

myDisciplemaker



EQUIPPING YOU TO BECOME AND BE HIS DISCIPLE

"Establish my footsteps in Your word."

Psalm 119:133

Disciplemaking 1

Abiding in His Word

"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8:31-32

My name :

My teacher's name:



Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

Foreword

It is the official policy of Acts One Eight that this course not be just stored in your bookcase or on your hard drive. You have official permission and the strongest encouragement to apply it to yourself and to multiply it into the lives of others. This course can help you learn and abide in His Word as a disciple of Jesus Christ ... and assist you in teaching others to do the same. Before teaching this course, review the *Teaching Others* appendix.

You may contact John Morris, the author, for an e-mail response to any question about this course. Just send an e-mail to John at questions@MyDisciplemaker.org.

Disciplemaking 1, as well as other courses and lessons, is available from www.MyDisciplemaker.org. On that site, you can study online ... and/or print your own free copies.

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Disciplmaking 1 Being His Witness

INTRODUCTION

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20

THE COMMAND TO MAKE DISCIPLES

After Jesus was crucified, He appeared to His disciples several times before He ascended into heaven. At one of those appearances on a mountain in Galilee, Jesus gave His disciples the commandment that is quoted above. That important commandment is known as the Great Commission. The individual product of obedience to the Great Commission is a disciple. Obedience to the Great Commission is a multiplication process.

THE DEFINITION OF A DISCIPLE

A disciple is a student and follower of Jesus Christ ... one who lives by and spreads His teaching. Jesus set high standards for those wanting to be His disciples. Jesus explained that His disciples must put Him above their own lives, relationships, and all, Luke 14:26-33. He said that being His disciple means abiding in His Word, John 8:31-32. Notice that He speaks to believers in those two verses. Jesus added that our love for one another demonstrates to the world that we are His disciples, John 13:35. In addition, He explained that we glorify the Father and prove to be (i.e. become) His disciples by bearing much fruit, John 15:8.

THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLEMAKING

The definition above makes disciplmaking seem to be out of reach. However, it is God's work combined with our work ... and therefore attainable. The first step is belief. A nonbeliever becomes a believer. Then that new believer, being baptized and taught to obey, grows to become a disciple. However, the process is not complete until that disciple becomes a disciplmaker. In the Great Commission, Jesus stated that we are to be *"teaching them to observe all that I commanded you"*. One of the commandments He gave was the Great Commission. Therefore, the process of disciplmaking includes teaching disciples to be disciplmakers.

COMMITMENTS

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:2

Paul instructed Timothy to entrust what he had taught him to faithful men who could teach others. The process multiplied to a fourth generation ... from Paul ... to Timothy ... to faithful men ... to others also. That kind of multiplication is the goal in this course. Each lesson is a building block in the process of becoming a disciple and a disciplemaker. For this process to work, it takes effort on the part of both the teacher and the student.

THE COMMITMENTS TO TAKE THIS COURSE

Be available. Make the time available for these lessons.

Be conscientious. This requires effort ... pray, study, and review.

Be teachable. Be willing to learn, think, grow, and change. Apply what you learn to your own life. Then teach someone. Apply and multiply.

THE COMMITMENTS TO TEACH THIS COURSE

Be committed to them. Give your time as a teacher and as a friend to those you teach. Be available to them. Remember, they are to be disciples of Jesus Christ ... not of you.

Be an example. Your life is a demonstration of your commitment to God, to His Word, and to the process of disciplmaking. Your thorough knowledge of the materials will show that the lessons can be learned.

Be flexible and firm. Be patient ... it takes time to learn and to apply the content of these lessons. Give enough time to your student(s) to learn, to grow, and even to fail. Encourage them and hold them accountable to learn ... to apply what they learn ... and then to teach others also.

Be prepared. Know each lesson thoroughly ... and study the appendix on improving your teaching skills.



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**Disciplemaking 1
Abiding in His Word**

SALVATION

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

AN ETERNAL DECISION

The Bible makes it clear that everyone will live forever ... the only question is where that will be. The answer to that is based on our decision about Jesus Christ ... to believe in Him or to reject Him. With eternity in the balance, no other decision is as important as our decision about Jesus.

THE PROBLEM

Simply stated, our sin separates us from God. We are guilty by association with the human race (imputed sin). We are afflicted with a natural tendency to sin (inherited sin nature). And on our own, we do wrong things (personal sin) that separate us from Him. Without God's intervention, we would face an eternity away from Him.

THE SOLUTION

We are incapable of solving this problem ... but God is capable of solving it. He took the initiative. He sent His Son to die on the cross in our place. When we believe in Jesus as our personal Savior, His substitution pays for our sins (redemption) ... satisfies God (propitiation) ... changes us (reconciliation) ... and gives us His righteousness (imputation). Then God declares that we are righteous (justification).

THE RESULT

We are born into God's family when we put our personal faith in Jesus. Our good works do not save us ... they do not produce faith. But good works demonstrates real faith. Good works are a consequence rather than a prerequisite of our faith. As believers, we have the wonderful privilege of knowing that we have eternal life. We are eternally safe because no one can snatch us out of His hand.

SIN

The Bible makes clear statements about sin. It states that sin is real in our lives. The result of our sin is very serious ... separating us from God ... on our own to face an eternity away from His presence. However, God provided a remedy. He offers that remedy to us as a free gift.

THE REALITY OF SIN. Sin is anything that does not express or conform to the goodness of God. It can be a thought, Matthew 5:27-28 ... a deed committed, John 8:34 ... or a deed omitted, James 4:17. The words for sin in the Bible mean missing the mark, transgressing the Law, rebelling, defiance, disobedience, wickedness, evil, and unrighteousness. Sin can be against others or against ourselves, 1 Corinthians 6:18. Ultimately all sins are against God, Genesis 39:9, Psalm 41:4 and 51:4, and Romans 8:7. Three categories of sin are described in the Bible. The first category is imputed sin described in Romans 5:12-21. It is guilt by association with the human race ... in Adam all sinned. The second is our inherited sin nature referred to in Ephesians 2:3 and Psalm 51:5. This is our natural tendency to sin. That natural tendency brings us unavoidably to the third category, personal sin. Personal sins are those that we commit in thought or deed ... in attitude or action.

THE RESULT OF SIN. The reality of sin in each of our lives is unavoidable. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23. It is also unavoidable that we must deal with the consequences, or results, of that sin. One result is that we are alienated from God. We are His enemies, Romans 5:10. We are separated from Him. *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God."* Isaiah 59:2. We stand before God guilty, judged, and condemned. On our own without God's intervention, we stand condemned to an eternity *"away from the presence of the Lord,"* 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ... and condemned to *"disgrace and everlasting contempt."* Daniel 12:2.

THE REMEDY FOR SIN. Sin and its accompanying condemnation are humanly unavoidable. However, God has provided the remedy for sin in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. *"While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."* Romans 5:6. *"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross."* 1 Peter 2:24. *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all."* 1 Timothy 2:5-6. *"Everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."* Acts 10:43. Everyone will deal with the sin problem in one of two ways: (1) by eternal separation from God, or (2) by God's solution received through faith in Jesus.

SALVATION

In His great love, God provided salvation through the death of Jesus to all those who believe. Salvation has different facets ... directed toward God, sin, and man. An understanding of salvation is rooted in these different aspects of His great gift. Six of these are described below.

1. SUBSTITUTION ... JESUS TOOK MY PLACE. He died on the cross as our substitute. All of salvation is based on this one fact. It is more than His dying for our benefit. He died in our place.

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."
Romans 5:6

"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter 3:18

2. REDEMPTION ... MY SIN WAS PAID FOR. This is directed toward sin. Redemption is buying or delivering by payment of a price. Redemption is a payment for sin ... made to God. The payment was the blood of Christ. The life, or soul, of the flesh is in the blood, Leviticus 17:11. The payment was His life. Jesus Christ gave His life for our sins.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us." Galatians 3:13

"Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."
1 Peter 1:18-19

"For Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Revelation 5:9-10

3. PROPITIATION ... GOD WAS SATISFIED. This is directed toward God. Propitiation means satisfaction. The Bible states that Christ Himself is the sacrifice that satisfies God ... that appeases or placates God's wrath. The justice of God has to be satisfied.

"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:17

"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." 1 John 2:2

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10

SALVATION (continued)

4. RECONCILIATION ... I WAS AND CAN BE CHANGED. This is a change directed toward man. It makes man acceptable to God. Reconciliation brings two into harmony ... makes them compatible again. God did not change. He does not need to change. Man needs to be changed. At the cross, mankind was changed ... made savable. We are changed individually when we believe. Then we are given the ministry and word of reconciliation ... to share the Gospel with the lost people of our world.

"For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:10

"Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

5. IMPUTATION ... DOUBLE TRANSFER. Upon belief in Christ, all of our sin is transferred to Him ... and all of His righteousness is transferred to us. The sinless Christ became sin on our behalf ... and we, the unrighteous ones, were given His righteousness.

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

"And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

1 Peter 2:24

6. JUSTIFICATION ... GOD DECLARED ME RIGHTEOUS. Justification is a declaration of righteousness. It is God's pronouncement that we are right in our standing before Him. The cross makes us righteous. Justification declares that we are righteous. As a part of our salvation, we are justified by Christ's work on the cross. After we have been saved, our resultant good works justify us ... they declare our salvation, James 2:24.

"Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1

"So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, so even through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous." Romans 5:18-19

A REVIEW OF SIN AND SALVATION

SIN

Sin is very real in every person's life ... and it produces a serious problem as a result. Each person's inherited sin nature (innate tendency to sin) unavoidably leads to personal sin. Then that personal sin separates him or her from God. If it weren't for God's intervention, we would have to pay the debt for our sin - eternal separation from Him. However, God sent Jesus to pay for our sin by His death on the cross. We are born again when we receive Jesus as our Savior by believing in Him. His payment on the cross becomes our payment for sin at the moment of our belief in Him.

SALVATION

When Jesus died on the cross, His substitution...
propitiated (satisfied) God for mankind, and
redeemed (paid for) sin for mankind, and
reconciled (changed/made savable) mankind.

However, no individual was (or is) automatically saved by this. All of the above was accomplished on the cross ... but no universal salvation consequentially saved all mankind. Each person must individually be born again through personal faith in Jesus.

.....

When you put your personal faith in Jesus ... a double imputation is transacted for you in that your sin is imputed (transferred) to Jesus and His righteousness is imputed (transferred) to you.

Then His substitution on the cross...
propitiates (satisfies) God for you, and
redeems (pays for) your sin, and
reconciles (changes) you.

Therefore, you are justified (declared righteous) by God.

SECURITY

Scripture states that salvation is eternal, permanent, and cannot be lost ... once saved, always saved. Our eternal security is based on God's strength. It is His work, not ours. Assurance is our response to security. You can *"know that you have eternal life."* 1 John 5:13. *"He who hears ... and believes ... has eternal life, and does not come into judgement but has passed out of death into life."* John 5:24. *"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."* John 6:37. *"And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father ... is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."* John 10:28-29. You are not holding onto Him in your strength ... He is holding on to you in His strength.

A greater understanding of eternal security comes from the following four subjects ... none of which affects our eternal security.

1) Believer's judgement. Every believer's works will be judged by fire, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. What remains after the fire, determines rewards. If nothing remains, *"he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved"*, verse 15. Salvation can never be lost ... only rewards can be forfeited.

2) The three tenses of salvation ... past, present, and future. We have been saved from the penalty of sin, Luke 7:50, Ephesians 2:5,8. We are being saved from the power of sin, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Corinthians 2:15. In addition, we will be saved from the presence of sin, Romans 5:9-10, 13:11. None are lost in these three stages. Actually the opposite is clearly stated ... all who have been saved will ultimately be saved, John 6:39 and Romans 8:30.

3) Justification is a declaration of righteousness. *"A man is justified by works, and not by faith alone."* James 2:24. Our good works declare our salvation. Our good works do not save us or keep us saved.

4) God's discipline of His children. Hebrews 12:4-13 describes His discipline, which is based on His love. God disciplines all believers. However, He does not take back our salvation as part of His discipline.

The strong conclusion is that nothing *"shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 8:35-39.



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Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

PRAYER

"And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'" Luke 11:1

A pattern for prayer is clear in the teaching and examples of the Bible. That pattern includes praise, thanksgiving, confession, and requests. All four of these do not have to be in every prayer ... but they should all be included in our prayer lives.

PRAISE ... because of who He is. Praising God exalts, honors, and glorifies Him, Psalm 34:1-3. It is a very important part of what our prayers should be. We are taught to *"continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God."* Hebrews 13:15. Helpful Biblical examples of praising God are Psalms 144 - 150. Many examples can be found in other Psalms and other books of the Bible.

THANKSGIVING ... because of what He has done. God gives much to us to be thankful for in our lives ... based on our requests ... and often just because He loves us. *"It is good to give thanks to the Lord."* Psalm 92:1. *"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving."* Colossians 4:2. *"In everything give thanks."* 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Thanklessness is a last days sin, 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

CONFESSION ... because of our sin. To confess is to acknowledge our sins to God. When we do that, He has promised to *"forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:9. David outlined the great blessings of forgiveness in Psalm 32 ... and gave us a great example of confession in Psalm 51:1-13. Unconfessed sin hinders our fellowship with God.

REQUESTS ... because He loves us. It is God's desire to meet our needs and give us the desires of our hearts, Psalm 37:4. We are instructed to let our *"requests be made known unto God."* Philippians 4:6. However, sometimes we do not have because we do not ask ... or because we ask with bad motives, James 4:2,3. Spiritual needs are often much more important than physical needs. Examples of both types are found in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13

THE BIBLICAL EMPHASIS. The Bible is a record of men and women committed to prayer. The Psalms have example after example of man pouring his heart out to God. The rest of the Bible records over 600 prayers and 400 specific answers. Adam and Eve talked openly with God in the Garden of Eden. In the days of their third son, Seth, "*men began to call upon the name of the Lord.*" Genesis 4:26. Great men and women of the Old and New Testaments were committed to prayer ... Moses, Hannah, Samuel, David, Daniel, and Paul. Even the last few words of the Bible include the prayer, "*Come, Lord Jesus.*" Revelation 22:20.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS. Jesus demonstrated and taught that prayer should be a high priority. At the beginning of His public ministry, He prayed at His baptism. He also taught His disciples how to pray. He prayed for Himself ... for His disciples ... and for the world. He went out alone early in the morning to talk with His Father. Sometimes He prayed all night. Jesus prayed for the food that He ate and prepared for others. The night before He died, He prayed so fervently in the Garden of Gethsemane that His sweat became like drops of blood. Then as He hung on the cross, He prayed, "*Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.*" Luke 23:34. As the great intercessor, Jesus is praying for us now, Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:34. The Holy Spirit also prays for us when we don't know how we should pray, Romans 8:26.

