing you from living in victory. Or, how memories of your past have to be healed spiritually. Or, one that is commonly taught how the sins of your ancestors have put a curse upon you that you need to be delivered from (Read also Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 18; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 4:18-19). Finally, as we learned earlier when we spoke about guilt, some will say we need to forgive ourselves so we can move on.

Before we can deal with our past Biblically, we must ask what is it about the past that we think is *causing problems*. Was there something we heard, or we experienced, or we were

taught that is at the root of the problem? Was there something we did, or said, or taught to someone else that is at the root of the problem? The point is this: if we “know” that a life issue we are struggling with today is rooted in the past, then we must deal with it Biblically. To simplify things, we must determine if what happened in the past was something that we did not handle right or was it because of something someone else did not handle right.

Determining how to handle something we did

Often, we may suffer life issues because of something we did not do right. It could be sinning against someone else or it could be not doing what we should have done. In either case, we are dealing with guilt. Remember, guilt has a purpose: to hold us accountable (Read also Exodus 20:7; Romans 1:20-21; Romans 3:9-12, 19, 23). Also, we must always keep in mind that *guilt* should point us toward *Christ* and lead to a desire to make *restitution* or necessary *changes* (Read also Galatians 3:24; Romans 5:8).

How then should we resolve a guilty past? First, we should acknowledge our guilt. Second, we must confess it. Third, we must make things right so that the future is not hindered by our guilt. If we have done something in the past to someone that is at the root of our guilt, then we need to make things right with them. Likewise, we must not forget that we need to make things right with God too because not making things right with someone as we should, interferes with things being right between us and God (Read also Matthew 5:21-26; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16).

Many people that try to make things right with someone will go to that person and apologize for what they did, thinking that apologizing makes things right. However, it is important to understand that an *apology* is not the same as asking for *forgiveness*. An apology does not address what we did that was wrong nor does it properly deal with the resolution of the offense. Asking for forgiveness, however does.

The word forgiveness has its root in the words “force” and “give” with the ending of –ness, which means “state of.” In other words, forgiveness is the action of “giving” up your right to execute justice by “force” (force-giving) so that the offender can be free of the penalty of their legal wrong. Therefore, when we ask for forgiveness, we must humble ourselves and confess our sin to them.

After we have confessed our sin, only then can we ask them to forgive us. When we do this, we have entered into a two-way transaction that brings about reconciliation. We humbly confess our guilt to the person and the person gives up their right for justice (Read also Romans 5:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

An apology on the other hand does not apply as it does not involve confessing sin and asking for forgiveness. The word apology is a combination of the prefix “apo,” which means “without” and the root “logy.” Logy is a derivative of the Greek word *logos* meaning “the Word.” Together, apology means “without the Word.” Therefore, an apology is appropriate in a situation where the Word does not apply (Read also John 1:1, 14).

Logy is often seen used to mean the “study of” something, but always infers a standard or truth. For example, the word theology means the study of (the truth of) God. Or, biology, means the study of (the truth of) life or way of living. An apology would communicate the idea that the situation would be addressed by studying it without (the truth of) the Word because there was no Biblical legal offense.

Once forgiveness is asked and granted it is important to understand that the *confession* and *forgiveness* removes the *sin* from the *relationship* (Read also Psalms 103:12; Hebrews 8:12; Hebrews 10:16-18). Therefore, it cannot be used against the sinner in the future. It cannot be discussed with others. It cannot be dwelt upon. Likewise, forgiveness must be granted again when necessary (Read also, Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 17:3).

No matter what the case, if there is a failure to confess sin or a failure to forgive sins, then there is fallout from the situation that often results in loss of fellowship and a loss of blessing from God (Read also Matthew 18:15-35; 1 Corinthians 5:1-8; 2 Corinthians 6:11-18; James 5:16; 1 John 1:5-10). However, if someone does not ask us for forgiveness, we are still called to let God deal with the issue and stand ready to forgive (Read also Psalms 103:12; Proverbs 10:12; Proverbs 17:9; Proverbs 28:13; Romans 12:14-21).

Discussion

Read the following situations and determine how they should be handled in light of what we have just learned.

1. Your car was in the shop getting repairs and you asked your friend if you could borrow their car to run to the grocery store. On your way, you are in a hurry and you decide to try and beat a yellow light, but it turns red before you enter the intersection. At that very moment, Harry Hot Rod hits the gas the second he sees the green light on his side. As he enters the intersection you hit him. Once the dust settles it is determined that everyone is okay. Since you are driving your friend’s vehicle you now have to tell them about the situation. What do you do? Are you guilty or not guilty?

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2. Your car was in the shop getting repairs and you asked your friend if you could borrow their car to run to the grocery store. On your way, you are in a hurry and you decide you can make it through a yellow light, and hopefully it will stay yellow until after you clear the intersection. However, at the very moment your light turned yellow, Harry Hot Rod hits the gas despite his light still being red. As he enters the intersection you hit him. Once the dust settles it is determined that everyone is okay. Since you are driving your friend's vehicle you now have to tell them about the situation. What do you do? Are you guilty or not guilty?

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What have we learned?

1. Guilty! In this illustration you borrowed your friend's vehicle and drove through a red light and were involved in an accident. The appropriate thing to do would be to humble yourself and confess your sin to your friend and Harry Hot Rod. You broke the law and damaged your friend's vehicle as well as Harry's vehicle, which was wrong. Only after confessing your sin could you ask them to forgive you or give up their right to force justice upon you. Once forgiven, the two-part transaction makes things right between all parties. However, you will still be legally liable for damages.
2. Not Guilty! In this illustration, you borrowed your friend's vehicle and someone else ran the red light and hit you. Although you were driving your friend's vehicle, you were not Biblically at fault, so forgiveness is not needed. In this case, an apology would be appropriate because the Word does not apply. The person at fault needs to humble themselves and ask for forgiveness. However, you were involved in the accident and should want to do all you can to restore your friend's vehicle, not because you were at fault, but because you should want to make your friend whole again.

Handling something in the past

Often people may suffer life issues from things after forgiveness has been asked and received. Or it may be from things that have happened at the hands of others. In both situations, God provides a direction forward. Consider the following situations:

1. Fallout from a past that was resolved by confession and forgiveness

God has not called us to wallow in sadness, unworthiness, or anger resulting from past sin that has been confessed. When we do this, then we are not able to use our lives in service to the Lord because we are in bondage to illegitimate or false guilt. Instead, we must ask ourselves why we might be unable to get beyond the past.

It might be that we went through the motions of asking for forgiveness, but really did not forsake the sin or repent out of a godly sorrow (Read also Proverbs 28:13; Acts 26:19-20; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11). Or, it might be because of pride that belittles what we did as being no big deal. (Read also 1 Corinthians 10:12; Proverbs 16:18). Or maybe it is that we do not really believe in God's promises of forgiveness (Read also 1 John 1:9; Psalms 103:8-14). Often the latter is the case in that we really do not believe we can be forgiven.

In any case, if forgiveness has been genuinely asked, we must rejoice in the Lord's forgiveness (Read also Psalms 103:12; 1 Timothy 1:12-13; Philippians 4:4-5). We must also search for what good can come out of the lessons of the past. Finally, we must move on with life and serving the Lord (Read also Philippians 3:13-15).

2. Fallout from a past that was a result of bad memories not brought on by my own fault

Sometimes we may encounter people that are victims of abuse, assault, or any number of situations where someone committed some act of sin against their person. Sometimes it may even be a time when someone has been persecuted for their faith or has gone through some personal trial (Read also Romans 10:13-17; Hebrews 11).

In these cases, it is important not to seek revenge. This does not mean that if a crime took place, we should not report it. In fact, that is why God ordained government officials to handle these issues. As mentioned before, we should seek what good can come out of these experiences of the past (Read also Romans 13)

Some of the most effective *counsel* is when someone uses their *experiences* to help and *serve* others that might be *struggling* with similar issues. Likewise, they should help the person dealing with life issues resulting from the past to spend time in the

Word and in worship: remembering that it is God that is on the throne. He will do great things to heal us and give us peace (Read also Genesis 50:19-20; Psalms 34:13-22; Psalms 35:27; Nehemiah 8:6-10; Romans 12:9-20; Philippians 2:12-18; 1 Peter 2:17-25).

Handling sin in the church

One of the most troubling problems we see in many churches is that they do not address sin that is taking place in the congregation. In many cases, it may even involve the church leadership. Likewise, it may often involve those in the church engaged in affairs, sexual immorality, and even involvement with drug and alcohol abuse. Yet, there is little if any church discipline in the local church. Therefore, it is important that issues such as these and others be addressed Biblically (Read also 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

Unfortunately, many local church *leaders* do not want to address *sin-based* issues because they are afraid of *offending* people. Yet, the very activities they are afraid to address are the very same issues that drive away many people and ruin the lives of others that stay (Read also Psalms 119:165 KJV). However, unresolved or mishandled conflict is in and of itself also sin. Thankfully, God gave us instructions for local church *discipline* or addressing issues of *unrepentant sin* that proliferates in the local church so that the *flock* is *protected* (Read also Acts 20:27-3). We see the instructions for this in Matthew 18:15-20.

Matthew 18:15-20 (15) “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (16) But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (17) And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (18) Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (19) Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. (20) For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Based on what we see in this passage there are several important points to consider when it comes to addressing sin in the local church:

1. Matthew 18:15. Approach one-on-one alone
 - When there is an issue between two *believers*, the one “*offended*” should first consider if *love* can cover it (Proverbs 10:12; 1 Peter 4:7-10)
 - If not, then they should approach the other in a spirit of meekness and with the intent of reconciliation. He or she should also consider if they contributed to the problem. (Galatians 6:1-3)
 - Likewise, they should consider if it is their place to be involved. If someone is not part of the *problem* or part of the *solution* then sharing information with uninvolved parties is *gossip* so approach the other person one-on-one alone
 - Consider what might be the root cause so that resolution and reconciliation can be achieved (1 John 2:15-16)
 - Has the issue been resolved if it involves others? Did the person repent?
 - If unsuccessful go to the next step

2. Matthew 18:16. Re-approach with one or two others
 - Only done if first level approach does not work
 - Approach with one or two other impartial believers alone to confirm what is said and to avoid gossip
 - Biblically consider as a group what might be the root cause so that Godly resolution and reconciliation can be achieved (1 John 2:15-16)
 - If unsuccessful go to the next step

3. Matthew 18:17-20. Approach with the local body of believers
 - Only done when second level approach does not work
 - Take the matter to the church: preferably the church leadership
 - Only then may the unresolved matter be discussed as a body
 - Handle in a Christ-like manner so as to not inflame rebellion or reactionary sin. We should never use church *discipline* as a *hammer*, but as a loving *plea* for *repentance* and *reconciliation*. If unsuccessful, *weeping* should be the result, not fighting and arguing
 - If not resolved at this final level, treat as heathen and publican (unbeliever) (Romans 16:17-18; 2 John 1:9-11)

4. If resolved on any level, the issue is not brought up again

Wrapping it up

Considering what we just learned, the process of handling the past Biblically applies the same, no matter if it is the result of our own sin or the sin of another. The goal should be reconciliation and restoration. In the case of the sinner, the goal is to see them fully restored and serving the Lord, even if it is in another capacity. In the case of a victim of

someone else's sin, reconciliation and restoration with the offending party may not always be feasible, but the person that is suffering should be loved and supported while being helped to regain their strength and composure in the Lord.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. Unlike the world, which embraces the _____ to explain human _____, it is important that we do not let _____ of the _____ who we are.
2. Handling the past _____ is important and necessary to remove any _____, which might prevent us from being who _____ wants us to be.
3. Before we can deal with our past Biblically, we must ask what is it about the past that we think is _____?
4. We must always keep in mind that _____ should point us toward _____ and lead to a desire to make _____ or necessary _____.
5. It is important to understand that an _____ is not the same as asking for _____.
6. Once forgiveness is asked and granted it is important to understand that the _____ and _____ removes the _____ from the _____.