THE CHALLENGE TO US. With such an emphasis on prayer throughout the Bible, we should commit ourselves to prayer and to learning how to pray more effectively. It is our special privilege and opportunity to talk with the living God. "*The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.*" Psalm 34:15. "*Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray.*" Psalm 32:6. "*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises.*" James 5:13. The answers to the following five questions help to understand prayer.

1. WHERE SHOULD I PRAY? It is normal to think of praying in a religious building. Jesus referred to the temple as a "*house of prayer.*" Matthew 21:13. However, prayers are not limited to religious buildings and public meetings. In talking with the woman at the well in John 4, Jesus made it very clear that true worship was offered "*in spirit and truth*" and was not dependent on the location of the worshippers. He condemned the hypocrites for their public prayers in synagogues and on street corners to be seen of men ... and suggested that proper prayer may better be offered in the privacy of an inner room away from others, Matthew 6:5-6. It is clear that proper prayer does not depend on where it is offered. It depends on the condition of the heart of the one who prays.

2. HOW SHOULD I PRAY? The *how* of prayer is as important as, if not more important than, the *what* of prayer. Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6 and Luke 11, as a model to follow. Other Biblical examples include Daniel's prayer for the people, Daniel 9 ... David's prayer for forgiveness, Psalms 51 ... Jesus' own prayer, John 17 ... and the prayers of the Pharisee and the Publican, Luke 18. Biblical prayer is open and honest pouring out of the heart to God.

Scriptural guidelines include praying ...
Humbly, 2 Chronicles 7:14, 34:27.
With a thankful heart, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Philippians 4:6.
With sincerity, not by rote, Isaiah 29:13.
Openly and directly, Isaiah 37:14.
With great devotion, Colossians 4:2.
Without ceasing, 1 Thessalonians 5:17.
Persistently, Luke 11:5-10, 18:1-8.
With great striving, Romans 15:30.
With simplicity, Matthew 6:7.
Without wrath or dissension, 1 Timothy 2:8.
In unity with other believers, Matthew 18:19-20.
With great faith, James 1:6-7, Hebrews 11:6.
According to His will, John 15:7, 1 John 5:14-15.

3. WHOM SHOULD I PRAY TO? In all aspects of prayer, we should strive to follow the teaching and examples of Scripture. The Bible makes no mention of prayer addressed to anyone but God Himself. We have no examples or teaching that leads us to pray to angels, saints, or any dead Christians. Prayer *requests* should be made to the Father, John 15:16, 16:23. We should pray in the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18, Jude 20 ... under His leading and direction. We are instructed to pray "*in the name of Jesus,*" John 14:13, 15:16 ... that is, in His will and by His power. This Biblical pattern assures us that the full resources of the triune God are with us as we pray.

4. SHOULD I PRAY ON MY KNEES? Jesus knelt to pray, Luke 22:41. Daniel knelt and prayed three times a day, Daniel 6:10. Paul, on his departure from Ephesus, knelt and prayed, Acts 20:36. Jehoshaphat bowed his head to pray, 2 Chronicles 20:18. Because of the sins of the people, Ezra tore his clothes and fell to his knees with outstretched hands ... but wouldn't lift his face to God, Ezra 9:5-6. At his martyrdom, Stephen lifted his face and gazed intently into heaven as he prayed, Acts 7:55-60. Bowing down before God in prayer and worship, even to the point of having their faces to the ground, was commonplace in the lives of the men of the Bible. Standing while praying is found in Mark 11:25. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed, 2 Kings 20:2. The position of the body has no intrinsic value for effective prayer. It is important only as it expresses the posture of the heart.

5. WHAT SHOULD I PRAY FOR? It is a privilege to ask God for His involvement in our lives. It should be treated seriously. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught His disciples to pray for their daily physical and spiritual needs. In His prayer in John 17, He prayed for Himself, His disciples, and for the world in very specific requests. Jesus promised that the faithful prayer - fitting into His will, offered to the Father, in His name - would be answered, John 15:7,16, 16:23, 1 John 5:14-15.

Other Biblical suggestions include praying for...
Wisdom, James 1:5, 2 Chronicles 1:7-12.
Spiritual prosperity, Colossians 1:9-12.
Those who mistreat you, Luke 6:28.
Healing, James 5:14-15, 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.
Each other, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16.
The government, 1 Timothy 2:1-2
Our food, Mark 6:41, 8:6.
Those who need Christ, Romans 10:1.
Laborers to proclaim the Gospel, Matthew 9:37-38.
Open doors for the Gospel, Colossians 4:3-4.

DENIALS AND DELAYS. God hears all our prayers and answers all our prayers. His answer may be yes, no, or wait (no answer yet). Sometimes He goes beyond a yes and gives us more than all that we ask or think, Ephesians 3:20. Often we don't have because we don't ask or because we ask with wrong motives, James 4:2-3. The Bible teaches that a husband's prayers may be hindered if he treats his wife improperly, 1 Peter 3:7. An unforgiving spirit hinders our prayers, and our forgiveness of others demonstrates the forgiveness we should expect from God, Mark 11:25, Matthew 5:23-24, 6:12-15. We are to be clean before Him, and then our prayers accomplish much. *"The prayer of the upright is His delight."* Proverbs 15:8. If one turns away from His law, *"even his prayer is an abomination."* Proverbs 28:9. Denials and delays can be for our protection, preparation, or perfection. Sometimes denials are for our own good ... for our protection because we do not understand what we are asking for. It may be that an apparent denial is not a denial but simply a delay because we need time to be prepared for His answer. Delays give us the opportunity to be perfected through persistence and faithfulness as we wait. However, some denials are final, Deuteronomy 3:26, Jeremiah 7:16 and 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.



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Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

BIBLE STUDY

"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

THE PREMINENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES. No other book is like the Bible. No other book has had more copies published. No other book has been translated into so many languages. No other book has been so widely distributed. No other book has so positively changed so many lives. The Bible is the most important book ever written because it is God's message to us. It is more than inspiring. It is inspired. It is God-breathed. The authors of the Bible were carried along by the Holy Spirit as they wrote. Therefore the Bible is true ... it is accurate ... it is pure ... it is eternal ... and it is powerful. The Bible is more than man's message about God ... it is God's message to man. It is a book from God ... not simply about God. It is the preeminent Book. It is the supreme and final authority in what we should believe and in how we should live. The Bible is The Book ... it is The Book to study.

THE PRIORITY OF STUDY. The verse quoted at the top of this page records the great commitment that Jesus had to God's Word. These were His words during His temptations in the wilderness. God's Word was more important to Jesus than physical food was ... even after 40 days without eating. The Bible is provided for our spiritual nourishment. The availability of His Word gives us the great privilege and serious life-long challenge of Bible study. If we really want to learn and to grow ... then we must invest both time and energy in the process of Bible study. There are no shortcuts. We must commit sufficient regular time to studying God's Word.

THE PROGRESS OF STUDY. Peter used a newborn baby's focused attention on its need for milk to illustrate what our desire for God's Word should be ... *"Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."* 1 Peter 2:2. Then, as we grow, we need to move on to the solid food of deeper study, Hebrews 5:11-14. It is important to set realistic goals for regular study ... starting with the easier sections of the Bible ... and increasing the quantity and complexity of study as we grow. Throughout this life-long process of study, our continual prayer should be like that of the Psalmist, *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Thy law."* Psalm 119:18.

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THE BOOK TO STUDY. The Bible is the most important book. It is God's message to us, and that makes it different from all other books. It is the most important book to study because...

The Bible is inspired (God-breathed).

"All Scripture is inspired by God." 2 Timothy 3:16

The Bible is true.

"Sanctify them in the truth, Thy word is truth." John 17:17

The Bible is accurate.

"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished."
Matthew 5:18

The Bible is pure.

"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times." Psalm 12:6

"The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."
Psalm 19:7-8

The Bible is eternal.

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."
Isaiah 40:8

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away."
Matthew 24:35

The Bible is powerful.

"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
Hebrews 4:12

THE COMMAND TO STUDY. The Bible is very clear that the man or woman of God is committed to His Word ... to learning it and applying it. There is no option for us ... it is a command.

To be a disciple ... abide in (live in ... not just visit) the Word.

"Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.'" John 8:31

To be approved ... study the Word.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

To be a good parent ... teach the Word to your children.

"You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul ... and you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up." Deuteronomy 11:18-19

THE BENEFITS OF STUDY. The Word is powerful and eternal. God blesses us as we study it. The accumulative benefits are overwhelming.

The Bible makes us equipped.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Bible helps us not sin.

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word ... Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee." Psalm 119:9, 11

The Bible gives us guidance.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

THE BENEFITS OF STUDY (continued)

The Bible gives us wisdom.

"Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts ... The unfolding of Thy words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." Psalm 119:98-100, 130

The Bible helps us through difficulty.

"This is my comfort in my affliction, that Thy word has revived me ... It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes." Psalm 119:50, 71

The Bible provides hope.

"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Romans 15:4

The Bible gives peace.

"Those who love Thy law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble." Psalm 119:165

The Bible gives joy.

"Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Thy name." Jeremiah 15:16

The Bible offers conditional blessings.

"Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments." Psalm 112:1

"The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, but the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded." Proverbs 13:13

"But He said, 'On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it.'" Luke 11:28

THE PROCESS OF STUDY

Pick a regular time and place to study. Develop the habit of study. Pick a primary time and an alternate time for daily Bible study to guarantee that you will study every day.

Put what you read in context. A phrase or verse seldom contains enough information to draw a conclusion. It is necessary to understand what is in the surrounding verses ... and how it is woven into the bigger picture of what God is saying. The answers to the following questions will give understanding to any verse.

1. What does the whole sentence say?
2. What does the paragraph or section teach?
3. What is the chapter about?
4. How is that woven into the whole Bible?

Cross references, study Bibles, and commentaries can provide help in understanding the overall context.

Pray for wisdom to understand and apply what you study.

Look for the answers to the following questions.

1. What does it say?
2. What does it mean?
3. How do I make this part of my life?

Pick it apart by looking for ...

Main thoughts.
Grammar.
Cause and effect.
Comparisons and contrasts.
Connectors.
Repetition.
Promises and conditions.
Commands - do's and do not's.
Illustrations and parables.
People, places, and time.

Put it in usable form. Write notes and thoughts in your Bible and/or a notebook. Memorize key verses ... write them in your mind and heart.

Put it into practice. The goal of Bible study is a full life ... not a full notebook. Always approach the study of God's Word with a heart open to His working in and through your life.

WHAT STUDY TOOLS DO I NEED?

The most important tool for studying the Bible is a good Bible. Begin with a good translation. Plan to mark it up. A single-column page may give more space for writing your own notes in the margins. Think before you write or underline anything on the pages of your Bible ... be sure that it will be meaningful. Remember that commentaries, paraphrases, study Bible notes, books, messages, and teaching tapes give you God's Word secondhand. Invest the bulk of your study time directly in your Bible.

Which Bible should I use? There are three types of Bibles. The best for study is a good **translation**. It is the most accurate and precise because it closely follows the original language word for word ... more than paraphrases and dynamic equivalents do. Good English translations include the *New American Standard (NASB)* and the *New King James*. A **paraphrase** is a much more readable text ... but it is not as accurate as a translation is. Paraphrases are better at conveying the ideas than they are at translating the details. *The Living Bible* and *The Message* are popular English paraphrases. A **dynamic equivalent** is more of a thought-for-thought than word-for-word translation. The *New International Version (NIV)* is a dynamic equivalent. Dynamic equivalents and paraphrases are not as good as translations for detailed study. A great starting point would be a study Bible in a good translation.

What books would help? As the need arises, build a personal study reference library from the following.

1. A study Bible containing notes, outlines, cross-references, maps, and an abridged concordance ... such as The Ryrie NASB.
2. A concordance for use as a word and verse finder ... available in abridged or complete (exhaustive) versions ... be sure it matches your Bible version.
3. A Bible dictionary for facts and details about the people, places, things, and times referenced in the Bible.
4. A commentary giving verse-by-verse and section-by-section interpretation of the Bible.

What about Bible Study software for my computer? This is a great way to get many resources at a reasonable price. A CD-ROM is essential for any Bible program beyond the very basic ones. Ask a friend or send an e-mail request for a recommendation to contact@MyDisciplemaker.org.

(Page 3-7)

Name:

Date Started:

Date Finished:

MY STUDY OF _____

*"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable
for **teaching**
for **reproof**
for **correction**
for **training in righteousness**
that the man of God may be adequate, prepared for every good work."
2 Timothy 3:16-17*

COPY/PRINT THIS SHEET. Develop a notebook of your study of the Word. Print or copy this page for a cover page for each book, chapter, or subject of your Bible study. Print multiple copies of page 3-8 for your daily study ... one for each day's study.

STUDY TIPS. Study daily. Pray and think as you study. Review yesterday's notes as you begin today's study. Read today's chapter or section of the Bible once, then read it again, filling in the appropriate categories on your copies of the *Daily Study Sheet* (page 3-8). You may want to recruit a study and accountability partner to encourage one another.

SUGGESTED READING. Begin with shorter books such as Colossians, 1 John, and 2 Timothy. Then move on to books such as Mark, John, Ephesians, and Philippians. Progress to the more complicated ones such as Romans and Hebrews. Vary your reading in the Old and New Testaments, seeking the full counsel of God's Word.

OTHER HELPFUL MATERIALS. Visit www.ActsOneEight.org for information about other study helps on our other Web sites.

(Page 3-8)

ACTS ONE EIGHT - DAILY STUDY SHEET

Date:

Today's study of _____

has been profitable ...

In **teaching** me these truths, facts, and promises to believe:

For **reproof** in convicting me of these sins of attitude, action, and inaction:

For **correction** in helping me get back on course by:

For **training** me to obey these commands, to apply these principles, and to follow these good examples:

In giving me this **key verse or thought** for today:



Page 4-1

Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

THE OLD TESTAMENT

"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."
Romans 15:4

Old Testament history starts in Genesis with the beginning of man and the beginning of Israel. The beginning of man is described in four historic events ... creation, the fall, the flood, and the confusion of language at the Tower of Babel. The beginning of Israel is seen in four heroic men ... Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and Joseph. Joseph's older brothers sold him into slavery in Egypt where he rose to second in command. He was reunited with his family when famine drove them to Egypt. The 12 tribes of Israel (the descendants of Jacob's 12 sons) prospered greatly in Egypt ... but were enslaved for 430 years after Joseph's death. God called Moses to deliver the Israelites out of bondage. He led them across the Red Sea ... and then on to Mt. Sinai (where God gave the Law).

The Israelites were numbered. They traveled north to Kadesh-Barnea and sent 12 spies into Canaan. The people believed the ten faithless spies and didn't enter the land. God condemned all those 20 years old and older (except the two good spies, Joshua and Caleb) to wander and die in the wilderness. Forty years later, on the east side of the Jordan on the plains of Moab, they were numbered again. Moses gave his final messages ... viewed the land from Mt. Nebo ... and died. Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan to conquer, divide, and settle the land. In the time of the Judges, the Israelites went through 17 cycles of failure. They sinned ... God judged them through outside oppression ... they repented ... God sent a judge to deliver them from their oppressors ... peace and forgetfulness followed ... and they repeated the cycle of sin.

Then the Israelites wanted a king because everyone else had one. They rejected God's rule (theocracy) and chose man's rule (monarchy). The united Kingdom was ruled by three kings ... Saul, then David, then Solomon. Because of Solomon's sins, the kingdom was divided into a Northern and a Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom, Israel (ten tribes) was led by 19 bad kings before being taken captive into Assyria and dispersed. The Southern Kingdom, Judah (the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi), was led by a queen and 19 kings (some good and some bad). They were taken into a 70-year captivity in Babylonia through three deportations. The Israelites returned to Jerusalem after Babylonia fell to Persia. Zerubbabel led the first wave back and rebuilt the temple. Ezra led the second wave back and brought spiritual revival. Nehemiah brought the third wave back and rebuilt the walls. Four hundred years of Biblical silence separates Old Testament history and the birth of Jesus.

#1. THE BEGINNING OF MAN – FOUR HISTORIC EVENTS

(Genesis 1 - 11)

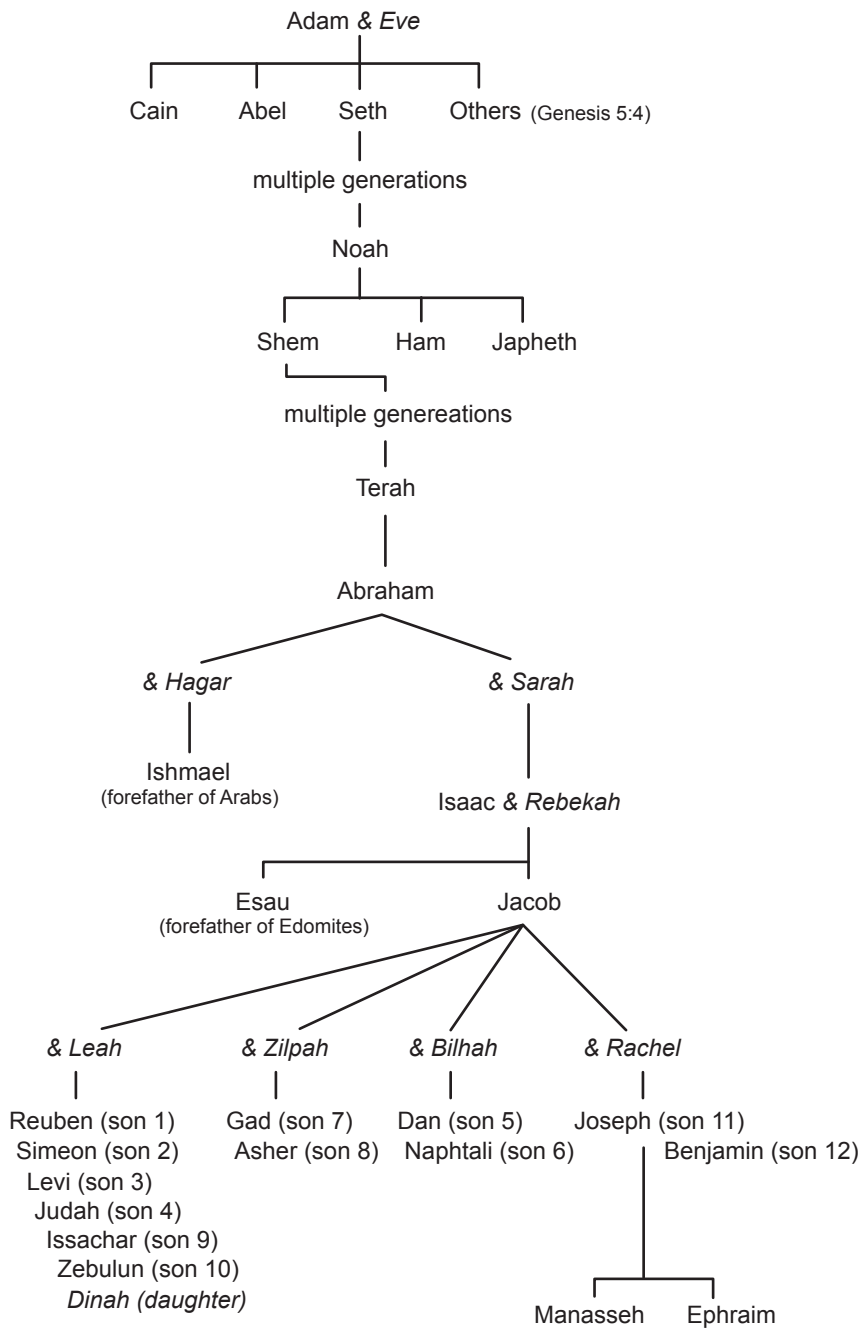
CREATION ... GENESIS 1 - 2. Chapter 1 gives an overview of the creation of the heavens, earth, and man. God said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."* 1:26. Chapter 2 details the creation of man on the sixth day. God created a man of dust from the ground and placed him in the Garden of Eden. Then God created a woman from the rib that He had taken from the man to be his partner. *"God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good."* 1:31.

FALL ... GENESIS 3 - 5. Chapter 3 begins with the serpent's tempting Eve to doubt the truth of God's Word and to disobey His command. She ate the forbidden fruit and then offered it to her husband, who also ate of it. This broke their open fellowship with God. The result was God's curse on the serpent, woman, man, and the earth, 3:14-19. Then God drove them out of the Garden of Eden. Chapter 4 details the birth of Cain and Abel, Cain's murder of Abel, and the birth of Seth to continue the godly line. Chapter 5 gives the family tree from Adam to Noah and the birth of his three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

FLOOD ... GENESIS 6 - 9. In the days of Noah, man was very wicked, and God judged the world by a flood. At His instruction, Noah had built an ark to save himself, his wife, their three sons and their three wives, and a representative sample of animals. Chapters 7 and 8 outline the yearlong flood. God promised never again to destroy man by a flood and placed a rainbow in the sky as a sign of His covenant with Noah. The sin of Ham and Noah's curse of Ham's son Canaan completes Chapter 9.

CONFUSION OF LANGUAGE ... GENESIS 10 - 11. The generations that followed Noah all spoke the same language. At Babel man decided to build a city and a tower to prevent them from being scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth. This was in direct disobedience of God's command to *"be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."* 9:1. They rebelliously said, *"Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."* 11:3. God judged them by confusing their language ... scattering them over the face of the whole earth. The family line can be traced from Noah's sons to Abram (Abraham).

THE FAMILY TREE



Aaron & Moses (of the tribe of Levi)
 King David (of the tribe of Judah)
 Jesus (of the tribe of Judah)

King Saul (of the tribe of Benjamin)
 Paul (of the tribe of Benjamin)

#2. THE BEGINNING OF ISRAEL – FOUR HEROIC MEN

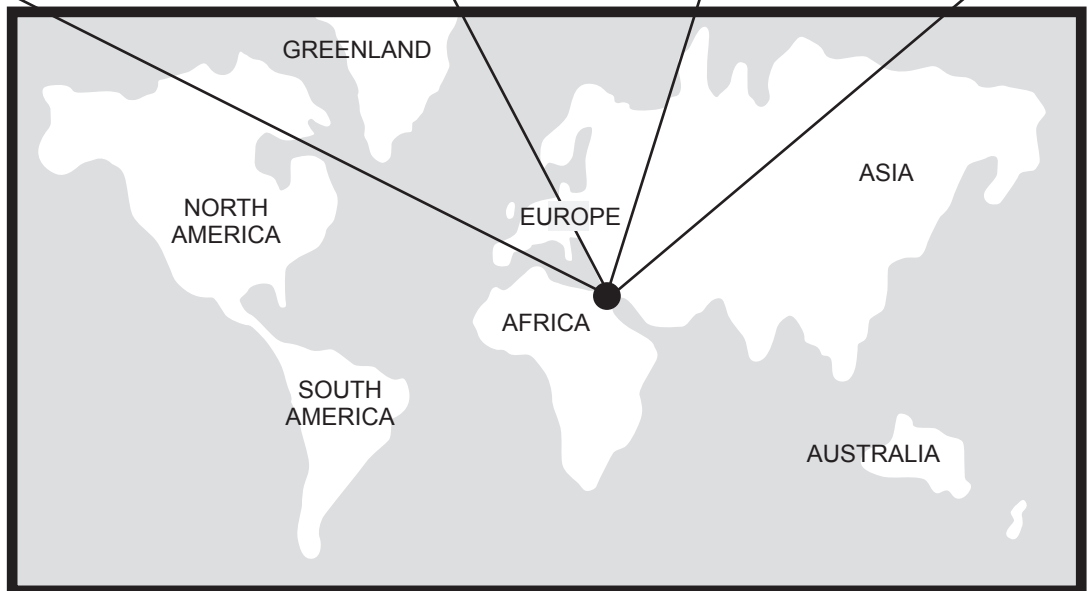
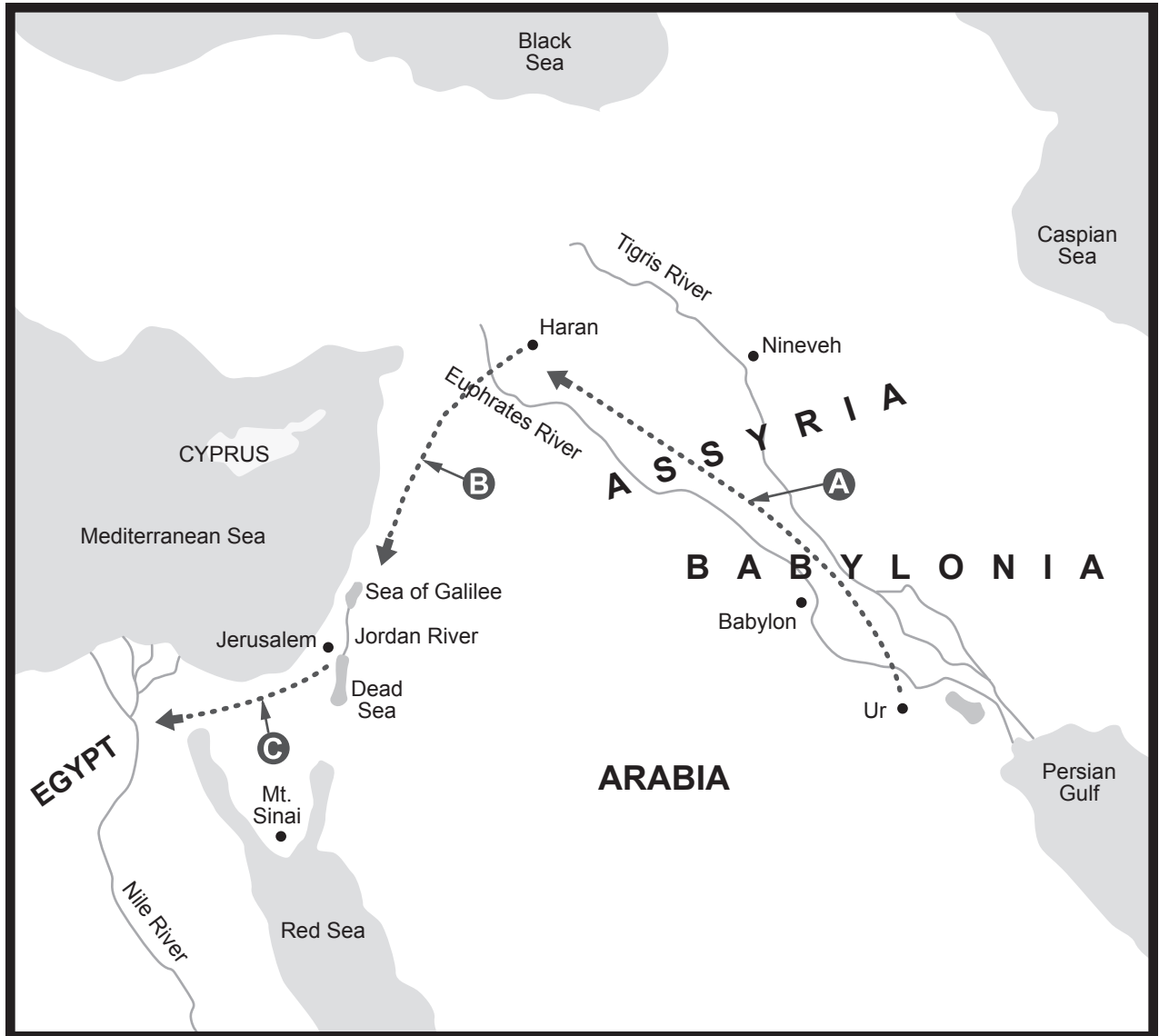
(Genesis 12 - 50)

ABRAHAM ... GENESIS 11:27 - 25:11. God called 75-year-old Abraham to become the father of many nations. Abraham traveled from Ur of the Chaldeans, with his wife Sarah and nephew Lot, to Haran where his father Terah died (see **A** on map, page 4-5). They traveled on to Canaan (see **B** on map, page 4-5). God promised to bless all of the earth through Abraham, 12:1-3 ... to give the land of Canaan to him, 12:7, 13:14-15, 15:18 ... to give him many descendants, 13:16, 15:5 ... and to give an heir to him with Sarah, 15:4. Advanced in age and not trusting God, Sarah gave her handmaid Hagar to Abraham (at age 86). She bore a son, Ishmael, from whom the Arab nations descended. However, as God promised, Sarah bore their heir Isaac ... in 2065 BC when Abraham was 100 years old. God tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac, 22:1-19 ... and God provided a ram as a substitute.