7. Some of the most effective _____ is when someone uses their _____ to help and _____ others that might be _____ with similar issues.
8. Unfortunately, many local church _____ do not want to address _____ issues because they are afraid of _____ people.
9. God gave us instructions for local church _____ or addressing issues of _____ that proliferates in the local church so that the _____ is _____.
10. When there is an issue between two _____, the one “_____” should first consider if _____ can _____ it.
11. If someone is not part of the _____ or part of the _____ then sharing information with uninvolved parties is _____.
12. We should never use church _____ as a _____, but as a loving _____ for _____ and _____. If unsuccessful, _____ should be the result, not fighting and arguing.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 9: Key elements in Biblical discipleship

So far, we have learned that if we hope to help someone make positive change in their life then we should be able to do it in our own lives. We also learned that if we seek to help others to grow to be like Christ, then we must also be striving to grow to be like Christ. We found how if we want to use God's Word to help others, we must have the faith, desire, and willingness to maintain a proper orientation in the areas of ministry, problem solving, and Spiritual growth.

We explored how a good Biblical disciple sees God's provision: ministering as a gifted servant while seeing God's pattern of ministering with the mind of Christ; seeing God's plan of ministering to strengthen the body to make the body more efficient; and increasing the body by encouraging the love of one another.

Practically speaking, we learned that problems should be expected at any time in life. However, we found that problems often reveal sinful thinking and behaviors as well as Godly thinking and behaviors. Furthermore, they can provide opportunities to teach and mold us to be more like Christ. We found how changing our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to what God says requires us to actively fill our hearts with the Word of God and make sure that we are in an environment where we can grow.

Foundationally, we learned the importance of keeping in mind where we stand in light of God's grace and our position in His plan when considering our discipleship methods and practices. We considered that we must follow Christ's philosophy of education, we should be teaching with words and demonstrating it by actions, as well as proving the wisdom of God through results. Finally, we studied guilt, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 63-64. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Key elements in Biblical discipleship

Many times, we learn about someone's life issues as part of a normal *conversation*. It may be a close friend, a family member, or someone in a group that we are hanging out with. It is important to keep this in mind because someone does not have to be a down and out addict living on the streets to have problems. After all, every one of us has *problems*. Therefore, we must be tuned in and *discerning* about what is being said no matter who it is or the situation that we are in when the conversation takes place.

This means we must have a constant awareness of our *testimony* and keep in mind what we learned about where we stand in light of God's *grace* and our position in His plan when

considering our discipleship *methods* and *practices*. Practically speaking, we should consider several goals in Biblical discipleship when helping others:

1. What are you trying to accomplish with those whom you choose to help?

Do you make the decision to get involved because you consider yourself to be an expert on life issues and want them to follow your advice in their situation? Or, do you want to get involved because you want to hear all the juicy details about what happened? If it is all about the juicy details, you need to take a step back and think about what you are trying to accomplish.

Consider for a moment that there is a fine line between being confident in the wisdom and power of God's Word to help someone versus using the wisdom and power of God's Word to make ourselves out as a candidate for our own daytime television counseling show where people look to us as the person with all the answers. Remember, Biblical discipleship is not about us inspiring others to follow *us*: it is about us inspiring others to follow *Jesus*. Therefore, the goal that we should be trying to accomplish is that the other person would know Christ as their *Savior* and that they should also learn how to know Christ as their *Lord*.

2. What standard are you trying to promote with others?

Sadly, if you watch or listen to any kind of popular show with a famous leader or counselor, they will give you all the facts and figures and studies they want you to consider while convincing you to follow their advice. However, what is glaringly absent is that there is no reference to promoting what Jesus said and the standards given in Scripture. This is not to say that sometimes their advice is not good for the situation at hand, but without referencing the living *Word of God*, Biblical discipleship loses a great deal of its *power* because the *foundation* that it is based on is not even mentioned.

Consider for a moment if you are consistently promoting the standard of Christ as found in the Bible? Are you consistently promoting the standard of having the mind of Christ in the individual? Or, on a more public scale, are you promoting the standard of having the mind of Christ in the world as we learned in the Decision Tree? Do you look for opportunities to serve others? Overall, the goal we should be trying to accomplish with others is the promotion of God's standards as found in Scripture (Read also Matthew 28:19-20; Philippians 1:21-30; Philippians 2:1-18; 1 Peter 4:1-2).

3. Are you promoting how the change should be occurring?

Do you promote a desire to please God through our faith? Do you teach others that they must believe that God exists, and they must diligently seek Him? Do you proclaim the power of the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit? Do you share with them that they must believe what God says about their life issues and how to change them as much as they believe that He can save them? Do you reinforce that they must not waiver in trusting God to do what He promises He will do in the situation? Overall, our goal should be to promote *positive change* through the *gospel* of Jesus Christ, the *wisdom* and counsel of God's Word, and the *power* of the Holy Spirit. We should not be promoting change through ungodly fear and intimidation. This is because, while inspiring people takes more time, it lasts because they are motivated by love. Fear and intimidation may work, but it does not last when the source of fear and intimidation is gone (Read also Romans 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Colossians 1:9-15; Hebrews 11:5; James 1:2-8; 1 John 4:4).

Discussion

While we keep in mind the goals of Biblical discipleship, we should also consider the elements that should be in the methods of Biblical discipleship. Consider the following Scripture passage:

1 Peter 3:8-15. (8) "Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous: (9) Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. (10) For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: (11) Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. (12) For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil. (13) And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? (14) But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; (15) But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

1. 1 Peter 3:8-9. What do these verses say about our thought process and related actions when we interact with and help others?

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2. 1 Peter 3:10-11. What do these verses say about how we as believers should communicate and the track we should take when addressing the details of someone's life issues?

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3. 1 Peter 3:12-13. What do these verses say about God's support and intervention when we are trying to minister to others using His Word and prayer?

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4. 1 Peter 3:14. What does this verse say about our attitude and confidence if we suffer for doing what God wants us to do?

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5. 1 Peter 3:15. What does this verse say about our motivations and what we should be doing to prepare ourselves to help others with life issues and explaining our positive attitude?

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What have we learned?

1. 1 Peter 3:8-9. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are to collectively have the *mind* of Christ in how we *interact* with and help each other. Just as Christ had compassion, we are to have compassion for one another (Read also Matthew 5:3-12; Mark 6:30-34; John 15:8-17; Romans 12:9-21).
2. 1 Peter 3:10-11. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should want to communicate in ways that bring peace and joy to those around us. We must always be careful not to allow ourselves to get caught up in the *emotion* of those things that tempt us to *speak* evil of others or malign their *reputations*. We must reject any notions of doing things out of spite, revenge, or maliciousness. Instead, we must seek peace and do whatever we can to make it come to pass (Read also Psalms 34:11-18; Psalms 37:30-31; Psalms 120:1-3; Proverbs 21:23; James 3:1-12).
3. 1 Peter 3:12-13. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should take comfort in the fact that we have God's *support* in that He *watches* over us and intervenes as our needs arise for *protection*. We can have confidence that when we are ministering for good on His behalf that He will spoil the efforts of those whom would work against His will (Read also Psalms 34:15; Proverbs 15:3; Proverbs 22:12).
4. 1 Peter 3:14. As believers in Jesus Christ, we have the assurance that if we *suffer* for doing God's will that He can give us *happiness* in the situation so that we are not *afraid*. Likewise, He can give us the peace of mind that passes all understanding so that we are not troubled (Read also John 14:1-3; 1 John 5:14-15).
5. 1 Peter 3:15. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should make the effort to engage in our own discipleship so that we are motivated and empowered with the ability to help others using the Word of God. As we work on becoming like Christ in our hearts, we will be ready to give an answer in a moment's notice how God has made a difference in our lives and can make a difference in the life of others. Therefore, we must strive to focus on *glorifying God* instead of *winning* the *argument* to chalk up another win to our score (Read also Proverbs 15:23; Proverbs 15:28; Proverbs 16:1; 2 Corinthians 5:12-15; Colossians 3:16-17; Colossians 4:5-6).

Wrapping it up

As we have looked at key elements in Biblical discipleship, we should have noticed that the overall goal is to prepare ourselves for any task that God puts before each one of us. We must ask ourselves, are we giving our all for the Lord? Are we emotionally invested in the wellbeing of others? Are we ready to roll up our sleeves and work for the Lord? Are we taking the time to minister using the Word instead of taking a few Bible verses and adding them to our words? Are we studying to learn all of God's Word so that we can

readily give an answer to anyone on any topic so that we can demonstrate that God's Word is quick and powerful and ready at a moment's notice to address any situation with the wisdom and power to make things happen? Are we ready for the challenge (Read also Romans 15:13-14; Philippians 3:17-19; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:14-16)?

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each statement.

1. Many times, we learn about someone's life issues as part of a normal _____.
2. Every one of us has _____. Therefore, we must be tuned in and _____ about what is being said no matter who it is or the situation that we are in when the conversation takes place.
3. We must have a constant awareness of our _____ and keep in mind what we learned about where we stand in light of God's _____ and our position in His plan when considering our discipleship _____ and _____.
4. Biblical discipleship is not about us inspiring others to follow _____: it is about us inspiring others to follow _____.
5. The goal that we should be trying to accomplish is that the other person would know Christ as their _____ and that they should also learn how to know Christ as their _____.

6. Without referencing the living _____ of _____, Biblical discipleship loses a great deal of its _____ because the _____ that it is based on is not even mentioned.
7. Our goal should be to promote _____ through the _____ of Jesus Christ, the _____ and counsel of God's Word, and the _____ of the Holy Spirit.
8. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are to collectively have the _____ of Christ in how we _____ with each other.
9. We must always be careful not to allow ourselves to get caught up in the _____ of those things that tempt us to _____ evil of others or malign their _____.
10. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should take comfort in the fact that we have God's _____ in that He _____ over us and intervenes as our needs arise for _____.
11. As believers in Jesus Christ, we have the assurance that if we _____ for doing God's will that He can give us _____ in the situation so that we are not _____.
12. We must always strive to focus on _____ instead of _____ the _____ to chalk up another win to our score.

13.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 10: The four rules of communication

In our last session we learned that in informal counseling situations we often learn about someone's life issues as part of a normal conversation because every one of us has had problems that we share with others. This teaches us that we must be tuned in and discerning about what someone is saying no matter what the situation when the conversation takes place. Likewise, we found that we must have a constant awareness of our testimony and keep in mind what we learned about where we stand in light of God's grace and our position in His plan when considering our counseling methods and practices.

We also learned that Biblical discipleship is not about us inspiring others to follow us: it is about us inspiring others to follow Jesus. Therefore, the goal that we are trying to accomplish in discipleship is that the other person would know Christ as their Savior and that they should also learn how to know Christ as their Lord. With this in mind, if we do not make reference to the living Word of God, Biblical discipleship loses a great deal of its power because the foundation that it is based on is not even mentioned. Likewise, we learned that we should promote positive change through the gospel of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and counsel of God's Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit; not ungodly fear and intimidation.

Finally, we learned that as believers in Jesus Christ, we are to collectively have the mind of Christ in how we interact with each other. We must also be careful not to allow ourselves to get caught up in the emotion of those things that tempt us to speak evil of others or malign their reputations. Likewise, we should take comfort in the fact that we have God's support in that He watches over us and intervenes as our needs arise for protection. Therefore, we have the assurance that if we suffer for doing God's will that He can give us happiness in the situation so that we are not afraid. This enables us to focus on glorifying God instead of winning the argument to chalk up another win to our score.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 70-71. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

The four rules of communication

The most common hinderance to resolving problems Biblically, besides our own human lusts, is usually our failure to communicate properly. If you think about it, people can go to college to study and obtain degrees at all levels in communications. However, these

programs often go into the science of communications, communication methods and types and psychological concepts to keep in mind when communicating. There is usually no mention of Biblical concepts and motivations of communications.

We will find that God gives us specific rules to remember when communicating with people. We will look at four of those rules and their Scriptural basis as we consider the entirety of Ephesians 4 as follows:

Ephesians 4:1-32. (1) "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, (2) With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; (3) Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; (5) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. (7) But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (8) Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (9) (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? (10) He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) (11) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (15) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: (16) From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (17) This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, (18) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: (19) Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. (20) But ye have not so learned Christ; (21) If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: (22) That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (25) Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are

members one of another. (26) Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: (27) Neither give place to the devil. (28) Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. (29) Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (30) And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (31) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Before we specifically look at the four rules of communication, let's look at two principles we should keep in mind so that we have a better understanding of the context of these rules. Consider the following:

1. God has established the local church as the center of operations in the mission of sharing the Word of God using the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:1-10). Sharing the Word of God involves individuals that make up larger groups of believers.

In Ephesians 1:1 we are taught that God has called us to walk worthy of the “vocation” wherewith we are called. The word vocation has that same root as the word, vocal, which refers to someone speaking. In this case, a vocation is a spoken calling by God. We also think of a vocation as an occupation or profession (profession) that we are called to do. Together this verse is telling us that we should walk worthy of the occupation or profession, in which God has called us to work.

In Ephesians 4:2-6 we are given details about how we should carry out the work in a way that demonstrates that we are worthy of the work that God wants us to do both personally and collectively as a local church. Personally, God wants us to do our work with an attitude of humbleness and meekness, with patience that demonstrates love for others above ourselves: striving to stay unified with fellow believers through the Holy Spirit, whom enables us to have peace with one another. When we have peace with one another then you (ye/you all) are able to function as one body and one Spirit, whom is in us, to be called in hope (in Christ) in our calling (vocation).

In Ephesians 4:7-10 we learn that sharing the Word of God is done through the establishment of Spiritual gifts given to each believer. We are taught that everyone of us is also given grace by Christ according to the measure and gifting that God wants us to have. Finally, we find that the process of giving the Holy Spirit and Spiritual gifts

to believers to do the work of our vocation, or calling, was instituted after Christ died on the cross. We are specifically told that Christ took the Old Testament believers out of Paradise with Him as He ascended to Heaven, after which He sent the Holy Spirit to the believers that were alive on earth (read also Matthew 7:11; Romans 11:29; 1 Corinthians 12; Hebrews 2:3-4; 1 Peter 3:17-22).

2. God gave us certain roles in the local church so that the people can learn, avoid deception, and grow as a body to do the work of the Lord (Ephesians 4:11-16). If we think about it. God gave the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for a reason. Each person or believer that is in the church is called to one or more of these roles or vocations. In consideration of this fact, each person that God gifted in those roles must be an effective communicator to be successful in their roles. This is because, each one of these roles is designed to communicate the Word of God for a variety of reasons and a specific time period: when we stand face to face before God perfectly changed into the image of Christ.

Now that we have established the context of how we are empowered by God to carry out our work, we can look at the four specific areas or rules of communication as found in Ephesians 4:15-32. Consider the following:

- 1. Be honest: Speak the truth in love; shouting does not make it true (Ephesians 4:15-25).**

One of the most basic principles of communication is that the people communicating need to be able to trust one another. If people cannot trust one another to tell the truth, then all efforts to communicate will either come to a halt or the conversation will quickly escalate to an argument. Likewise, some think that if they increase the volume that it makes what they are saying to be more true than what the other person says. This is especially common among children that will often argue without using any facts, but each child tries to shout down or shout louder than the other child to win an argument. Consider the following passage as seen in Ephesians 4:15- 25:

Ephesians 4:15-25. (15) "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: (16) From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (17) This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, (18) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: (19) Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all

uncleanness with greediness. (20) But ye have not so learned Christ; (21) If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: (22) That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (25) Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

This passage tells us several things about being honest and speaking the truth in love. First, it is a necessary part of our Spiritual growth as we change into the image of Christ and do our part as a member of the local church body (v15-16.) Therefore, it is not something that believers do: instead it is something that is common amongst non-believers that are motivated by carnal lusts (v17). This results in the inability to understand and see the Biblical truth or logic in things, which prevents them from having a close relationship with God and others and makes them ignorant because their hearts are blinded to the truth (v18-19). (Read also Proverbs 21:19)

Second, Christ spoke the truth in love and His example is for our learning (v20-21). We learn from Him and His Word that we should “put off,” the dirty old garment of corrupt lying and former unsaved ways of having conversation and communicating; and “put on” a renewed garment, or Spirit led way, of doing the same in holiness as a new creature in Christ (v22-24). (Read also Proverbs 28:17-28; Titus 3:2).

Finally, in the practice of putting away lying, we demonstrate our love for our neighbor because we are members of the body of Christ and seek to demonstrate to Jesus our love for Him (v25). (Read also Proverbs 4:20-25; Proverbs 6:16-19; Luke 6:45; Colossians 3:8-11).

2. Keep Current: Resolve issues today; do not bring them up tomorrow. (Ephesians 4:26-28).

In an earlier session we learned about forgiveness. We found that when forgiveness is asked and given that the sin is removed from the relationship. Unfortunately, many people may say or even think they have forgiven someone, but when the conversation goes bad they reach in to their bag of wayward grievances and pull them out to throw in the face of the other person. Remember, when forgiveness is asked and given, it cannot be brought up again so it is important that we should resolve issues right away and not bring them up tomorrow. Consider the following passage as seen in Ephesians 4:26-28:

Ephesians 4:26-28. (26) “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: (27) Neither give place to the devil. (28) Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

This passage tells us two things about keeping current and resolving issues right away so that they are not brought up again. First, we notice that if we are angry, we address it right away so that it does not result in sin. We will not discuss at this point the principles of Biblical anger management, but to say that no matter if anger is righteous or unrighteous, it must be addressed quickly (v26).

If it is not addressed quickly, then it will be on our minds so that we are continually thinking about why we are mad. This will give Satan’s way of thinking a space in our minds and our thoughts (v27). When we allow him space, we are drawn away by our own lusts, which conceives sin and leads to bad communications and behaviors. Therefore, we must Biblically resolve it by engrafting the Word of God into our thoughts so that our thinking is led by the Holy Spirit. We will talk about this more when we discuss Firestorm prayer. Going to bed angry is not a recipe for keeping current and resolving issues today because the next day we will be thinking about what we were thinking the day before and before long we are overwhelmed with thoughts and bitterness in our minds that stop us from serving the Lord. (Read also 1 Peter 4:8; Matthew 6:25-34; Galatians 6:1-2; James 1:13-16).

Second and finally, it is one thing to resolve things Biblically right away, but it is another thing to get back to doing what God has called us to do. Therefore, we must quickly reengage in serving the Lord (v28). In this verse, the person that was a thief stopped stealing and instead started working with his hands so that he could have to give to others that have needs. Likewise, if we have a problem with forgiveness and letting things go without bringing them back up then we must actively engage in resolving issues that we have and making a deliberate effort to keep current in our thinking and communication with others by serving others. (Read also Proverbs 3:5-6).

3. Attack the problem, not the person: Build up do not tear down; avoid absolutes like always, never, and ever. (Ephesians 4:29-30)

We live in a time when people do not respect much of anything. We see this play out when someone makes a mistake or does something that others do not agree with. Instead of communicating on the merits of what happened or discussing how to prevent the mistake from being made in the future, many will make it their life’s mission to destroy the other person in emotional and even physical ways. Consider the following passage as seen in Ephesians 4:29-30:

Ephesians 4:29-30. (29) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (30) And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

This passage tells us two things about what our focus should be when we communicate. First, our focus should not be avoidance of breaking the law, but instead, our focus should be on following the Spirit when we communicate (v29). If we think about it, this thinking is commonly seen in how people attempt to change their behaviors and live a holy life for Jesus. They focus on living their lives according to the boundaries and guidelines of not breaking the Old Testament law. Then when they break the law, they see their failure as their inability to keep the law, which is discouraging.