ISAAC ... GENESIS 21 - 27. Isaac married Rebekah and had twins in 2005 BC ... Jacob (from whom the Jews descended) and Esau (from whom the Edomites descended). Esau traded his birthright to Jacob for a meal of lentil stew. Later Rebekah helped Jacob (her favorite) trick Isaac so that he would give Jacob the firstborn blessing that was due to Esau. God kept His promise in spite of their sin.

JACOB ... GENESIS 25 - 36. Jacob married Rachel and Leah ... daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother. Jacob had 12 sons with them and their two handmaidens Bilhah and Zilpah. God renamed Jacob. His new name was Israel, 35:10. God promised Israel that His covenant with Abraham and Isaac would be fulfilled through Jacob, 35:11-12. Jacob's 12 sons are called the 12 tribes of Israel.

JOSEPH ... GENESIS 37 - 50. Joseph had a dream that his family would bow down to him. Because of this and because he was Jacob's favorite, his ten older brothers sold him to a passing caravan. They took him to Egypt and sold him as a slave to Potiphar (see **C** on map, page 4-5). Joseph became second in command in the household but was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and was put in prison ... where he rose to second in command. After correctly interpreting the cupbearer's and baker's dreams, he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, predicting seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. Joseph rose to second in command in all of Egypt in 1884 BC. When the famine spread to Canaan, his family came to Egypt for food, and they were reunited with him. Israel and Joseph both died in Egypt.



#3. CAPTIVITY IN EGYPT TO THE EDGE OF CANAAN

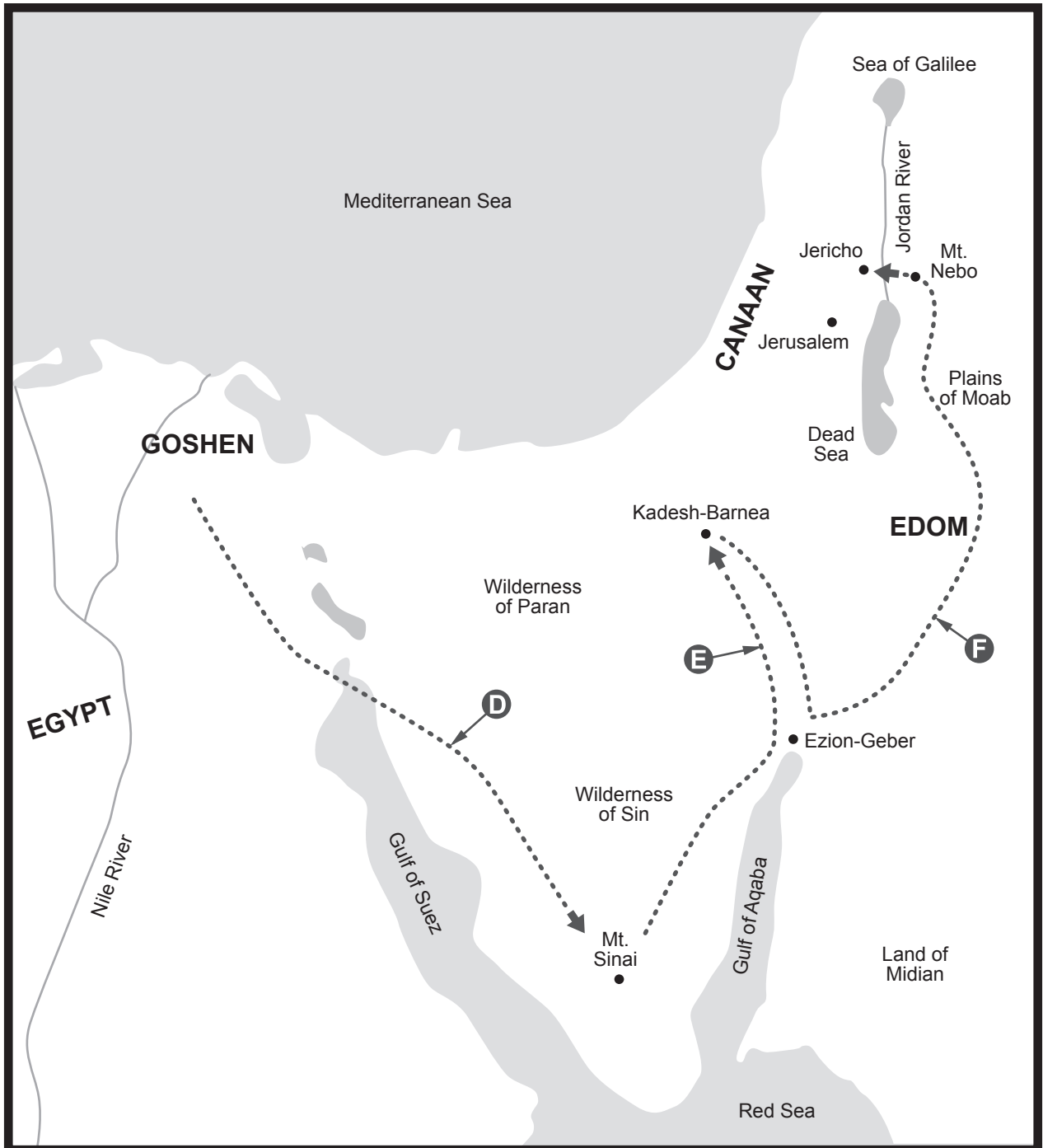
(Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy)

SLAVERY IN EGYPT. The 12 tribes of Israel prospered and multiplied greatly. They were enslaved for 430 years after Joseph's death.

MOSES AND THE EXODUS. Moses was born to a Levite woman ... but was raised as son of the Pharaoh's daughter. *"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."* Hebrews 11:24-26. At age 40 Moses killed an Egyptian for beating a Hebrew and then fled to Midian where he spent the next 40 years tending sheep. God called Moses through a burning bush, Exodus 3, to lead His people out of bondage. God worked through Moses and his brother Aaron by means of ten plagues to bring freedom to the Israelites in 1445 BC. The Passover was instituted, Exodus 12 to protect the Hebrew people from the last plague. Moses led the people (600,000+, Exodus 12:37) across the Red Sea to Mt. Sinai (see **D** on map, page 4-7).

MT. SINAI. God instituted the Old Covenant as He gave the law at Mt. Sinai, Exodus 19 and Leviticus. The Law, given at Mt. Sinai, included the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20.

NUMBERINGS, WANDERING, AND DEATH. In the wilderness of Sinai the people were numbered (census #1). Then they traveled north to Kadesh-Barnea. They sent 12 spies into Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea (see **E** on map, page 4-7). The people believed the ten faithless spies, grumbled, complained, and yearned for Egypt. They refused to enter the land. God condemned all who were 20 years old and older (except the two good spies, Joshua and Caleb) to wander and die in the wilderness, Numbers 14:28-30. After 40 years of wandering (see **F** on map, page 4-7), the faithless grumblers had died. Then the new generation was brought to the plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River. They were numbered again (census #2). Moses gave his final messages, Deuteronomy. He appointed Joshua to be his successor. Then Moses went up Mt. Nebo to view the Promised Land. Moses died and was buried by God in a valley in the land of Moab. God did not allow Moses to enter the land because he disobeyed God, Numbers 20:8-12, Deuteronomy 3:27.

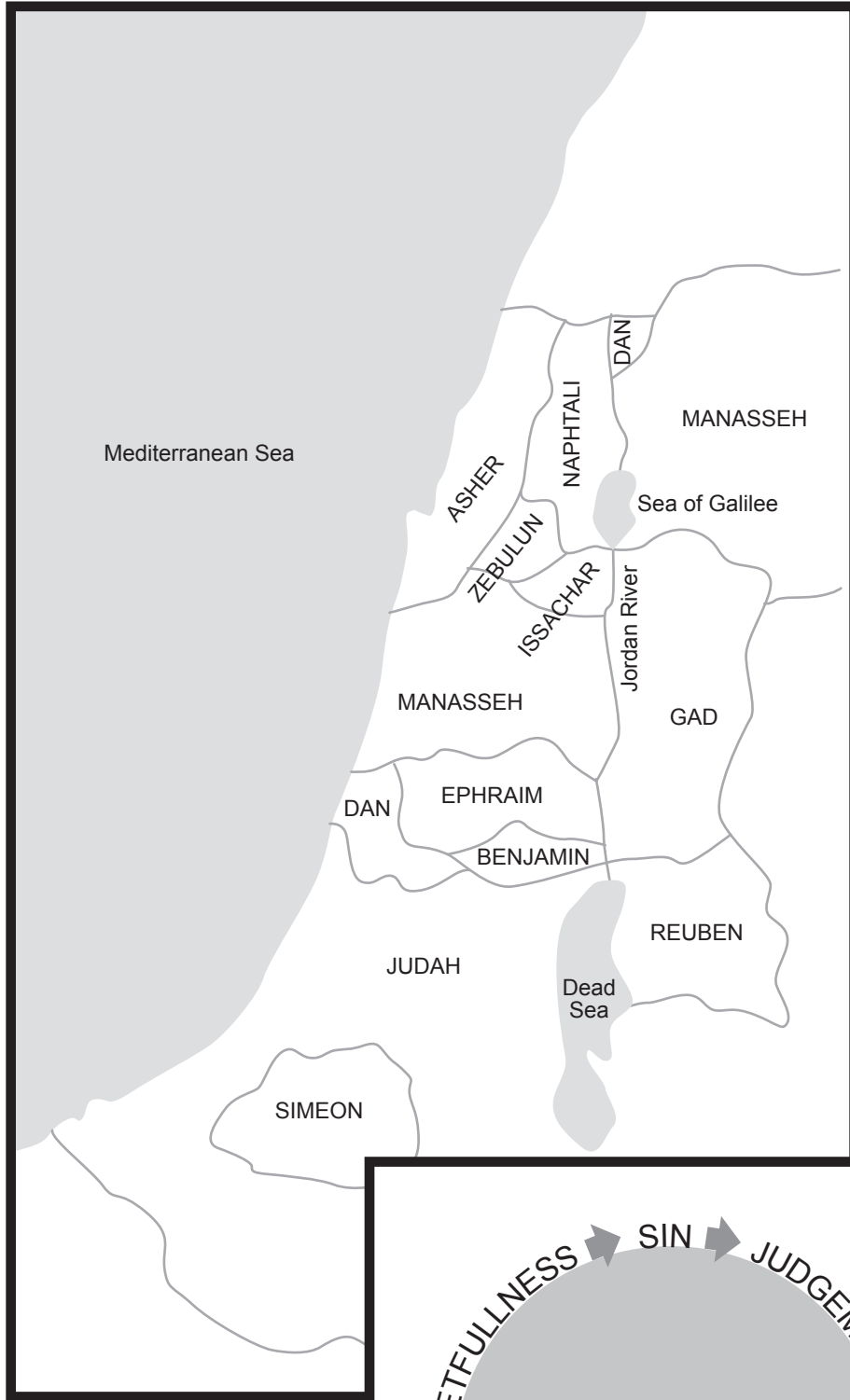


#4. SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN CANAAN

(Joshua, Judges, and 1 Samuel 1 - 8)

JOSHUA AND SUCCESS IN CANAAN. Joshua took the Israelites into Canaan in 1405 BC to conquer, divide, and settle the land. Jacob (Israel) had blessed Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, with a blessing reserved for his own sons ... making them of equal status with Jacob's other sons, Genesis 48:8-22. Therefore, both of their tribes were given a share of the land ... as were the other tribes of Israel. Each of the tribes of Dan and Manasseh received their land in two pieces. The Levites received no land. God was their inheritance, Joshua 13:33. However, the Levites were given 48 cities, Joshua 21:41. God had instructed the Israelites to make no covenants with the people of the land ... not to serve their gods but to tear down their altars ... and to utterly destroy the inhabitants of the land, Exodus 23:32, 34:12-16, and Deuteronomy 7:1-5,16. The reasons for God's severe judgment against the evil people of Canaan are in Leviticus 18. Joshua and the Israelites did not obey these commands ... and they and their descendants suffered the consequences of coexisting in the land with their enemies and their false gods. However, in spite of their failures, Scripture records, *"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua."* Joshua 24:31.

THE JUDGES AND FAILURE IN CANAAN. Seventeen cycles of the Israelites' failure over 330 years are outlined in Judges (13 cycles) and 1 Samuel (4 cycles). The description of the cycle of all these failures is in Judges 2:11-19. The people did evil and angered God ... He gave them over to oppressors ... in response to their groaning He sent a deliverer (a judge) to free them ... then in the time of peace that followed they forgot and turned back to their evil ways ... and the cycle began again. Seven cycles are detailed including those of judges Gideon and Samson. Thirteen of the judges are in the book of Judges and four are in 1 Samuel. After the 17 cycles of failure the Israelites wanted a king (monarchy) like everyone else had, 1 Samuel 8:5-20 ... and rejected God's rule (theocracy). At their demand Samuel, one of the last judges, appointed the first king ... Saul, 1 Samuel 8 - 10. Ruth (David's great-grandmother) is an example of a godly woman during the time of the judges.



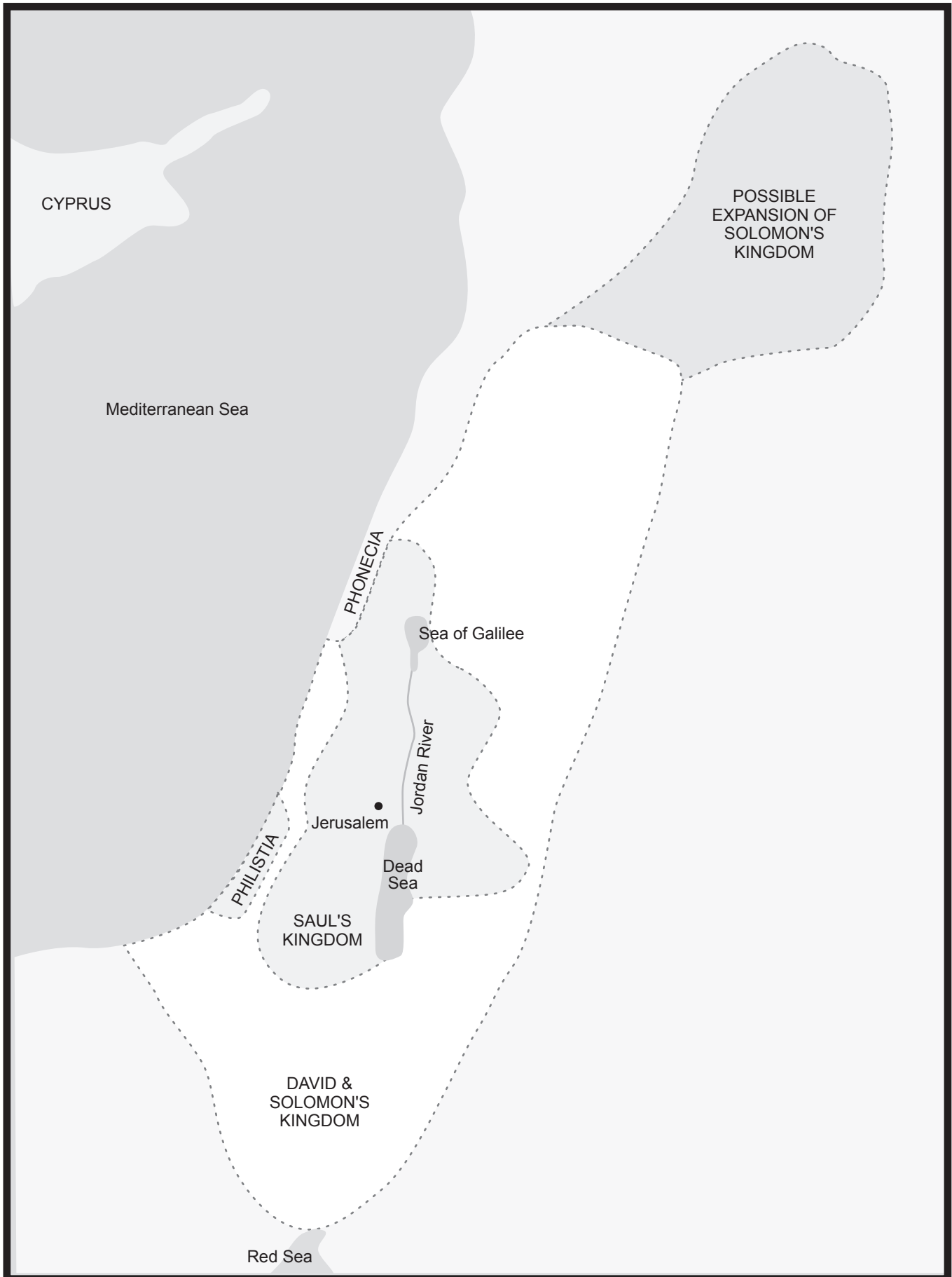
#5. THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE THREE KINGS

(1 Samuel 9-31, 2 Samuel, and 1 Kings 1-11)

SAUL. The people wanted a king, 1 Samuel 8. They rejected God by insisting on having a king, 1 Samuel 8:7. Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was chosen to be the king, 1 Samuel 9 - 12. This first king of Israel began to reign at age 40. He reigned 32 years. King Saul was inconsistent, rash, sinful, and gave God partial obedience. Therefore, God rejected him as king, 1 Samuel 13:8-14 and 15:9-11, 26. Saul tried to contact the spirit of the deceased Samuel, 1 Samuel 28:7 ... and he died because he did that, 1 Chronicles 10:13-14.

DAVID. Samuel chose God's man to succeed Saul as king, passing over Saul's son Jonathan. David is described as a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man, 1 Samuel 16:18. After years of conflict with Saul, he became king in 1011 BC and prospered ... greatly expanding the kingdom during his 40-year reign. David had an adulterous affair with Bathsheba ... and, finding out that she was pregnant, arranged the death of her husband Uriah in battle. They married ... but their first child died. Solomon, their second son, was successor to the throne. The testimony that David was a man after God's own heart, 1 Samuel 13:14 and Acts 13:22, describes his character before he became king. That testimony was not given to describe him after his sin with Bathsheba. David suffered greatly after that adulterous affair, 2 Samuel 12:10-14.

SOLOMON. He became the third king in 971 BC and was very wise with wisdom given from God, 1 Kings 3:7-12. He spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs numbered 1,005, 1 Kings 4:32. He became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. In answer to David's prayer and by David's instructions, Solomon built the Temple. However, God had instructed the kings not to multiply horses, wives, silver, and gold, Deuteronomy 17:16-17 ... and Solomon did all these things. God had instructed the Israelites not to intermarry with foreigners or worship their gods ... and Solomon did these things, 1 Kings 11:1-11. God was angry with Solomon because of his sins. God condemned the kingdom to be divided after Solomon's death ... after because of God's promise to David, 1 Kings 11:9-13. Solomon ruled Israel for 40 years.



#6. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM, THE EXILE, AND THREE RETURNS

(1 Kings 12 – 22, 2 Kings, Ezra, and Nehemiah)

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED INTO TWO KINGDOMS. Solomon's rule ended. The united kingdom was divided into two kingdoms in 931 BC.

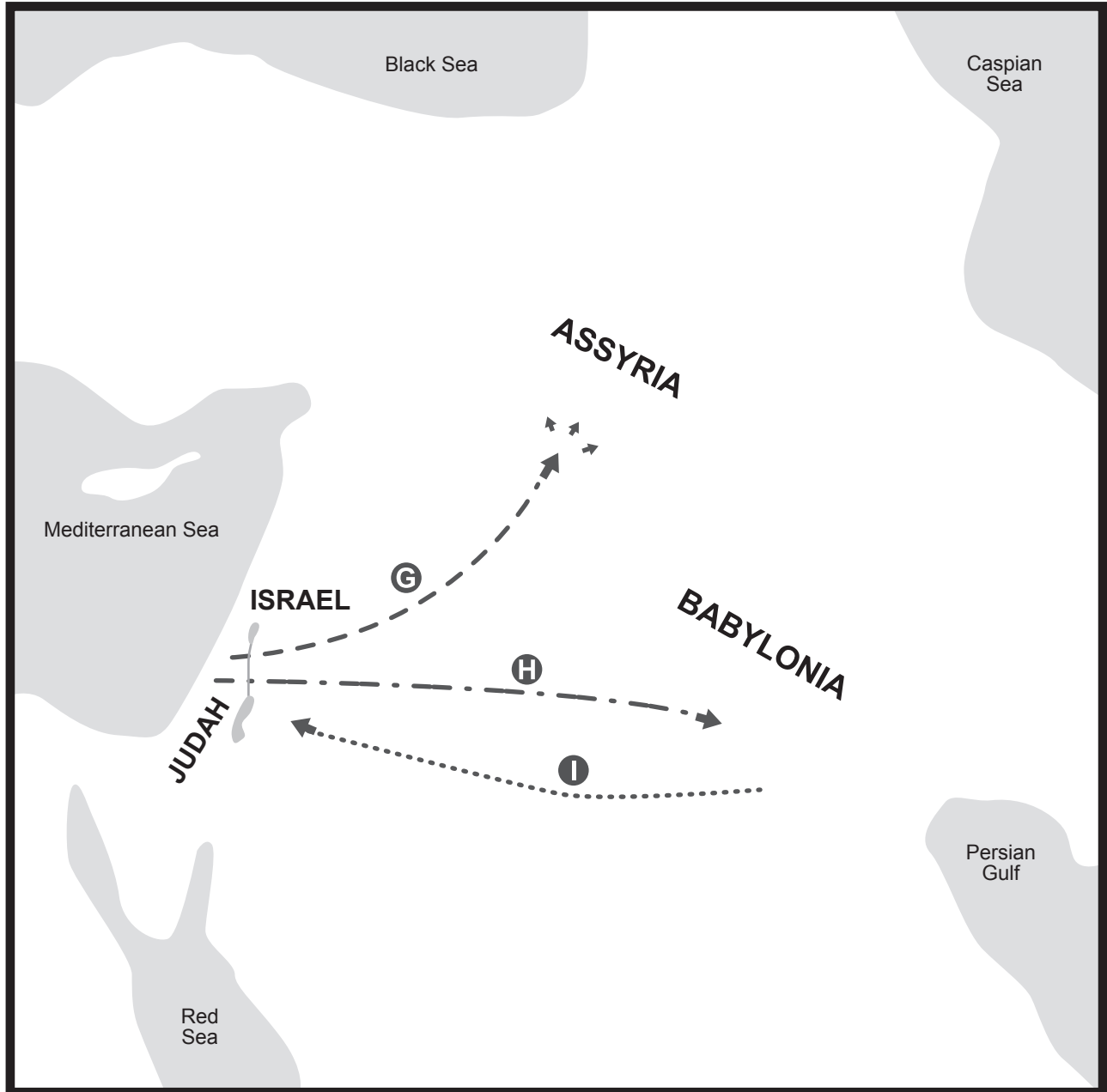
1. The Northern Kingdom ... Israel. The Northern Kingdom, Israel, was comprised of ten tribes (including the tribes of Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim). Israel was led by 19 bad kings. In 722 BC, Israel was taken into Assyria and dispersed (see **G** on map, page 4-13).

2. The Southern Kingdom ... Judah. The Southern Kingdom, Judah, was comprised of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. Judah was led by a combination of good and bad rulers. There were 19 kings and a queen (Athaliah). In 586 BC, Judah fell when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. They were taken into exile in Babylonia through three deportations (see **H** on map, page 4-13). Daniel was in the first in 606 BC, Ezekiel in the second in 597 BC, and the rest in 586 BC when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. Babylonia fell to Persia in 539 BC after Judah had been in exile for 70 years (606 BC to 536 BC). At that time, Judah was able to begin returning to Jerusalem.

THE THREE RETURNS OF THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM. Judah was taken into exile in three waves. After 70 years, they returned in three waves.

- 1.** Zerubbabel led the first wave, over 40,000, back to Jerusalem in 536 BC to rebuild the temple ... completed in 516 BC.
- 2.** Ezra led the second wave back in 458 BC. He brought spiritual revival to the people.
- 3.** Nehemiah brought the third wave back in 445 BC. He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Esther records the story of a godly woman among the exiles in Persia.

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS OF SILENCE. Four hundred years of Biblical silence separate the conclusion of Old Testament history and the birth of Christ. No books in the standard canon of Scripture were written in those years. During that time in history, Alexander the Great and the Greeks ruled that part of the world. Then the Roman Empire followed the Greek and was in power before and during the birth and life of Christ.



5 - The Five History Books ... written by Moses

Genesis ... the beginning of the world, man, and Israel.

Exodus ... the exiting from slavery in Egypt ... and Law at Mt. Sinai.

Leviticus ... the Levites and more Law at Mt. Sinai.

Numbers ... a census, wandering, death, and another census.

Deuteronomy ... the final messages of Moses ... and his death.

9 - Nine History Books ... in Canaan before the exile

Joshua ... successful conquering, dividing, and settling in Canaan.

Judges ... 17 cycles of failure.

Ruth ... a godly woman in the time of the judges.

1 Samuel ... the last judges and the first King, Saul.

2 Samuel ... King David's success and failure.

1 Kings ... King Solomon and the division of the Kingdom.

2 Kings ... the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

1 Chronicles ... similar to 2 Samuel.

2 Chronicles ... similar to 1 and 2 Kings.

3 - Three History Books ... during and after the 70-year exile

Ezra ... Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple ... Ezra rebuilt the people.

Nehemiah ... Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.

Esther ... a godly Jewess among the exiles in Persia.

5 - Five Books of Poetry

Job ... an early story of God's sovereignty in a man's suffering.

Psalms ... the hymnbook of Israel.

Proverbs ... the wisdom of God.

Ecclesiastes ... the futility of man without God.

Song of Solomon ... the beauty of marriage.

5 - Five Major Prophets ... before and during the 70-year exile

Isaiah ... predicted condemnation and comfort ... Messianic.

Jeremiah ... the weeping Prophet warns Judah and the nations.

Lamentations ... Jeremiah laments over the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel ... reminds the Jews of the sins that caused them to be exiled.

Daniel ... prophecy by a godly man exiled in an evil place.

9 - Nine Minor Prophets ... before the 70-year exile

Hosea ... God's love for Israel.

Joel ... God's judgment in the *Day of the Lord*.

Amos ... condemnation of Israel.

Obadiah ... God's condemnation of the nation Edom.

Jonah ... Gentile Nineveh is given a second chance.

Micah ... predictions of judgment and the coming Kingdom.

Nahum ... destruction of Nineveh 150 years after Jonah.

Habakkuk ... God's patience and punishment of Judah.

Zephaniah ... judgment and blessing.

3 - Three Minor Prophets ... after the 70-year exile

Haggai ... The Jews urged to rebuild the Temple.

Zechariah ... call to repent ... predictions of the coming Messiah.

Malachi ... apathy criticized ... predictions of John the Baptist and Jesus.