The Scriptures are full of references that tell us that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God because we cannot keep the law perfectly. Therefore, we cannot expect that this approach will lead to positive change. Instead of focusing on continuing on how not to break the law, we should focus on developing our relationship with Christ. This requires an active effort on our part to develop our relationship with Christ. Then, when we communicate, we are inspired by love to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in how we do it knowing that He will not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil. (Read also Romans 3:10-20; Romans 15:1-6; Philippians 2:3).

Second and finally, when we change our focus, the Holy Spirit changes our hearts so that when we try to discuss problems, our focus is not on how we can attack the other person, but instead, how we can attack the problem while respecting the other person. In doing so, we will not grieve or disappoint or sadden the Holy Spirit, whom has sealed us until the day of redemption, or the day we stand face to face with the Lord. (v30). We see this played out when we give credit where credit is due and not shifting blame to someone for everything that is wrong by accusing them of always, never, or ever doing something. (Read also Romans 1:28-32; Galatians 5:13-26).

4. Act don't react: Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. (Ephesians 4:31-32)

Probably nothing has caused more problems in relationships than reacting to what is communicated without thinking. Whether it is face to face communication or responding to an email or text, the urge to open our mouths and say something without thoroughly thinking about what we are going to say often proves to be devastating. In fact, in many cases, reacting has led to deadly consequences. Consider the following passage as seen in Ephesians 4:31-32:

Ephesians 4:31-32. (31) "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Notice that this passage focuses on what we should do. This is the result of a person that has matured in their faith in that they "put off" any bitterness, wrath, anger, annoying complaining and belly aching, and evil speaking that is accompanied with the desire to do bad things to someone (v31). They demonstrate or "put on" kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness, which models Christ in His forgiveness for us (v32).

Practically speaking, when following this rule, we should be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. We should take the time to hear both sides of a story before rendering and answer or an opinion. (Read also James 1:19-20).

Discussion

When looking at Proverbs 18:13,15,17,19, consider the things to do in the fourth rule of communication as follows:

1. What does Proverbs 18:13 teach us about what we should do when someone is talking to us about a situation? "He that answereth a matter before he heareth *it*, *it is* folly and shame unto him."



2. What does Proverbs 18:15 teach us about what we should do to prepare when we communicate? “The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.”



3. What does Proverbs 18:17 teach us about different perspectives when communicating? “*He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*”



4. What does Proverbs 18:19 teach us about how relationships can impact communication? “A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city: and *their contentions are* like the bars of a castle.”



What have we learned?

By now, you should be able to start seeing that when you take the time to read what a verse says in the context along with other factors, you can learn many things. Overall, what we have learned is found in Proverbs 18:20-21 and Proverbs 18:23-24 as follows:

Proverbs 18:20-21. (20) “A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. (21) Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

Proverbs 18:23-24. (23) “The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly. (24) A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.”

Wrapping it up

As we have looked at the four rules of communication, we have seen that being honest; keeping current; attacking the problem, not the person; and acting, not reacting are good rules to follow. However, if we consider these “rules’ in light of the Old Testament Commandments, they really should not be rules to follow, but merely indicators to show us how well we are following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our focus should be on allowing Christ to rule in our hearts, so that we no longer focus on rules in our heads.

End of session Checkpoint and homework

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint instructions: Read each rule of communication and find an example in Scripture where each rule might apply or was used in a situation. Write how the rule applies to the Scripture you use:

1. Be honest: Speak the truth in love; shouting does not make it true

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2. Keep Current: Resolve issues today; do not bring them up tomorrow.

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3. Attack the problem, not the person: Build up do not tear down; avoid absolutes like always, never, and ever.

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4. Act don't react: Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

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[END OF SESSION]

Session 11: Firestorm prayer

In our last session we learned about the four rules of communication. We saw that being honest; keeping current; attacking the problem, not the person; and acting, not reacting are good rules to follow. However, we also considered these “rules” in light of the Old Testament Commandments as they are not really rules to follow, but merely indicators to show us how well we are following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our focus should be on allowing Christ to rule in our hearts, so that we no longer focus on rules in our heads.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let’s take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on pages 81-82. Hopefully, you were able to find some examples in Scripture where each rule might apply or was used in a situation and wrote them down. If you had trouble finding Scriptural examples, look at the Checkpoint answer key in the appendix for examples. On the other hand, if you were not able to find any, think of situations in your life of someone you know where these rules could have been used.

Firestorm prayer

If you look at all the books out there, one of the most common topics seen in Christian circles are books about prayer. Many of them provide great details about prayer in general, but it is hard to find any that go deep into what actually takes place Spiritually when you pray. Unfortunately, for this reason, many people do not see the depth of what God does for us nor understand how prayer during the most troubling times can get us through the toughest days of our lives.

This is especially important because when we are confronted with firestorms in life it can be very discouraging and difficult to deal with. An example can be seen in military history when service members experienced extremely traumatic and confusing situations. In many cases, the shock of what was happening made them unable to think clearly, make decisions, or even get moving from where they were. For this reason, these service members were often diagnosed with “Shell shock.”

Looking at this from a physiological or human function perspective, it is actually known as psychogenic shock. Psychogenic shock is caused when someone goes through a severe or traumatic experience that causes their brains to be overwhelmed. This causes actual physical side effects as there are a lot of chemical and physical reactions going on that make it so that the person is unable to do much if anything at all.

This is why in the military, service members train over and over again on how to do things so that it becomes almost second nature to do certain things in certain situations. Many service members will describe what they went through as a situation where their “training kicked in” and they did what they had to do to get through it. It is in these times of stress that there needs to be a go to answer Scripturally that will “kick in” and guide us when we encounter our firestorms of life. Likewise, in extreme cases, it may require having someone that can directly guide the person in what they need to do until such a time as they are able to manage on their own.

Our mindset and part in firestorm prayer

So, what should we do to engage in firestorm prayer? First, we need to look at what happens Spiritually when we encounter a difficult situation. Consider the following passage of Scripture:

Romans 5:1-5. (1) “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

In this passage of Scripture, the context is that according to Chapter 4, Abraham was justified by faith and not works, which made Him righteous before God. With Abraham’s faith, he was confident in the promises of God regarding having children and being the father of a great nation. This enabled Abraham to be fully persuaded that he could do all things that the Lord had called him to do and to serve as an example to others.

First, this passage should teach us the same principles about God’s will and plan for our life. We can make the assumption that since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God and access to stand in God’s grace in all things that He has called us to do. This foundation gives us the confidence, like Abraham, to know that when we go through tough times, we can glory in the same because we know that the tough times, or tribulation, will teach us patience. As we gain patience, we also get experience because rarely do problems resolve quickly. As we experience God moving in the situation and fully supporting us, we learn to trust God more, which gives us hope. When we have hope, we are not ashamed, meaning that we are confident, or not hesitant to step out in faith; not ashamed of giving God the glory and credit for what we accomplish.

Notice again the pattern: Tribulation teaches us patience; patience gives us experience; experience gives us hope; and hope makes us not ashamed or gives us the confidence and the boldness to move forward to glorify God and fulfill His calling. This pattern is also summarized in the following passage of Scripture:

James 1:1-4. (1) "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. (2) My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; (3) Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. (4) But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Notice that this passage summarizes Romans 5:1-5 as the work of learning patience when our faith is tried, or examined, to see of what sort it is. This trying reveals if our faith is genuine or not. Therefore, it is an indicator of where we need to work in our discipleship efforts to increase our faith. This is where the next part of our faith moves into the action phase. Consider the following Scripture passage:

James 1:5-8.(5) "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. (6) But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. (7) For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. (8) A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways."

We are told here how to move forward in faith when dealing with tribulations (Romans 5:3) and temptations (James 1:2). No matter what the case, we do this first by asking God for wisdom. In other words, we pray. However, when we pray, we must ask God in faith, without any wavering. This means we need to trust God with the wisdom and results to guide us through the tribulation or resist the temptation as much as we trust God to save us and bring us into His presence the moment our mortal life ends.

If we do not do this, then we are told in this passage that when we waiver in our faith, it is like a wave of the ocean being driven with the wind and tossed. In our minds, one moment we trust God and have faith in the wisdom and promises He gives us. In another moment, we doubt God and we fall. Then when things ease off a bit, we trust God, but when things get rougher, we doubt God. In the end, we are told that our mind is going back and forth between trusting God and doubting Him like waves of the sea. God tells us He will not give us anything to help us through the situation and we will fail because of our lack of faith.

We see this played out in Matthew 14:22-33 in the story of when Peter and the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. They first thought that Jesus was a ghost and were afraid until Jesus called out to them and told them not to be afraid. Peter called out to Jesus and asked Him to call him out onto the water if it was really Him. Jesus called Peter out, so Peter stepped out in faith onto the water. However, when the wind kicked up and water got rough, Peter took His eyes off the Lord and became afraid and started sinking. He cried out to Jesus to save Him and the Lord caught Him and stopped Him from sinking. Jesus then told Peter that He had little faith and asked why Peter doubted. When they both got into the ship, the wind ceased.

We see that the moment that Peter doubted, the ability from the Lord to walk on the water stopped. Therefore, as we saw in James 1:5-8, when our minds become a wind tossed sea of doubleminded trust and doubt, we do not receive anything from the Lord to do amazing things, just as Peter learned. We need to keep this in mind that our faith must be focused on trusting what God says and His will or we will experience failure to overcome tribulations and temptations (Read also Romans 8:26-29; Colossians 1:9; 1 John 5:14-15).

Discussion

Now that we understand the basis of faith in overcoming these things, how do we put it into practice? Consider the following passage as it describes Firestorm Prayer:

Philippians 4:4-9. (4) "Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. (9) Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

1. Philippians 4:4. What does this verse say to do in consideration of what we have learned in Romans 5:3 and James 1:2-3?



2. Philippians 4:5. What does this verse say about how we should handle trials tribulations and temptations and why?

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3. Philippians 4:6. What does this verse say about the mindset we should have and how we should pray to God when we need help?

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4. Philippians 4:7. What does this verse say will be the result when you ask for God's wisdom and help without wavering?

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5. Philippians 4:8. What does this verse say we should do immediately after praying for God's wisdom and help?

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6. Philippians 4:9. What does this verse tell us about what else we can do while we are in tough situations and what will be the result if we do it?



What have we learned?

1. Philippians 4:4. We see from this verse that we should always joyfully glory in tribulations and temptations.
2. Philippians 4:5. We see from this verse that we should demonstrate our stability or moderation in situations as believers because the Lord is always at hand, or with us, in the form of the Holy Spirit that lives within us.
3. Philippians 4:6. We see from this verse that faith in trusting God gives us the confidence to not worry or care about what could go wrong. Likewise, we are told to submit our requests to God by prayer and supplication. This means we must pray with a willingness to allow God to mold or conform our thinking to His way of handling things using His wisdom. Finally, this means we should maintain our joyfulness and glorying in the Lord with thanksgiving or thanking Him for the opportunity to grow.
4. Philippians 4:7. We see from this verse that when we ask for God's wisdom and help without wavering in our firestorm, He will guard our hearts and our minds from succumbing to doubt, which gives us peace beyond all understanding.
5. Philippians 4:8. We see from this verse that when we finish praying a firestorm prayer, we should meditate or think about things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; things of virtue, and things worthy of praise.
6. Philippians 4:9. We see from this verse that if we also consider what we have been taught and learned, received, and heard and seen in discipleship we should do these things and the God of peace shall be with us.

Practically speaking, we are sticking this firestorm prayer and Godly, Scriptural, thoughts dead center in the middle of the storm and it results in God giving us peace. It gives us peace very much in the same way that Jesus was able to bring peace to the turbulent waters that were about to drown Peter. This process of sticking the Word of God in the middle of a firestorm of life is called engrafting. We see this mentioned in James 1:19-25 as follows:

(19) "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: (20) For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of

God. (21) Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. (22) But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (23) For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: (24) For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. (25) But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (emphasis added)

In this case the passage is addressing a person’s behavior in a firestorm of life. It teaches that instead of letting loose with wrath, or uncontrolled anger, which does not demonstrate the righteousness of God by faith, we should engraft, or stick, the Word of God right in the middle of the situation as we just learned in Philippians 4:4-9. The result is the ability by God’s grace to get through the firestorm in a way that allows the believer to grow to be more like Christ.

God’s mindset and part in firestorm prayer

Now that we have looked at what happens with us when we are embroiled in a firestorm of life, we will look at what happens with God when we are needing His help. Consider the following passage:

Romans 8:26-31. (26) “Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (27) And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. (28) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose*. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (31) What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?”

We see many things that take place with God when we are in a firestorm of life:

Romans 8:26. First, we see that the Holy Spirit in us helps us with any “infirmities.” The word infirmity means anything from a disease, sickness, lack of capability or strength, or moral weakness. In other words, whatever we are suffering from or struggling with. Likewise, when things are to the point that we do not even know what we should pray for,

God the Holy Spirit is already communicating on our behalf with groaning or sighs, which cannot be humanly uttered or spoken, to God the Son.

Romans 8:27. Second, God the Son knows what is on our hearts and knows what is on the mind of the Spirit. He takes those things and makes intercession with God the Father on our behalf according to God's will.

Romans 8:28. Third, because of our faith in the situation, we can be confident that God will work out everything for good for those that love God and are called according to God's purpose. This is describing believers or those that have trusted Christ as their Savior (Read also 1 John 5:1-5).

Romans 8:29. Fourth, God also foreknew (knew ahead of time) whom would trust Him as Savior in eternity past. Therefore, He predestined (foreknew and carried out) that believers would be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. This means that God is allowing us to go through these firestorms and will use them to mold us or change us to become like Jesus so that we would be among many brothers (and sisters) in Christ in eternity.

Romans 8:30. Fifth, those whom God predestinated to be like Christ, He called to a specific vocation in His plan. Through this calling, the believers would demonstrate that God had a just reason for calling them and their works would demonstrate this and result in rewards and glorification of those that are one in Christ.

Romans 8:31. Finally, because of God's way of loving and supporting and providing wisdom and power to handle the firestorms of life; the patience, experience, and hope we gain from these tribulations and trials reinforces that when God is for us, nothing and no one can prevail against us.

Wrapping it up

We see from all these things that firestorm prayer should be implemented the moment we encounter a firestorm of life. In doing so, we are using the power and wisdom of God to deal with tribulations and temptations in life the way that Jesus would deal with it. This will give us the patience, experience, and hope to grow into becoming more and more like Jesus with each tribulation and temptation, which will give us that ability to live abundantly and victoriously.

End of session Checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session you should be able to complete the following Checkpoint correctly without looking at your notes. When you have successfully completed this Checkpoint, then you are ready to move on to the next session. For

homework, devote time before the next session to study it, write your answers to any questions and add your own notes. May God bless you in your study.

Checkpoint instructions: Circle the correct answer, true or false:

1. True or False. Many people do not see the depth of what God does for us nor understand how keeping the commandments during the most troubling times can get us through the easy days of our lives.
2. True or False. Psychogenic shock is caused when someone goes through a severe or traumatic experience that causes their brains to be relaxed so that the person can do all things through Christ.
3. True or False. In times of stress there needs to be a go to answer Scripturally that will “kicked in” and guide us when we encounter our firestorms of life.
4. True or False. In Romans 5:1-5, we learn that tribulations give us experience and experience gives us patience.
5. True or False. In James 1:5-8, we are told that to move forward in faith to deal with both tribulations and temptations we must ask God for wisdom in faith, without any wavering.
6. True or False. In James 1:5-8, we are told that when our minds become a wind tossed sea of doubleminded trust and doubt, we do not receive anything from the Lord to do amazing things.
7. True or False. In Philippians 4:6, we are told to submit our requests to God by prayer and supplication, which means we must pray with a willingness to allow God to mold or conform our thinking to His way of handling things using His wisdom.
8. True or False. In Philippians 4:7, we are told that when we ask for God’s wisdom and help without wavering in our firestorm, He will guard our hearts and our minds from succumbing to doubt, which gives us peace beyond all understanding.
9. True or False. In Philippians 4:8, we are told that when we finish praying a firestorm prayer, we should meditate or think about the things that made us upset to see if the prayer worked.
10. True or False. In Romans 8:26-31, we are told that even when we do not know what to pray for, God the Holy Spirit communicates with God the Son, Whom communicates with God the father to address what is on our hearts and to set in motion a plan that addresses our situation.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 12: Sharing discipleship with others

In our last session we discussed firestorm prayer. We learned that many people do not see the depth of what God can do for us during the most troubling times of life. We saw how all of us may have a time when we need someone to help lead us through a life issue. However, we also found that we must look to Scripture to provide the “kick” we need to move forward and guide us when we encounter firestorms of life.

We found in Romans 5:1-5 that tribulations provide an opportunity to learn patience, which gives us experience, and experience gives us hope so that we are able to step out in faith without fear. In James 1:1-5, we learned that to move forward from tribulations and temptations we must ask God for wisdom in faith without wavering. We learned in Philippians 4:6-9, to submit our requests to God by prayer and supplication, praying with a willingness to allow God to mold or conform our thinking to His way of handling things. When we use His wisdom, He will guard our hearts and our minds from succumbing to doubt and give us peace beyond all understanding.

We also discovered that when we finish praying a firestorm prayer, we should not meditate or think about the things that made us upset, but on Godly things. Finally, in Romans 8:26-31, we learned that when we do not know what to pray for, God the Holy Spirit communicates with God the Son, Whom communicates with God the Father to address what is on our heart. This sets in motion His plan to address our situation.

Previous session Checkpoint review

Before we move on, let's take a moment to review our Checkpoint from the last session found on page 91. If you had any incorrect answers, mark them. Then take a moment after this session to look up the correct answer and write the page number where the answer is located so you can review them again later.

Helping those with various issues

In this final session we want to look at discipleship and using it to help others with various issues. In an earlier session, we found that many times we learn of people's problems in life as part of a normal conversation. Therefore, we must always be prepared to minister to them using the Word of God. However, if we were to try and write up a guide on how to handle each and every issue, we would discover that although many people experience the same issues, their experience and faith make their issue unique to them. This makes it practically impossible to create a step by step guide on how to resolve every issue because people are different. So, how do we even begin to understand the issues that cause struggles in someone's life and know how to help them?

Listening and learning

Remember earlier we learned that if we believe someone is in danger or are a danger to others, we must get the proper authorities involved. But let's just say that is not the case and they are just sharing their life and struggles with us. What do we do?

Listen to what they say (subjective) and look at what they do (objective):

The first thing we should do is consider who they are? What is their experience, and what they do share with you? For example, what is their background and their family situation? Are they a man or a woman? Do they proclaim that they are a Christian? Do they have a clear testimony of salvation? Are they attending a church and if so, where? Are they married? Single? Divorced? How old do you think they are? Are they working, unemployed, homeless? What is their education level? What relationships do they have?

We can see that the questions are endless, but that is the point. To learn about them, we must be willing to listen and let them tell you their story. We must be willing to ask appropriate questions and show genuine interest in learning about who they are. Do not be quick to make any assumptions or form opinions while they share with you their story. However, be sure to note important areas that might affect their life and consider root causes of problems they share. Most importantly, what Scriptures come to mind that speak to their situation (Read also Proverbs 18:13,15,17,19)?

Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal communication. What did they say and how did they say it? What was their body language? Do they display any emotions about what they are telling you? Do they demonstrate anger or blame others for difficulties or conflict? Do they use foul language while communicating their situation? Is there anything that is not said or seems to be left out of the story?

Remember, there are always two or more sides to a story, so we may not know the full story, which makes listening and patience very important. Do they seem to be distracted, hyper, or moody? Do they give any indications that they are under the influence of something? Do they smell like they have been smoking or drinking? Do they violate any of the rules of communication?

Do they blame someone or something for what happened? Do they make comments about how they can't, or won't do something? Do they describe something as "too much" or more than they can handle or put up with? Do they say they can never forgive someone for something? Do they refer to anything they did that is sinful behavior as a result of an illness? Do they blame any poor choices? Do they give excuses based on feelings? Is there any mention of God in their situation? If so, what is His part? Do they claim there is

someone out to get them or is watching them? The questions are endless, but the more you ask, the more you will learn.

What seems to be the problem?

What can we assess to identify a problem?

What do they say about the problem and its effects? Do they clearly state what is wrong or what happened? Do they describe the effects of the problem? Do they share how the problem is causing other problems? Do they share how what they are experiencing affects them? For example, do they say, "Every time this happens, I miss work and can't afford it." Or, "No matter what I do, it is never good enough to make him happy"? Do they seem to want help or a solution or do they say they have had enough and want to give up? Is the problem caused by something sinful? What is their standard of right and wrong?

How have they tried to deal with the problem? What have they tried in the past to deal with the problem? What is their normal practice? Do they have a plan for moving forward? Do any of their plans include Christ-centered practices? How do they feel when dealing with the problem? Have they had anyone try to help them? What or whom do they see as not helping in the situation?

Has anything worked or not worked? Are they willing to try something new? Are they willing to allow someone to be involved to help? If so, whom: God, you, the church, others that may be interested? Do they admit any fault or responsibility for anything they did to contribute to the problem? Once we have a good idea of who they are, how they communicate, and who or what they blame or is involved, we can identify the problem in its proper context.