THE 39 BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

17 HISTORY BOOKS

5 Creation to Canaan

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

9 In Canaan...before
70-year exile

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles

3 In Canaan...after
70-year exile

Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther...in Persia

5 POETRY BOOKS

5 Books of Poetry

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

17 PROPHECY BOOKS

5 Major Prophets...before
& during 70-year exile

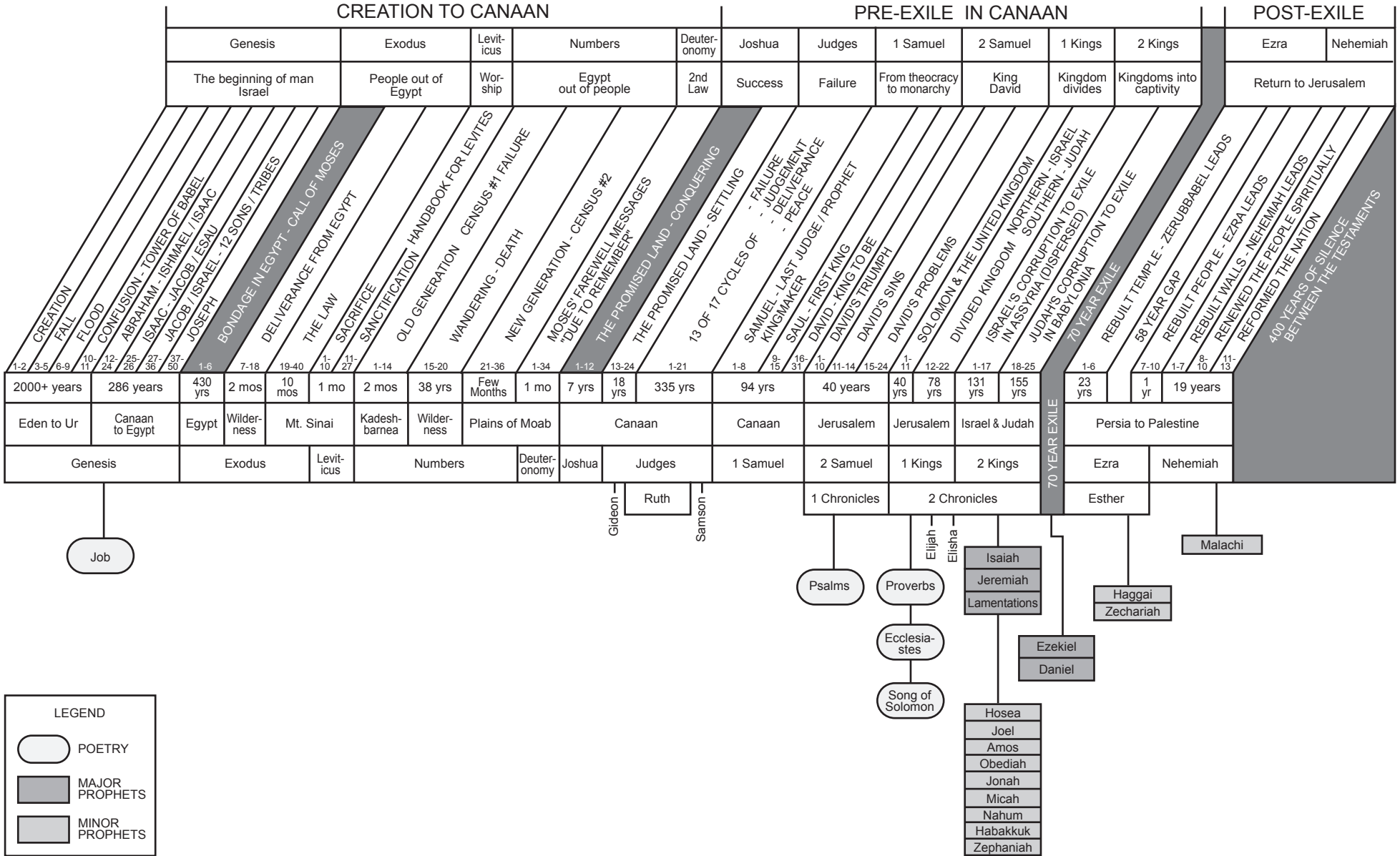
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

9 Minor Prophets...before
70-year exile




Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah

3 Minor Prophets...after
70-year exile

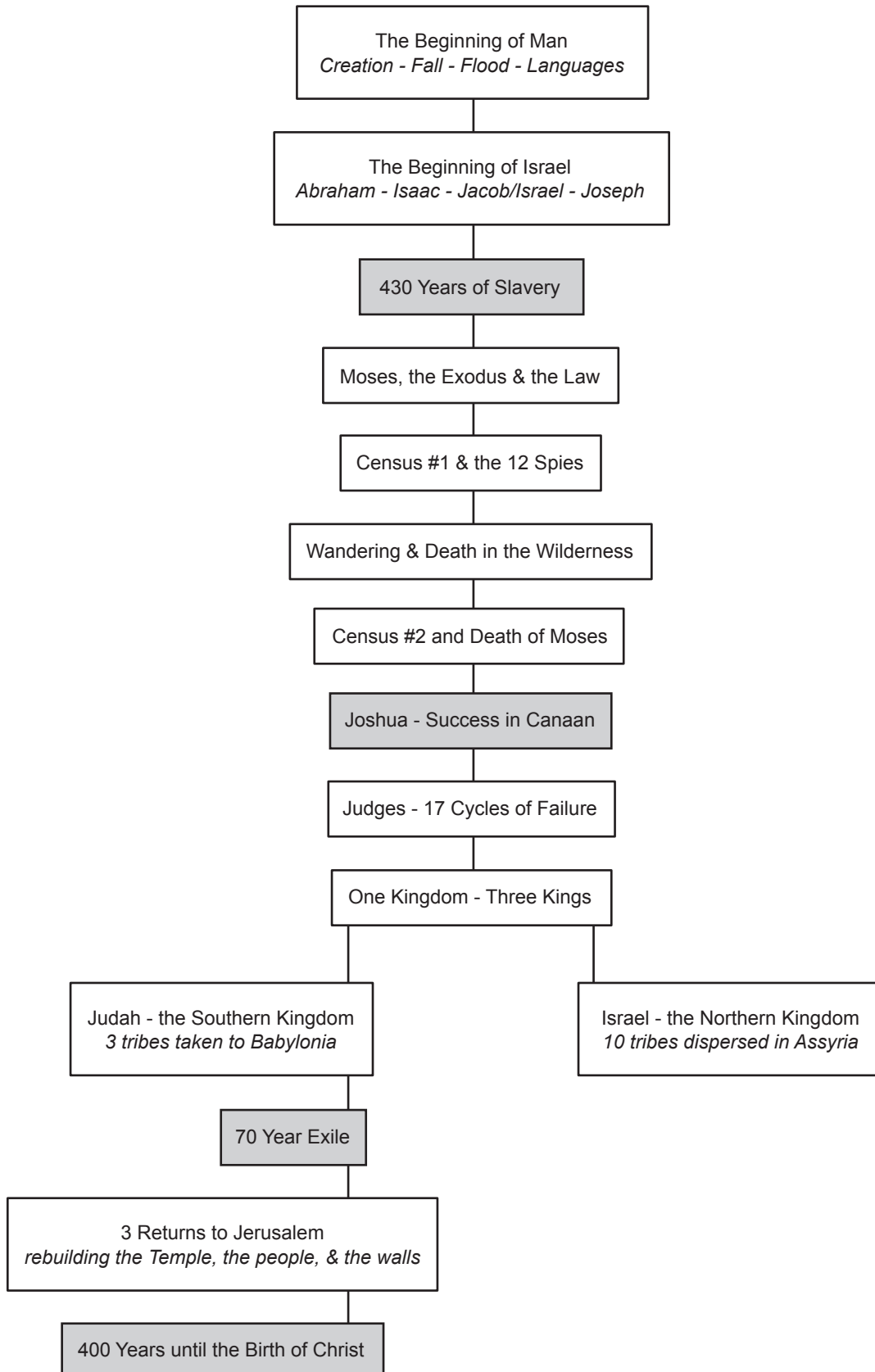
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi



LEGEND

-  POETRY
-  MAJOR PROPHETS
-  MINOR PROPHETS

THE OLD TESTAMENT





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Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And ... He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:5-11

The life of Jesus did not begin at His birth in Bethlehem. He existed in eternity past. He had no beginning. There was no time when He did not exist. He was the Creator in Genesis 1 and 2. In Old Testament history, He appeared as the Angel of the Lord. He delivered and defended Israel. He was born in Bethlehem ... lived in Egypt for a short time as a young child ... and then moved to Nazareth in Galilee. He lived there with His family, making annual trips with them to Jerusalem for the Passover.

At about age 30 Jesus began His ministry ... in four geographic segments. John the Baptist baptized Him in the Jordan River. Then the Spirit led Him into the desert to be tempted by Satan for 40 days. In the first months, Jesus ministered in *Judea and Galilee*. There He met His first disciples . . . performed His first miracle . . . and cleansed the temple for the first time. Jesus' popularity increased during His *Galilean* ministry . . . but opposition and hostility also increased. He taught, performed miracles, and healed. He chose and began to minister with His disciples. His ministry expanded into the regions *north and east of Galilee* . . . where He was transfigured on Mt. Hermon. In the last months Jesus' ministry centered in *Judea and Perea*.

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem marked the beginning of the week of the cross and declared that He was King of the Jews. Monday and Tuesday were public days. He cleansed the temple, cursed the barren fig tree, denounced the Scribes and Pharisees, and prophesied about His return. Later that week He spent a day alone with His disciples. He washed their feet before the Last Supper, taught them, and prayed for them. Jesus went to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was arrested there. After three Jewish and three Roman trials, He was condemned to be crucified. They nailed Him to a cross. He died and was buried in a borrowed tomb. He rose from the dead on the third day. For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus appeared ten or more times . . . to the women, to His disciples, and to His followers. He ascended into heaven where He ministers for us now as we wait for His return.

FULFILLED PROPHECIES. Jesus said, "All things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Luke 24:44. Compare the following predictions and fulfillments. In addition, compare Psalm 22 and Matthew 27.

22 of 300+ Prophecies	Old Testament	New Testament
1. Born of a Virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25
2. Seed of Abraham	Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1
3. Son of Isaac	Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
4. Son of Jacob	Numbers 24:17	Luke 3:34
5. Tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33
6. Line of Jesse	Isaiah 11:1	Luke 3:32
7. House of David	Jeremiah 23:5	Luke 3:31
8. Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1
9. Called Immanuel	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
10. Preceded by Messenger	Isaiah 40:3	Matthew 3:1-2
11. Perform Miracles	Isaiah 35:5-6	Matthew 9:35
12. Teach in Parables	Psalms 78:2	Matthew 13:34
13. Triumphal Entry	Zechariah 9:9	Luke 19:35-37
14. Betrayed by Friend	Psalms 41:9	Matthew 10:4
15. 30 Pieces of Silver	Zechariah 11:12	Matthew 26:15
16. Forsaken by Disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Mark 14:50
17. Silent before Accusers	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:12
18. Crucified	Psalms 22:16	Luke 23:33
19. With Thieves	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38
20. Garments	Psalms 22:18	John 19:23-24
21. No Bones Broken	Psalms 34:20	John 19:33
22. In Rich Man's Tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60

FOUR GOSPELS . . . FOUR HISTORICAL RECORDS

The four Gospels give us four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ. Each author, moved by the Spirit of God, gave a partial record of the life of Jesus . . . giving us different insights based on the authors' different backgrounds, personalities, original audience, and emphasis.

The synoptic Gospels (the similar accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke) cover many of the same events. John wrote more information that is only in his account ... 90% unique. John stressed Christ's deity more than the others ... and mentioned believing in Jesus a total of 98 times.

The four Gospels account for almost half of the New Testament. Within the Gospels themselves, one-third of the text is devoted to the seven weeks from the Triumphal Entry through the Ascension.

These four men . . . the former tax collector Matthew, the young man Mark, the Gentile physician Luke, and the fisherman John . . . gave us God's record of the life and death of Jesus.

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Author	Taxman and Disciple	Young man	Gentile physician	Fisherman and Disciple
Date	60's AD	50's AD	60 AD	85-90 AD
Readers	Jews	Romans	Greeks	All
Emphasis	Predicted Messiah	Action and miracles	Historical record	Believe (98 times)
Jesus as:	King of Jews	Servant of God	Son of Man	Son of God
Miracles	20	17	20	8
Parables	19	6	24	0
Chapters	28	16	24	21
Verses	1,071	678	1,151	879
Uniqueness	40%	60%	5%	90%

FROM ETERNITY PAST TO BETHLEHEM

Jesus always existed. He existed from eternity past.

Micah 5:2
Isaiah 9:6

He existed before all created things.

John 1:1,2
Colossians 1:17
John 8:56-58
John 17:5

He was the Creator in Genesis 1 and 2.

John 1:3
Colossians 1:16

Pre-incarnate Jesus appeared as *the* Angel of the Lord.

To Hagar - Genesis 16:7-13, 21:17-20
To Moses - Exodus 3
To Gideon - Judges 6:11-14
To Samson's Parents - Judges 13:1-22

There were other Old Testament appearances.

To Abraham - Genesis 18:1, 22:11-18
To Jacob - Genesis 31:11-13, 32:24-32
No One Has Seen the Father - John 1:18, 6:46, 14:9

Jesus was the warrior, defender, and deliverer of Israel.

Joshua 5:13 - 6:3
2 Kings 19:35
1 Chronicles 21:14-27
Psalm 34:7

The Trinity is clearly presented in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 48:12-17 (written about 700BC)

Jesus came down from Heaven to earth.

John 3:13,31
John 6:33,38,41,50,51,58,62

He became the image of the invisible God

Colossians 1:15
John 14:9

He became flesh in Bethlehem and lived among us.

Micah 5:2
John 1:14

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

His Birth

Jesus was born in the small town of Bethlehem about five miles (8 km) south of Jerusalem between 6 BC and 4 BC. Note: the Gregorian calendar (with BC indicating *before Christ*, i.e. before the birth of Christ, and AD indicating *anno Domini*, i.e. in the year of our Lord) was begun with an inaccurate date for Christ's birth.

His Parents

Mary's genealogy is traced in Luke 3:23-38 to Nathan and his father King David ... then back to Judah, Shem, Noah, Seth, Adam, and God. Mary conceived of the Holy Spirit (not of Joseph) and remained a virgin until after the birth of Jesus.

Joseph, the carpenter, although not the physical father of Jesus, was his legal earthly father. Joseph's genealogy is traced in Matthew 1:1-17 to Solomon and Solomon's father King David, to Judah, and to Abraham.

Born in Bethlehem

Joseph and Mary traveled south about 70 miles (110 km) to Bethlehem from Nazareth in Galilee ... to be counted in a census. While there, Jesus was born. His first bed was a feeding trough (manger). His birth was announced by angels to the shepherds. At His dedication at the temple in Jerusalem (at least 40 days after His birth), Simeon and Anna recognized the infant as God's Messiah.

The Magi and Herod

After Jesus was born, an undisclosed number of magi from the East followed a star to Jerusalem to find the one born King of the Jews. They found Him and Mary in a house in Bethlehem and worshipped Him. Herod attempted to destroy Jesus by killing all male children up to two years old in and around Bethlehem.

To Egypt

An angel had warned Joseph to take his family and flee to Egypt, and they stayed there until an angel told them it was safe to return.

In Galilee

The family returned to live in Nazareth. Jesus grew up there making annual trips at the Passover to Jerusalem (about 65 miles or 100 km south). At 12 years of age, Jesus astonished the temple teachers with His understanding and answers. At that time Jesus referred to the temple as "*My Father's house*." Jesus lived with His brothers (James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas) and his sisters in Nazareth, Matthew 13:55-56.

Public Ministry

At about 30 years of age Jesus began His public ministry . . . announced by His relative, John the Baptist.

HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY

1. In Galilee and Judea - the beginnings. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan River near Bethany. Then the Spirit of God led Jesus into the desert of Judea to be tempted by Satan for 40 days. Jesus met His first disciples ... Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael. He performed His first miracle at a wedding in Cana ... turning water into wine. Jesus cleansed the Temple for the first time ... driving the merchants out of His Father's house. He proclaimed, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* John 2:19. A ruler of the Jews, the Pharisee Nicodemus, came to Jesus at night in Jerusalem. Jesus told him, *"You must be born again."* John 3:7. On His way back to Galilee, Jesus traveled through Samaria where He met the woman at Jacob's well near Sychar. She believed and brought many to Him.