Putting it all together

With all this information we see the questions are endless. However, God is faithful in that He has given us His Word, which will address any situation. The question is, do we know enough Scriptures that might apply to the situation? If not, we should get a concordance or a Bible reference book that can provide Scriptures we can study that apply. For example, if we see anger, do we know verses on anger? Or, do we know verses on how to communicate with others or even our children? What about verses that teach us about what we should be doing to help our children know the Lord?

With time, studying and memorizing Bible verses will make them part of our vocabulary and the Holy Spirit will bring them to mind just when they are needed. Before long you will really see that these complex situations are really not that complex at all. In fact, you will find that a good guideline for resolving life's issues is laid out in James Chapter 1

1. James 1:1-11. This passage addresses having joy when we encounter difficulties and temptations in life because it will enable us to learn patience, experience, and have hope. It sets direction in how to address life issues in faith knowing God will give peace of mind. This peace of mind is based on God's way of thinking. This thinking will impact different people in different ways no matter if they are humble in spirit or rich in pridefulness. Furthermore, no matter who we are we will live a life and die.
2. James 1:12-16. This passage addresses the rewards we will receive as believers when we stand before God and He addresses what works we did that were motivated out of love for Him. It also reveals the true source of temptations and the effects they have upon humanity and warns us not to do them.
3. James 1:17-20. This passage addresses the gifts God gives us and His perfect ways that serve as a model for how we should use them as born again believers. It also directs us to keep in mind how we encounter things, patiently deliberate, and respond so as to demonstrate His righteousness.
4. James 1:21-25. This passage addresses the process of engrafting the all-powerful Word of God in our life. It also directs us to compare ourselves in the light of His Word and commit to doing something about it when we recognize where we do not measure up to the fullness of Christ, and how He will bless us for the same.
5. James 1:26-27. This passage addresses our religion or the standards we use when making choices about how we live our life that reveal what is in our heart. It also shows the character of our religion before God in our visitation of widows and orphans and living a life not contaminated by the world and its lusts thereof.

Final Approach

Now that we have guidelines to determine how to help someone with any life issue, we can take a look at an example of what we should do to finally address the situation. Remember, the first step is to find out what is their story. We consider who they are, how they communicate, and who or what do they blame as being involved. Next, we look for what seems to be the problem. We consider what do they say about the problem and its effects and what they have tried to do to deal with the problem. From that we try to discern what is the root cause of the problem and come up with a plan to help.

Example: A person tells you that they are in a relationship with an abusive person. They add that they both grew up in non-Christian homes. They have no Christian friends or church involvement. They also say their friends tell them they should not put up with the other person and even go as far as telling them they should separate or get divorced. They share how the abuse seems to be at its worst when the other person drinks. The abuse makes them get angry and they get in physical fights. The reason they feel angry is because they do not like how the person talks to them or always disagrees with them without considering if they are right. They feel like they are not respected and are tired of always fighting. They feel that if the other person would stop trying to control everything,

it would get better. After they fight, they are angry and avoid the other person until they cool off. Before long, the cycle starts again. They tell you they have no hope and need help.

What is their story?

For this example, we will use the S-O-A-P method to explore a problem and come up with a plan to help. S=Subjective information. O=Objective information from observations. A=Assessment that reveals a problem from God's perspective. P=Plan from God's Word to address the problem.

Who are they? (S)

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What has been their experience and people involved? (S, O)

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What emotions are contributing to the problems or behaviors? (O)

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What is the thinking that is at the root of the problem or behaviors? (S, O)

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What questions do we have to assess the problem (A)?

What is the actual problem and the behaviors involved? (A)

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-
-

Is the problem reflective of the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh? What Scripture verses might apply? (A)

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-

Are the emotions experienced reflective of the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh? What Scripture verses might apply? (A)

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-
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-

Is the thinking reflective of the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh? What Scripture verses might apply? (A)

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-

What is the plan? (P)

Now that we have a good idea of the problem, the participants, the behaviors, the emotions, and the thoughts involved, what do we do? Consider the following:

What was tried or done to resolve the problem? (P)

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Establish trust by: (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

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Provide hope by: (John 15:8-11; Acts 20:31-32; Philippians 4:13; James 1:3-8; 1 John 4:4)

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Share what God can do by: (Romans 5:3-5; Philippians 4:4-9; James 1:3-8)

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Help them to establish a new direction by: (2 Timothy 2:1-16; 2 Timothy 4:2-5)

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Wrapping it up

Hopefully, we should now have a good idea how discipleship is used to address life issues. We learned how to find out what is their story. We explored what seems to be the problem by considering what was said about the problem and its effects, and what they have tried to do to deal with the problem. Finally, we came up with a plan to help.

We put it all together by looking at an example of a situation. We considered what we should ask or need to know; what is the problem and the behaviors involved; the emotions involved, and the thinking that is at the root of the problem. With this information we were able to discern the spiritual roots of the problem and come up with a plan to help.

Final Charge

Praise God and congratulations that you have made it to the end of this Biblical Discipleship Foundations course. In twelve sessions you have just begun to understand the foundations of Biblical Discipleship and how to use it to make Christ-like change in your life and help others to do the same. We must remember a very important truth that we discussed earlier: even if you memorized every single word and every concept and application in this course it is not your foundation for life. Instead, your foundation for life is demonstrated in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 3:9-11. (9) "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. (10) According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (11) For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ".

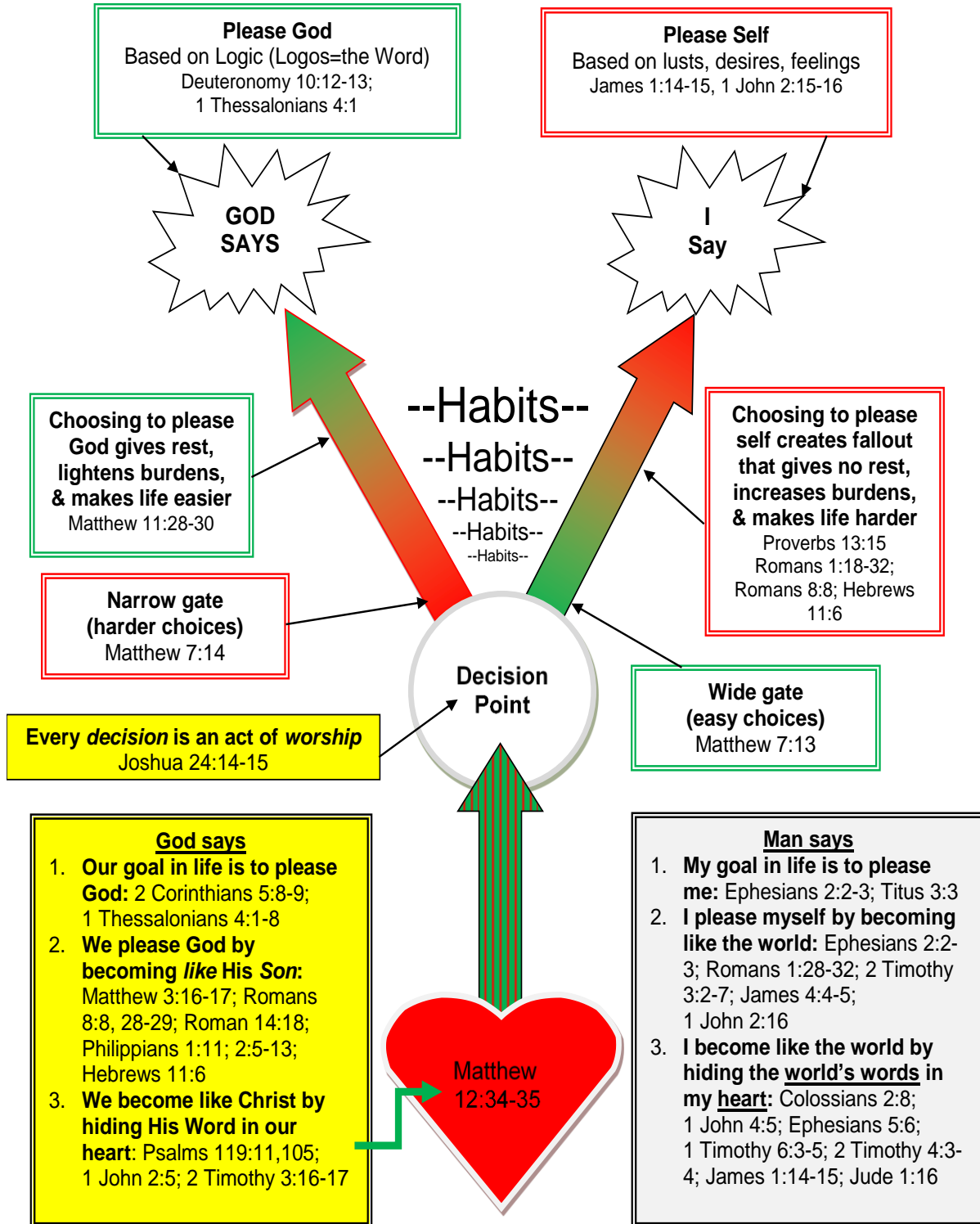
Therefore, use the foundation you have, which is found in Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone Whom is the Living Word of God: spoken by holy men of God, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost and written in the Old and New Testaments.

Preach the Word! Be instant in season and out of season! Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine! Be watchful; endure afflictions; do the work of the ministry God has called you to do in love and appreciation for what He has done in you and for His glory!

May God bless you in His calling.