2. In Galilee - popularity and hostility rose. Jesus traveled to Galilee where He was rejected in His hometown of Nazareth. He moved on to Capernaum. After a miraculous catch of fish on the Sea of Galilee, He called the fishermen (Andrew, Simon, James, and John) to be fishers of men. He also called Levi, the tax collector, to follow Him. Jesus returned to Jerusalem where He healed on the Sabbath ... offending the Jewish leaders. After a night of prayer, Jesus selected the 12 disciples. He amazed the multitudes with the authority of His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. He continued teaching in parables and healing. He sent out the 12 disciples by two's to minister to the lost sheep of Israel . . . to preach and to heal. Jesus miraculously fed the 5,000. Then He taught that He was the bread of life ... driving many followers away.

3. To the north and east of Galilee. Jesus traveled north toward Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia where He continued to teach and to heal. He traveled east through Decapolis and Bashan. Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on Mt. Hermon (the probable location) where He shone like light at the Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Him. In addition, God declared, *"This Is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; hear Him!"* Matthew 17:5.

4. In Judea and Perea - the final months. His teaching, healing, and miracles continued. He claimed to be the Light of the world and equal to God ... therefore the Jews tried to stone Him. After explaining the cost of discipleship, Jesus sent out 70 followers in pairs to minister. Jesus delayed His visit to Bethany so that He could raise Lazarus from the dead. The chief priests and the Pharisees became determined to kill Him. Jesus traveled to Jerusalem by way of Samaria and Galilee. He continued to teach and to heal. He told His disciples of His death and resurrection. Finally, He went to the home of Lazarus in Bethany to begin His last week before His crucifixion and resurrection.



THE WEEK OF THE CROSS

Sunday - the Triumphal Entry

Jesus traveled from the home of Lazarus in Bethany to Jerusalem. On the way, Jesus stopped at the Mount of Olives on the east side of Jerusalem. He sent His disciples to bring a donkey and a colt to Him. Jesus rode the colt into Jerusalem, thereby proclaiming to be the King of Israel, Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12 ... fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. The people spread their garments and branches on the road before Him and worshipped God. In Jerusalem Jesus saw the condition of the temple ... again filled with merchants. He returned to Bethany.

Monday - another Temple cleansing

On the way back into Jerusalem Jesus cursed a barren fig tree, which withered by the following day, Matthew 21, Mark 11. He proceeded to cleanse the temple by driving out the buyers, sellers, and moneychangers, Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19. This cleansing of the Temple was near the end of His public ministry. His first cleansing of the Temple was near the beginning of His public ministry, John 2:13-22.

Tuesday - a public day

The Jewish leaders questioned Jesus about His authority and tried to discredit Him with trick questions on taxes, marriage, and the commandments. He taught the parable of the wicked husbandmen who killed the son of the owner of the vineyard. Jesus strongly denounced the Scribes and the Pharisees. He prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem and about His return, Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, Luke 21. It was also on this day that Judas made his deal to betray Jesus.

The day before the cross - a private day

Jesus spent this day with His disciples ... away from the crowds. They gathered in an upper room for the Passover meal. He washed the disciples' feet. During the meal, Judas left to betray Jesus. In the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-16), He taught the disciples about His leaving and about the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and His Disciples walked to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus prayed until His sweat was like blood. His disciples, understanding that He would die soon, slept because of grief.

THE WEEK OF THE CROSS (continued)

The night before the cross - His six trials. After midnight, Judas brought the Jewish leaders and soldiers to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. They came with swords and clubs to arrest the Prince of Peace. They bound Jesus and took Him to the Jewish leaders for trial. His trial before Annas (Trial 1) was illegal ... being without witnesses. An officer struck Him. He was taken to the high priest Caiaphas for another trial (Trial 2) ... this one with false witnesses. They asked, "*Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?*" ... and He answered, "*I am.*" Mark 14:61-62. The High Priest tore his robe as a sign condemning blasphemy. The priests condemned Him to be deserving of death. Guards spit in His face, beat Him with fists, and slapped Him. Peter denied Jesus three times ... then he went out and wept bitterly. They brought Him to the Sanhedrin when they convened at sunup (Trial 3). They asked, "*Are you the Son of God?*" ... and He answered, "*Yes, I am.*" Luke 22:70. They convicted Him and transferred Him to the Romans for execution. He was tried before Pilate (Trial 4) ... taken to Herod (Trial 5) ... and then brought back to Pilate (Trial 6). The crowd rejected His release. Pilate sentenced Him to death. Jesus was beaten, mocked, spit on, severely whipped, and crowned with thorns. Jesus was too weak to carry His cross to Golgotha to be crucified. Simon of Cyrene helped carry it for Him. Golgotha, the place of the skull, was not a scenic mountain location ... it was the execution site along the road to the dump.

The day of the cross - His supreme sacrifice. Near 9 AM, they nailed Jesus to the cross between two thieves. Above His head a sign proclaimed, "*King of the Jews*". Jesus prayed, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*" Many mocked Him ... including the Jewish leaders, passers-by, soldiers, and even one of the two thieves. The other thief believed. Jesus said to him, "*Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.*" Guards divided His clothing and cast lots for His tunic. At noon, the sky became dark. At about 3PM Jesus said, "*My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" ... "*Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit*" ... "*It is finished.*" He bowed His head and died. An earthquake rumbled through Jerusalem. The veil of the Temple was torn in two. The Centurion guard at the foot of the cross began praising God ... and proclaimed, "*This man was innocent ... this man was the Son of God.*" After Jesus died, a guard speared His side to be sure that He was dead. He was dead. There was no reason to break His legs. The perfect, sinless God-man had paid for the sins of the world. Jesus was taken down from the cross to be buried in a borrowed tomb. The tomb was sealed and guarded by Roman soldiers ... because He had prophesied that He would rise from the dead in three days. The story of the crucifixion and the quotations in this paragraph are from Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19.

FROM HIS RESURRECTION TO HIS RETURN

The Resurrection

A severe earthquake occurred in Jerusalem and an angel rolled the stone away from the tomb of Jesus, Matthew 28:2. Jesus had conquered death. He was resurrected ... spiritually and physically made alive again, Matthew 28:9, Luke 24:39, and Luke 24:41-43.

The discovery

The women (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and others) came to the tomb with spices to anoint His body. They found the tomb open and empty. Two angels appeared to them and told them, "*He is not here, but He has risen.*" Luke 24:5. Mary Magdalene and the others returned to tell Peter and John . . . who came to the tomb.

The appearances - forty days of proof

(Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20-21, Acts 1, 1 Corinthians 15)

1. To Mary Magdalene ... at the tomb.
2. To Mary (mother of James), Salome, and Joanna ... at the tomb.
3. To Peter ... at the tomb.
4. To 2 Men on the road to Emmaus ... outside of Jerusalem.
5. To 10 Apostles in Upper Room on Resurrection evening.
6. To 11 Apostles 8 days later ... probably in Galilee.
7. To 7 Apostles ... by the Sea of Galilee.
8. To 500 for the Great Commission ... at a mountain in Galilee.
9. To His half-brother James ... at an undisclosed location.
10. To the 11 Apostles ... in Jerusalem.
11. At the Ascension from the Mount of Olives ... east of Jerusalem.

FROM HIS RESURRECTION TO HIS RETURN (continued)

His Two Final Instructions.

1. Go make disciples. On a mountain in Galilee, several days before the Ascension, Jesus gave the Great Commission, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.*" Matthew 28:18-20. They and we were commanded to teach others to be followers of Jesus ... to make disciples. Nonbelievers need to become believers. New believers should be baptized. We should teach them to obey all that Jesus has commanded ... including the Great Commission.

2. Be My witnesses. Several days later, Jesus appeared on the Mount of Olives where He told His disciples, "*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*" Acts 1:8. After that statement, He was lifted up into the sky. A cloud received Him out of their sight. He ascended to the Father.

His present ministry includes ...

1. Jesus is the head of the Body, Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:14-16.
2. He is our High Priest, Hebrews 8:1-2.
3. He is our advocate praying for us, Hebrews 7:25, 9:24-25.
4. He is preparing a place for us, John 14:1-3.
5. He is with us, Matthew 18:20.

His promised return. The New Testament mentions Christ's return over 300 times in its 260 chapters . . . averaging about once every 25 verses. "*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*" John 14:3. "*This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.*" Acts 1:11. Other references include: Matthew 24, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, and Revelation.

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1. House on rock or sand	7:24-27		6:47-49	
2. Bridegroom, cloth, wine	9:14-17	2:18-22	5:33-39	
3. Children in marketplace	11:16-19		7:31-35	
4. Seed and four soils	13:3-8	4:3-8	8:5-8	
5. Seed to the Harvest		4:26-29		
6. Wheat and Tares	13:24-30			
7. The mustard seed	13:33-32	4:30-32	13:18-19	
8. The leaven	13:33		13:20-21	
9. The hidden treasure	13:44			
10. The pearl of great price	13:45-46			
11. The fishnet	13:47-50			
12. Two debtors			7:41-43	
13. The unmerciful slave	18:23-35			
14. The good Samaritan			10:30-37	
15. The persistent friend			11:5-8	
16. The rich fool			12:16-21	
17. The barren fig tree			13:6-9	
18. The lowest seat			14:7-11	
19. Rejected invitations			14:16-24	
20. The tower and the battle			14:25-35	
21. The lost sheep	18:12-14		15:3-7	
22. The lost coin			15:8-10	
23. The prodigal sons			15:11-32	
24. The shrewd steward			16:1-9	
25. The unworthy slaves			17:7-10	
26. The persistent widow			18:1-8	
27. Two men praying			18:9-14	
28. Vineyard rewards	20:1-20			
29. The ten slaves			19:11-27	
30. Two sons in vineyard	21:28-32			
31. Wicked husbandmen	21:33-44	12:1-12	20:9-18	
32. The wedding feast	22:1-14			
33. Two servants	24:45-51		12:42-48	
34. The watchful doorkeeper		13:34-37		
35. Ten virgins with lamps	25:3-13			
36. The three slaves	25:14-30			

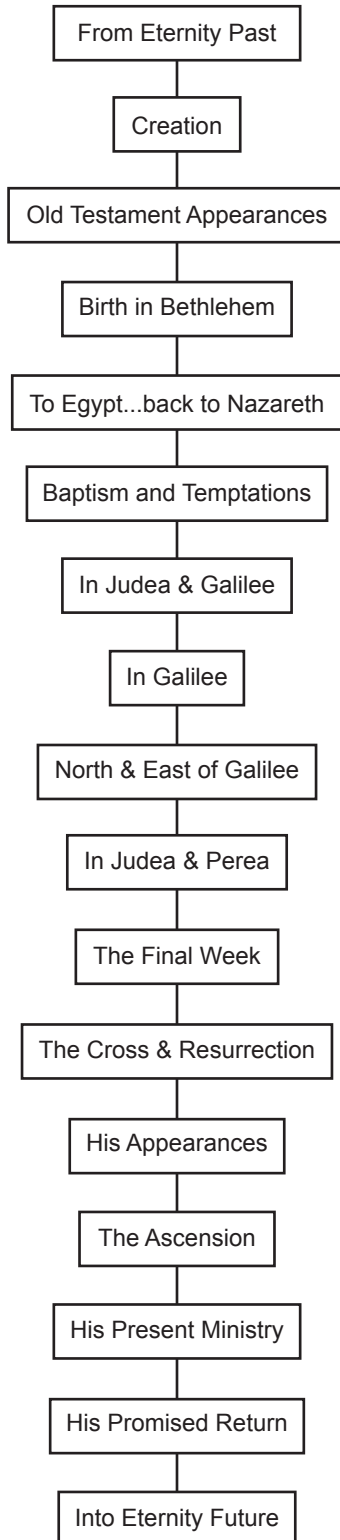
Parables are word pictures illustrating spiritual truth in terms of everyday life. The Old Testament predicted that Jesus would teach in parables, Psalm 78:2. Jesus taught in parables to give understanding to believers ... and to keep understanding from non-believers, Matthew 13:10-17, Mark 4:10-12. Parables illustrate truth ... but do not generate truth. They usually illustrate one truth ... not many. Keep interpretation simple and focused on the primary intent and context of the teaching.

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1. Water into wine	Cana				2:1-11
2. The official's son	Cana				4:46-54
3. Synagogue demon	Capernaum		1:21-28	4:33-37	
4. Peter's mother in law	Capernaum	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
5. First catch of fish	Galilee			5:1-11	
6. Gennesaret leper	Galilee	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-15	
7. Capernaum cripple	Capernaum	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
8. Pool healing	Jerusalem				5:1-16
9. Withered hand	Galilee	12:9-13	3:1-5	6:6-11	
10. Centurion servant	Capernaum	8:5-13		7:1-10	
11. Widow's son	Nain			7:11-17	
12. Blind demoniac	Galilee	12:22			
13. Calmed the sea	Galilee	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
14. Demons into pigs	Gadara	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
15. Jairus' daughter	Capernaum	9:18-26	5:22-43	8:41-56	
16. Woman's blood	Capernaum	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:43-48	
17. Two blind men	Capernaum	9:27-31			
18. Dumb demoniac	Capernaum	9:32-33			
19. Fed 5,000	Bashan	14:15-21	6:32-44	9:10-17	6:5-14
20. Walked on water	Galilee	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:15-21
21. Canaanite girl	Phoenicia	15:21-28	7:24-30		
22. Deaf mute healed	Decapolis		7:31-37		
23. Fed 4,000	Decapolis	15:32-38	8:1-9		
24. Blind Bethsaida	Bethsaida		8:22-26		
25. Possessed child	Mt. Hermon	17:14-21	9:14-29	9:37-42	
26. Fish mouth coin	Capernaum	17:24-27			
27. Man born blind	Jerusalem				9:1-8
28. Dumb demoniac	Judea (?)			11:14	
29. Woman bent	Perea			13:10-17	
30. Man with dropsy	Perea			14:1-6	
31. Lazarus raised	Bethany				11:1-45
32. Ten lepers	Samaria			17:11-19	
33. Blind Bartimaeus	Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
34. Cursed fig tree	Jerusalem	21:17-22	11:12-24		
35. Malchus' ear	Jerusalem			22:49-51	
36. Second fish catch	Galilee				21:1-14

Miracles are supernatural acts . . . ones that are naturally unexplainable. They demonstrate the person, power, and purpose of God. Jesus' miracles bore witness of who He was, John 10:25. His miracles caused people to believe in Him, John 14:11, 20:30-31. To understand miracles, it is necessary to look at several issues . . . who was there, what happened, why was it done, what prerequisites were there, what effects were there, and what of God was demonstrated.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST





Page 6-1

Disciplmaking 1 Abiding in His Word

THE NEW TESTAMENT

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

At the Ascension (Acts 1) Jesus told His disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them and that they would be witnesses, starting where they were in Jerusalem ... then into the surrounding areas of Judea and Samaria ... and then to the remotest part of the earth. They did receive power at Pentecost (Acts 2) and they became witnesses. The rest of the book of Acts recorded the expansion of their ministry into Jerusalem, into Judea and Samaria, and into the Gentile world and eventually Rome.