[END OF COURSE]

Appendix A
Decision Tree



Appendix B
The Family Tree of Resolving Guilt

Guilt Culpability and liability			
Seared Conscience	Untrained Conscience	Biblical Conscience	Weak Conscience
No longer activated by Biblical criteria 1 Timothy 4:2	Has never been taught Biblical criteria Romans 1-3	Activated by Biblical criteria 2 Timothy 3:16-17 1 Timothy 1:5	Activated by unbiblical criteria Romans 14:1,2,23
No guilt feelings	No guilt feelings	Produces guilt feelings for right known reasons	Produces guilt feelings for right unknown reasons
No excuse	No excuse	Lack of faith	Lack of knowledge
Remedy: Renewing of mind through God's Word	Remedy: Renewing of mind through God's Word	Remedy: Confess sin and ask for forgiveness	Remedy: Retrain with Biblical truth
Confess sin and ask for forgiveness →	Confess sin and ask for forgiveness →	Guilt resolved Biblically	Confess sin and ask for forgiveness ←

Appendix C - Session 1 Checkpoint Answers

1. Depending on whom you ask, the words “Biblical Discipleship” often brings up different **opinions**. (pg. 4)
2. Sadly, a large number of people who provide what they call Christian counseling and discipleship tend to use the Bible like a **hammer** to pound people into what they think they should be. (pg 4)
3. For those whom have experienced or know of Biblical discipleship done the right way, they know it as **Christ – centered**. (pg 5 “discussion”)
4. Every life issue will come with its own set of **circumstances** that will often result in more than just one person being upset. Sometimes the **reaction** to the life issue is worse than the issue. (pg 7, #1)
5. Establishing **trust** is necessary so that what is at the heart of the life issue can be openly discussed. (pg 7, #4)
6. Teaching practical ways to deal with the life issue to prevent it from happening again must be done with **encouragement**. (pg 8, #5)
7. According to John 10:10, Jesus described the fact that we live in a world where the entire creation **groans** and struggles from the satanic effects of **sin**. (pg 8 para 1)
8. Jesus also described in John 10:10 how He also came to give us a better life through a close **relationship** with Him, which is the **foundation** of Biblical discipleship and the reason why we should do it. (pg 8, para 3)
9. It is imperative that Biblical discipleship is rooted in the **gospel** of Jesus Christ through faith by the Word of God and that it is **empowered** by the Holy Spirit. (pg 8, bottom)
10. Biblical discipleship is used to identify and understand the **thinking, feelings,** and **behaviors** that God wants to change. (pg 9, #1)
11. Biblical discipleship uses God’s **Word** to **change** the thinking and behaviors. (pg 9, #2)
12. Biblical discipleship is motivated by the **love** of others and for the **glory** of God. (pg 9, #3)

Appendix C - Session 2 Checkpoint Answers

1. It should make sense that if we hope to help someone make **positive change** in their life then we should be able to do it in our **own life**. (pg 11)
2. Likewise, if we seek to help others to **grow** to be like **Christ**, then we must also be striving to **grow** to be like **Christ**. (pg 11)
3. A good Biblical disciple sees God's **provision**: ministering as a **gifted servant**. (pg 12)
4. A good Biblical disciple sees God's **pattern**: ministering with the **mind** of Christ. (pg 12)
5. A good Biblical disciple sees God's **plan**: ministering to strengthen the **body of Christ**, to make the body more **efficient**, and to increase the body by encouraging the **love** of one another. (pg 12)
6. We learned from Jesus' encounter with the woman in John 8:1-11 that **problems** should be **expected** at any time. (pg 15)
7. Problems often reveal **sinful thinking** and behaviors as well as **Godly** thinking and behaviors. (pg 15)
8. Problems can provide opportunities to **teach** and **mold** us to be more like **Christ**. (pg 15)
9. Changing our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to what God says we should do requires us to actively fill our hearts with the **Word** of **God** and make sure that we are in an **environment** where we can **grow**. (pg 16)

Appendix C - Session 3 Checkpoint Answers

1. It is important that we have a basic understanding of non-Biblical counseling and coaching so that we can make **informed** decisions. (pg 19)
2. When you know the **normal**, the **abnormal** stands out. (pg19)
3. Freud thought man was not responsible for **behaviors** because he is by nature an **animal**. (pg 20)
4. Skinner believed that man's problems result from **environmental** failure and lack of **rewards**. (pg 20)
5. Rogers viewed man as basically **good** with the **potential** within himself to do or be anything he wants to be. (pg 20)
6. Jesus believes that man's problems were a result of him being a **fallen sinner** by choice and that he is drawn away by his own **lusts** from being what God wants him to be (James 1:13). (pg 21)
7. We are in no position to give any **advice** or **instructions** when it comes to the use of **medications** to treat mental illnesses. (pg 24)
8. If someone on psychological drugs describes any potential **desire** to **harm** themselves or others, strongly advise that they talk to their health care provider. (pg 24)
9. The Biblical disciple's role is not to make a **diagnosis**. Instead, the Biblical disciple should be an advocate for the **health** and **safety** of any person that needs immediate help no matter who it is. (pg 24)

Appendix C - Session 4 Checkpoint Answers

1. In order to help others using the Word of God, it is important that we have a solid **foundation** when it comes to Biblical study and **interpretation**. (pg 26)
2. There will be times when we suffer the **persecution** of those whom **belittle** what we have to say and may even do things to hurt us. However, we must remember that God will help us to **think** clearly. (pg 27)
3. **Outside** of the Bible, no book can see where your **heart** is in that moment of time when you are **struggling**. (pg 29)
4. We must trust that God will provide the **wisdom** we need as well as the **results** when we apply His **Word** to the situation at hand. (pg 29)
5. We must make the effort to invest the **time** and energy into **studying** the Bible so that we are **familiar** with what God says and how it applies in certain scenarios and situations. (pg 29)
6. When we are trying to help someone and we encounter their unique situation, the **Holy Spirit** will bring to mind the **Scripture verses** that **apply** at the time they are most needed. (pg 29)
7. It is critical that we are faithful to **study** in a way that we **learn** and can **remember** what we are **taught**. (pg 30)
8. We must keep in mind certain **rules** or **factors** of Bible study that will help us to make sure we are allowing God's Words and wisdom to apply and not **our own**. (pg 33)
9. It is important that we study every **verse** and every **passage** of the Bible in light of its **context**. (pg 30)
10. There are no **contradictions** in the Bible, only "apparent **contradictions**." (pg 31)
11. Comparing Scriptures with other passages is a good practice, but discounting other passages that **contradict** or disagree with what we **think** a passage means is not a good **practice**. (pg 31)
12. Rules of Bible study will help to ensure that you are not **deceived** in your knowledge and **understanding** of God's Word. (pg 32)

Appendix C - Session 5 Checkpoint Answers

1. Only Biblical counseling addresses the **nature** of man at his most basic level, at his **soul** and **spirit**. (pg 34)
2. When the **soul** and **spirit** of a person is understood, explaining man's **motivations** and **behaviors** becomes very clear. (pg 34)
3. Without the **Holy Spirit**, we are subject to Satan's **tempting**, **deception**, and seduction to **live** for him. (pg 34)
4. God made us realize the **darkness** of our **hearts** and how we need the power and a way to leave the darkness of the **past** and come into the **light** of the **future**. (pg 35)
5. Making the right **decisions** is more than doing the right thing: It is doing the right thing for the **right reasons**. (pg 37)
6. We should be motivated to demonstrate our **love** for God by loving, or esteeming, our **neighbor** above ourselves in a way that would **please** us if we were in their **situation**. (pg 37)
7. We must always make it clear that it is Christ that has **inspired** us to **sacrificially** help them. This will help them to **trust** us to help them and **listen** to what we have to say about **Christ**. (pg 37)
8. We must also encourage those we help to get involved with **discipleship**, which involves studying, learning, fellowshiping with other believers and coming to church where they can meet others that **love Christ**. (pg 38)
9. Understanding the details of making Biblical **decisions** should help us to **target** our efforts in making change in **our** lives and helping **others** to do the same. (pg 38)
10. Every **decision** is an act of **worship**. (Appendix A Decision Tree)
11. We please God by becoming **like** His **Son**. (Appendix A Decision Tree)

Appendix C - Session 6 Checkpoint Answers

1. If you take a human anthropology course at most colleges, there is little discussion about beliefs and practices of cultures that have any **foundation** in a **moral code** such as the **Ten Commandments**. (pg 40)
2. Without a **moral code** any **cultural** norms that are in keeping with current day practices are **embraced** and those that are not are **rejected**. (pg 40)
3. Today, many people will equate **greatness**, not with a moral **foundation**, but with **ideological** ones that have proven to be disastrous throughout history. (pg 40)
4. The process of **change** and **growth** in the nature and character of man is demonstrated in the Circle of **Discipleship**.(pg 40)
5. **Spiritual** growth **enables** us to be **victorious** in life and to be prepared to help others **grow**. (pg 42)
6. **Babies** in Christ can have a "**Failure** to Thrive" and will need attention so that they can develop Spiritually to live fully **functional** and productive lives for **Christ**. (pg 44)
7. The process of Spiritual growth is often called progressive **sanctification**. (pg 44)
8. Progressive **sanctification** means that the person should be progressing toward being **holier** with each passing day. (pg 44)
9. Practically speaking, progressive sanctification involves making certain **practices** like Bible study, prayer, fellowship, church attendance, serving in local church ministries, and sharing the **gospel** part of our routine each **week**. (pg 44)
10. It is important that the local **church** considers how to integrate **Spiritual** growth into all of their **ministries**. (pg 45)
11. A personal approach whereby each person in the local church has the opportunity to be **paired up** with others that will help them *grow* or to help others grow is referred to as **discipleship**. (pg 45)
12. The proper view of progressive sanctification (Spiritual growth) contains several **Scriptural** truths: The Godhead of the **Trinity** is involved; we must be **active** in doing our part; and it is a **life-long gradual** process. (pg 46)

Appendix C - Session 7 Checkpoint Answers

1. A general sense that **feelings** are caused by something is a **common** belief. (pg 49)
2. Since we are made in God's **image**, that means that we can possess some of His attributes and **feelings**. (pg 49)
3. As humans we all also have three foundational human **lusts** or desires that produce feelings and motivate us to do ungodly things: lust of the **flesh**, lust of the **eyes**, and the **pride** of life. (pg 50)
4. Lusts are known to lead people **astray** because they produce **thinking** and **emotions** that make the lusts and desires **feel** right. (pg 50)
5. Lust of the flesh: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to please our **earthly bodies**. (pg 51)
6. Lust of the eyes: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to **accumulate** earthly **possessions**. (pg 51)
7. Pride of Life: These are ungodly feelings and desires that lead us to do ungodly things to make ourselves to be in a higher **standing** or **importance** over God or others. (pg 52)
8. Guilt is one of many emotions. However, it is unique to God's **plan** of **salvation** for humanity. (pg 52)
9. Biblically speaking, guilt is an indicator to us that our **beliefs** and **lifestyles** are not in keeping with God's Word. (pg 52)
10. When we do un-Christlike things that result in our guilt, we should handle it **Biblically** and not according to our **feelings**. (pg 53)
11. Guilt needs to be **acknowledged** and **confessed**. (pg 54)
12. We should not handle guilt by forgiving **God** or ourselves. (pg 54)

Appendix C – Session 8 Checkpoint Answers

1. Unlike the world, which embraces the **past** to explain human **behaviors**, it is important that we do not let **events** of the **past define** who we are. (pg 56)
2. Handling the past **Biblically** is important and necessary to remove any **barriers**, which might prevent us from being who **God** wants us to be. (pg 56)
3. Before we can deal with our past Biblically, we must ask what is it about the past that we think is **causing problems**? (pg 57)
4. We must always keep in mind that **guilt** should point us toward **Christ** and lead to a desire to make **restitution** or necessary **changes**. (pg 57)
5. It is important to understand that an **apology** is not the same as asking for **forgiveness**. (pg 57)
6. Once forgiveness is asked and granted it is important to understand that the **confession** and **forgiveness** removes the **sin** from the **relationship**. (pg 58)
7. Some of the most effective **counsel** is when someone uses their **experiences** to help and **serve** others that might be **struggling** with similar issues. (pg 60)
8. Unfortunately, many local church **leaders** do not want to address **sin based** issues because they are afraid of **offending** people. (pg 61)
9. God gave us instructions for local church **discipline** or addressing issues of **unrepentant sin** that proliferates in the local church so that the **flock** is **protected**. (pg 61)
10. When there is an issue between two **believers**, the one "**offended**" should first consider if **love** can **cover** it. (pg 62)
11. If someone is not part of the **problem** or part of the **solution** then sharing information with uninvolved parties is **gossip**. (pg 62)
12. We should never use church **discipline** as a **hammer**, but as a loving **plea** for **repentance** and **reconciliation**. If unsuccessful, **weeping** should be the result, not fighting and arguing. (pg 62)

Appendix C – Session 9 Checkpoint Answers

1. Many times, we learn about someone's life issues as part of a normal **conversation**. (pg 65)
2. Every one of us has **problems**. Therefore, we must be tuned in and **discerning** about what is being said no matter who it is or the situation that we are in when the conversation takes place. (pg 65)
3. We must have a constant awareness of our **testimony** and keep in mind what we learned about where we stand in light of God's **grace** and our position in His plan when considering our discipleship **methods** and **practices**. (pg 65-66)
4. Biblical discipleship is not about us inspiring others to follow **us**; it is about us inspiring others to follow **Jesus**. (pg 66)
5. The goal that we should be trying to accomplish is that the other person would know Christ as their **Savior** and that they should also learn how to know Christ as their **Lord**. (pg 66)
6. Without referencing the living **Word** of **God**, Biblical discipleship loses a great deal of its **power** because the **foundation** that it is based on is not even mentioned. (pg 66)
7. Our goal should be to promote **positive change** through the gospel of Jesus Christ, the **wisdom** and counsel of God's Word, and the **power** of the Holy Spirit. (pg 67)
8. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are to collectively have the **mind** of Christ in how we **interact** with each other. (pg 69)
9. We must always be careful not to allow ourselves to get caught up in the **emotions** of those things that tempt us to speak of others or malign their **reputations**. (pg 69)
10. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should take comfort in the fact that we have God's **support** in that He **watches** over us and intervenes as our needs arise for **protection**. (pg 69)
11. As believers in Jesus Christ, we have the assurance that if we **suffer** for doing God's will that He can give us **happiness** in the situation so that we are not **afraid**. (pg 69)
12. We must always strive to focus on **glorifying God** instead of **winning** the **argument** to chalk up another win to our score. (69)

Appendix C – Session 10 Checkpoint Answers

Be honest: Speak the truth in love; shouting does not make it true

- Numbers 14:1-10
- When the Israelites received the spy report from the ten spies that had no faith, they turned on Moses and Aaron and wanted to kill them until God intervened

- Job 2:1-7.
- When Job's body was attacked by Satan, his wife rebuked him and told him to curse God and die.

1. Keep Current: Resolve issues today; do not bring them up tomorrow.

- 2 Kings 5:1-11
- Naaman, Captain of the host goes to Elisha to be cured of leprosy, but Elisha sends a note to tell him to bathe in the Jordan River seven time. Naaman refuses and leaves mad. His servants talked him into returning and doing as he was advise, which healed him. If he had resolved the issue right away, he would have been spared much grief

2. Attack the problem, not the person: Build up do not tear down; avoid absolutes like always, never, and ever.

- John 10:20-39
- The Jews were not happy with what Jesus was teaching so they accused Him of being possessed by a demon. They ridiculed each other for even listening to Jesus. Later they tried to physically attack Him

3. Act don't react: Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

- John 26:57-68.
- While being examined by Caiaphas the High Priest, Jesus was being interrogated to the point of physical violence, yet He did not react sinfully

Note: Other Scriptures and/or answers may also be correct

Appendix C – Session 11 Checkpoint Answers

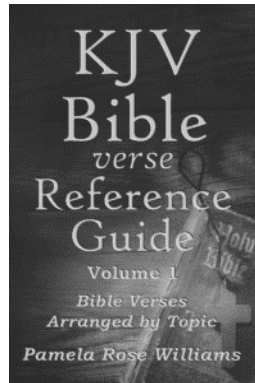
1. True or **False**. Many people do not see the depth of what God does for us nor understand how keeping the commandments during the most troubling times can get us through the easy days of our lives. (pg 83)
2. True or **False**. Psychogenic shock is caused when someone goes through a severe or traumatic experience that causes their brains to be relaxed so that the person can do all things through Christ. (pg 83)
3. **True** or False. In times of stress there needs to be a go to answer Scripturally that will “kicked in” and guide us when we encounter our firestorms of life. (pg 84)
4. True or **False**. In Romans 5:1-5, we learn that tribulations give us experience and experience gives us patience. (pg 84)
5. **True** or False. In James 1:5-8, we are told that to move forward in faith to deal with both tribulations and temptations we must ask God for wisdom in faith, without any wavering. (pg 85)
6. **True** or False. In James 1:5-8, we are told that when our minds become a wind tossed sea of doubleminded trust and doubt, we do not receive anything from the Lord to do amazing things. (pg 85)
7. **True** or False. In Philippians 4:6, we are told to submit our requests to God by prayer and supplication, which means we must pray with a willingness to allow God to mold or conform our thinking to His way of handling things using His wisdom. (pg 88)
8. **True** or False. In Philippians 4:7, we are told that when we ask for God’s wisdom and help without wavering in our firestorm, He will guard our hearts and our minds from succumbing to doubt, which gives us peace beyond all understanding. (pg 88)
9. True or **False**. In Philippians 4:8, we are told that when we finish praying a firestorm prayer, we should meditate or think about the things that made us upset to see if the prayer worked. (pg 88)
10. **True** or False. In Romans 8:26-31, we are told that even when we do not know what to pray for, God the Holy Spirit communicates with God the Son, Whom communicates with God the father to address what is on our hearts and to set in motion a plan that addresses our situation. (pg 89-90)

Appendix D
Other Christianity Every Day Resources

(www.christianityeveryday.com/resources):

KJV Bible Verse Reference Guide: Bible Verses Arranged by Topic

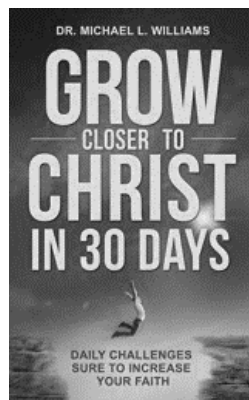
By Pamela Rose Williams



The beloved King James Version of the Bible has been around for more than 400 years. *The KJV Bible Verse Reference Guide Volume 1: Bible Verses Arranged by Topic* is the perfect companion to this bestselling translation of the Bible to add to your library. Pamela Rose Williams has been collecting KJV Bible verses for many years and now you can own her handy reference guide that includes hundreds and hundreds of Bible verses. Popular topics such as: creation, faith, life, marriage, peace, praise, salvation, truth and many, many more are included. The guide is arranged into the major categories of Character, General Topics, Life Challenges and Physical/Spiritual. It is a great tool for personal and family study as well as ministry reference. This is a must have for every Christian that seeks to cultivate their relationship with Jesus Christ. “*KJV Bible Verse Reference Guide Volume 1: Bible Verses Arranged by Topic*” is available from the CED Resource Center (www.christianityeveryday.com/resources).

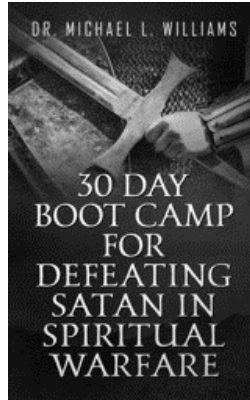
Grow Closer to Christ in 30 Days: Daily Challenges Sure to Increase Your Faith

By Dr. Michael L. Williams



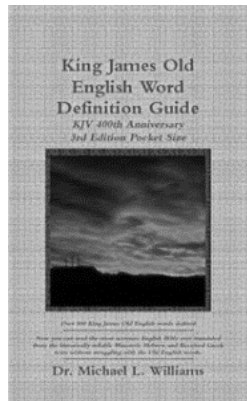
Take a 30 day journey toward drawing closer to Christ as Dr. Mike presents a unique approach in this daily devotional. These devotions are built around the Lord’s lesson plan from Acts Chapter 2. But don’t just read, put your faith into action as you increase your faith with each daily challenge. We pray that as you build your faith through these lessons that you come away refreshed and renewed, ready to continue daily in God’s Word. “*Grow Closer to Christ in 30 Days*” is available from the CED Resource Center (www.christianityeveryday.com/resources).

30 Day Boot Camp for Defeating Satan in Spiritual Warfare *By Dr. Michael L. Williams*



Spiritual warfare is a subject that many believers and nonbelievers avoid. Mostly because they simply do not believe it is real or they do not know how to deal with it. On this 30 day journey you will be progressively challenged to prepare yourself for spiritual warfare and then engage in battle. Dr. Mike shares from his own military experience as he offers the tools that are available for spiritual warfare straight from the pages of Scripture. During your boot camp you will face “Hell Week”, become “Spirit Strong”, learn how you can “Know the Enemy”, “Prepare for Battle”, and ultimately “Defeat the Enemy”. In the end you will be confident in how you can have victory over Satan as you walk in newness of life. “30 Day Boot Camp for Defeating Satan in Spiritual Warfare” is available from the CED Resource Center (www.christianityeveryday.com/resources).

King James Old English Word Definition Guide (3rd Edition) *By Dr. Michael L. Williams*



The King James Old English Word Definition Guide, 3rd edition, KJV 400th Anniversary Pocket Size, enables the user to read the most accurate English Bible ever translated from the historically reliable Masoretic Hebrew and Received Greek texts without struggling with the Old English words. Originally published in 2001 followed by a 2nd edition revision in 2008, this 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible 3rd edition substantially adds to the previous editions. This 3rd edition adds two hundred more Old English words for a new total of over eight hundred words. It adds a new section of King James helps, which explain some of the techniques the translators used to ensure important information in the original texts was clarified and communicated. Finally, this edition is smaller in size, so it fits better inside a Bible cover, pocket, or purse. This resource is written and published by Dr. Michael L. Williams. Click on the picture above for ordering information. “King James Old English Word Definition Guide” is available from the CED Resource Center (www.christianityeveryday.com/resources).