Peter and the apostles began in Jerusalem. The church grew by large numbers. Intense persecution, beginning at the stoning of Stephen, drove the early church into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus and Peter's vision opened the door for expansion to the Gentiles ... into the remotest part of the earth. The apostle James was executed.

The *first missionary journey* took Paul and Barnabas from Antioch through Southeast Asia Minor. After this trip, they and Peter attended the Jerusalem Council that concluded that Gentile new believers did not have to be circumcised to be saved. The *second missionary journey* took Paul and Silas from Antioch into Macedonia and Greece accompanied by Luke and Timothy. Because of a disagreement with Paul, Barnabas and John Mark went on their own mission trip to Cyprus. The *third missionary journey* took Paul and his companions from Antioch through western Asia Minor. At the end of that trip, they returned to Jerusalem. Paul was arrested and held in Caesarea. That gave him a chance to give the Gospel to Governors Felix and Festus ... and to King Agrippa. Appealing his case to Caesar, Paul set sail as a prisoner to Rome on his *fourth missionary journey*. He was shipwrecked along the way ... giving him a chance to minister on the Island of Malta.

During his first Roman imprisonment, Paul ministered to many people while under house arrest for two years. He was released and revisited the churches. Paul was arrested a second time and held in a Roman prison. Then he was executed.

After Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, the apostle John moved to Ephesus and then was exiled to Patmos where he wrote Revelation.

THE 27 BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ... 5 – 9 – 4 – 9

The New Testament books are arranged in an easily understood order. There are five books of history (the Gospels and Acts) ... nine letters from Paul to groups four letters from Paul to individuals ... and finally nine books by other writers.

5 Books of history

The first four New Testament books deal with the life of Jesus Christ. Then Luke's account is continued in the book of Acts. This fifth book of history records what Jesus continued to do through his followers after the Ascension.

9 Letters from Paul to groups

Paul wrote nine letters to new churches to encourage, teach, and correct them. During his missionary trips, he wrote Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Romans, and 1 and 2 Corinthians. After these trips, during his first Roman imprisonment, he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. These nine books are titled according to the recipients of the letters.

4 Letters from Paul to individuals

Paul also wrote four letters to individuals. During his first imprisonment in Rome, he wrote to Philemon, a brother in the Colossian church. After Paul's release he wrote to two church leaders . . . Timothy in Ephesus and then Titus in Crete. Then during his final Roman imprisonment, just before his death, Paul wrote his last letter . . . to Timothy. These four books are titled according to the recipients of the letters.

9 Books by other writers

James, the half-brother of Jesus, and the author of Hebrews each wrote a letter to Jewish believers. The seven remaining books include two by the apostle Peter, three by the apostle John, one by Jesus' half-brother Jude, and the apostle John's prophetic Revelation of Jesus Christ.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

5 history books	1	Matthew
	2	Mark
	3	Luke
	4	John
	5	Acts
9 Paul's letters to groups	1	Romans
	2	1 Corinthians
	3	2 Corinthians
	4	Galatians
	5	Ephesians
	6	Philippians
	7	Colossians
	8	1 Thessalonians
	9	2 Thessalonians
4 Paul's letters to individuals	1	1 Timothy
	2	2 Timothy
	3	Titus
	4	Philemon
9 books by others	1	Hebrews
	2	James
	3	1 Peter
	4	2 Peter
	5	1 John
	6	2 John
	7	3 John
	8	Jude
	9	Revelation

27 books total

ACTS - AN OUTLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

The author. Luke was a Gentile, a Greek, a doctor, an historian of the early church, and a missionary. He was Paul's companion from at least as early as the second missionary journey ... and as late as Paul's second Roman imprisonment. Luke wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else did (if we assume that Paul did not write Hebrews).

The book of Acts is a continuation of Luke's Gospel ... and a record of the apostles' obedience to the Great Commission. After Christ's Ascension in Acts 1 and the Holy Spirit's arrival at Pentecost in Acts 2, the apostles went into action. Acts 2-7 records their ministry in Jerusalem. Many believed in Jesus

Persecution beginning with the stoning of Stephen forced the early Christians out of Jerusalem into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Compare 1:8 to 8:1. The oppressor Saul was converted on the road to Damascus ... and the stage was set to take the Gospel to the remotest part of the earth. Peter had a vision that opened the apostles' hearts towards taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. Saul became the great apostle Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. In addition, the apostle James was killed.

Paul's *first missionary journey* took him and Barnabas through Southeast Asia Minor. A dispute about the Gentile converts arose. Paul and Barnabas attended a council with Peter in Jerusalem to resolve the problem. The decision was made that new Gentile believers did not have to be circumcised to be saved ... heresy was avoided. Paul and Silas left Antioch for the *second missionary journey* ... into Macedonia and Greece. Luke and Timothy were with them. Barnabas and John Mark split off from them at the beginning of that trip to take the Gospel to Cyprus. Paul's *third missionary journey* took him and his companions through western Asia Minor. Then they went back to Jerusalem.

Paul was arrested in Jerusalem ... and then confined at Caesarea. There he told the Gospel to governors Felix and Festus and to King Agrippa. Paul exercised his right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to Caesar. That set his course for Rome ... his *fourth missionary journey*. On his way to Rome he was shipwrecked on the Island of Malta, giving him an opportunity to minister there. Finally in Rome, he was under house arrest in his own rented quarters for two years. Large numbers of people came to him, and he told them of the Kingdom of God and about Jesus. And some believed.

Beyond the book of Acts. Paul was released and ministered for a few years before he was put in a Roman prison. He apparently was executed in the mid- to late-60's AD. The Apostle John's ministry continued beyond the other apostles. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, John moved on to Ephesus where he wrote 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. After he was exiled to the Island of Patmos, he wrote Revelation.

ACTS - THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

Acts 1 The Ascension ... Jesus went up to Heaven.

Acts 2 Pentecost ... the Holy Spirit came down.
"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"

Acts 3-6 The church went out into Jerusalem.
"... and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem"

Acts 7 Stephen gave his message and was martyred.

Acts 8 The church went out into Judea and Samaria.
"... and in all of Judea and Samaria"

Acts 9-12 Paul was converted, Peter had a vision, James was killed.

Acts 13-14 Paul's first missionary journey ... to SE Asia Minor.

Acts 15 The Jerusalem circumcision council kept the Gospel pure.

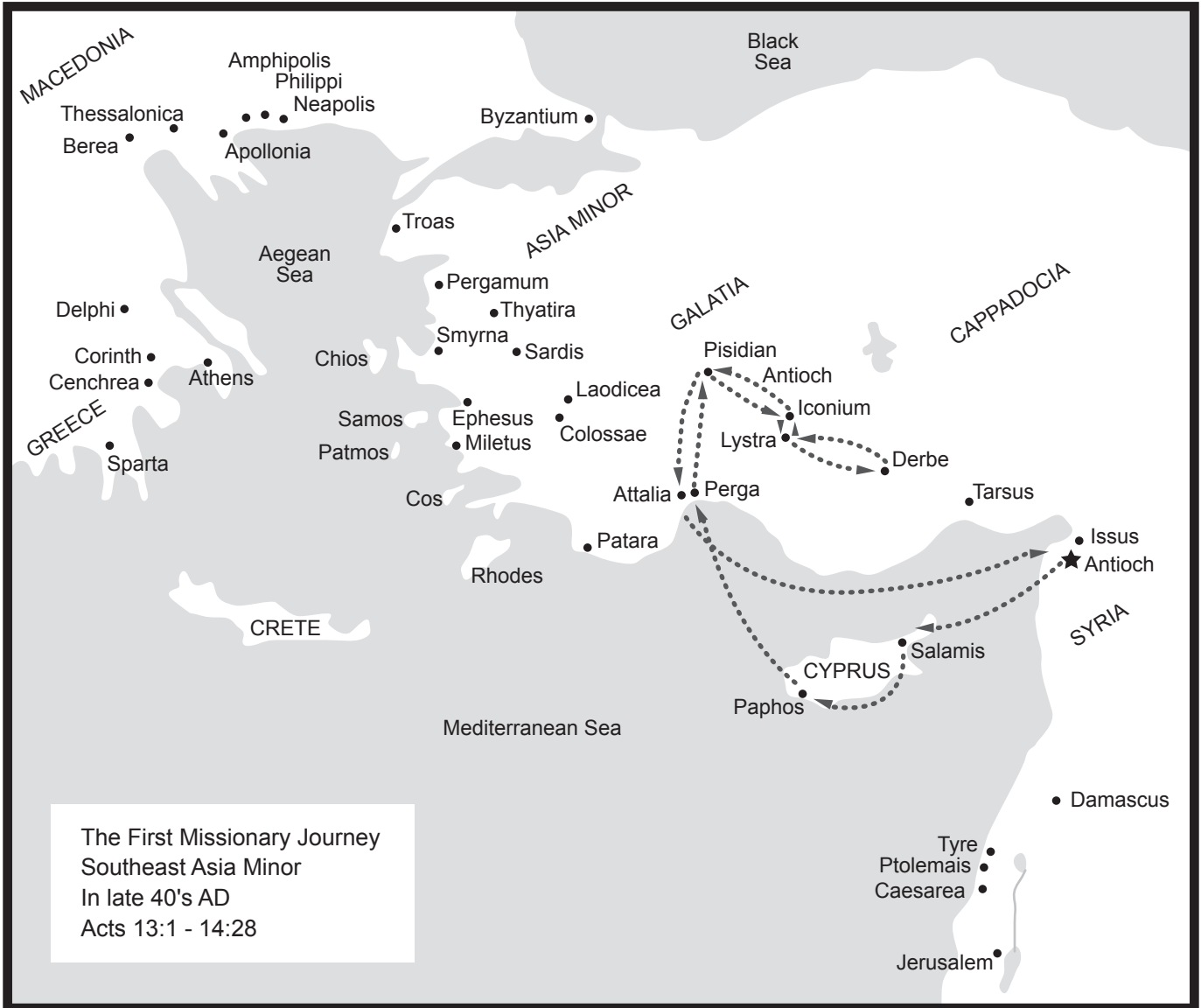
Acts 15:36 Paul's second missionary trip ... to Macedonia and Greece.

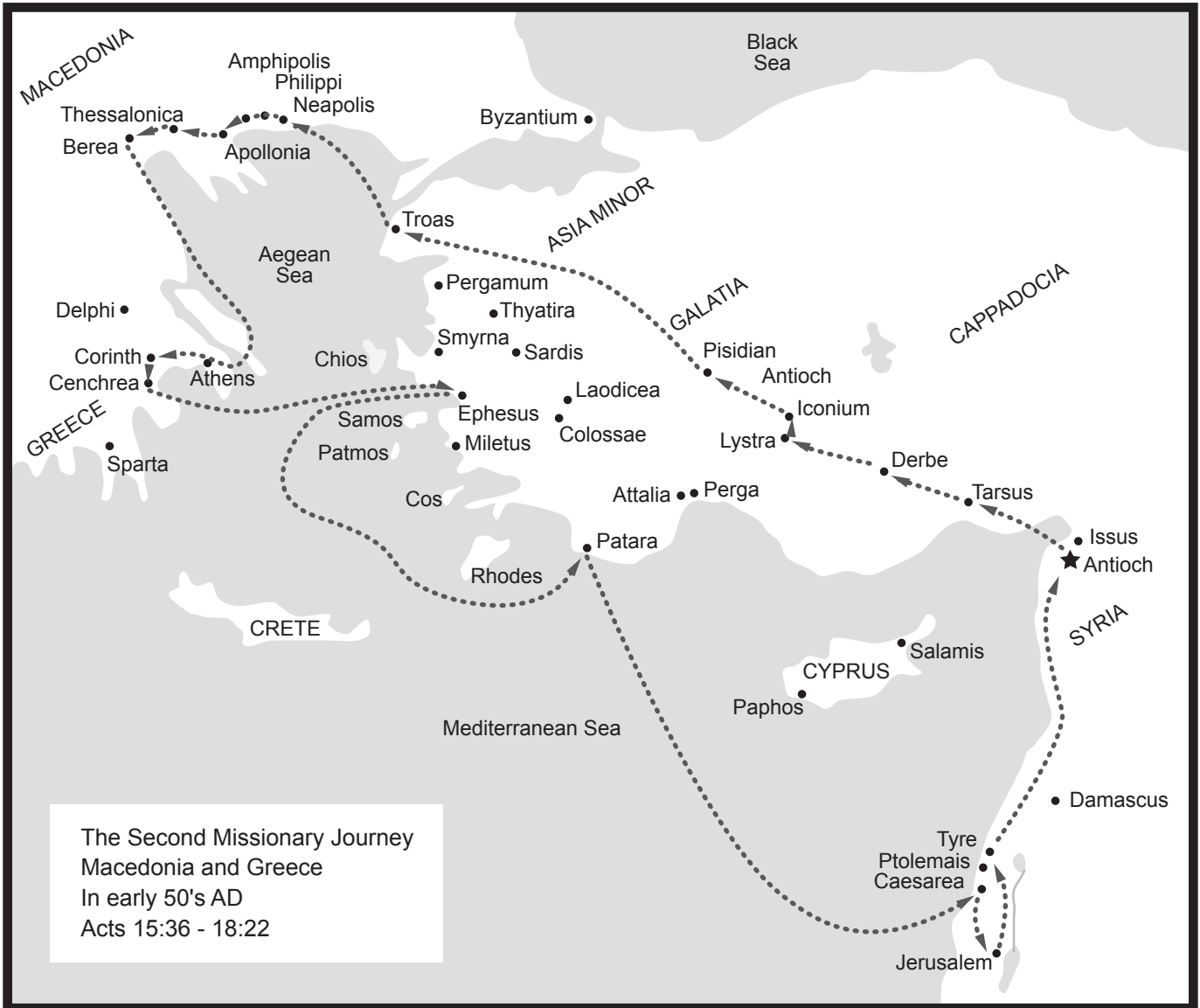
Acts 18:23 Paul's third missionary journey ... to western Asia Minor.

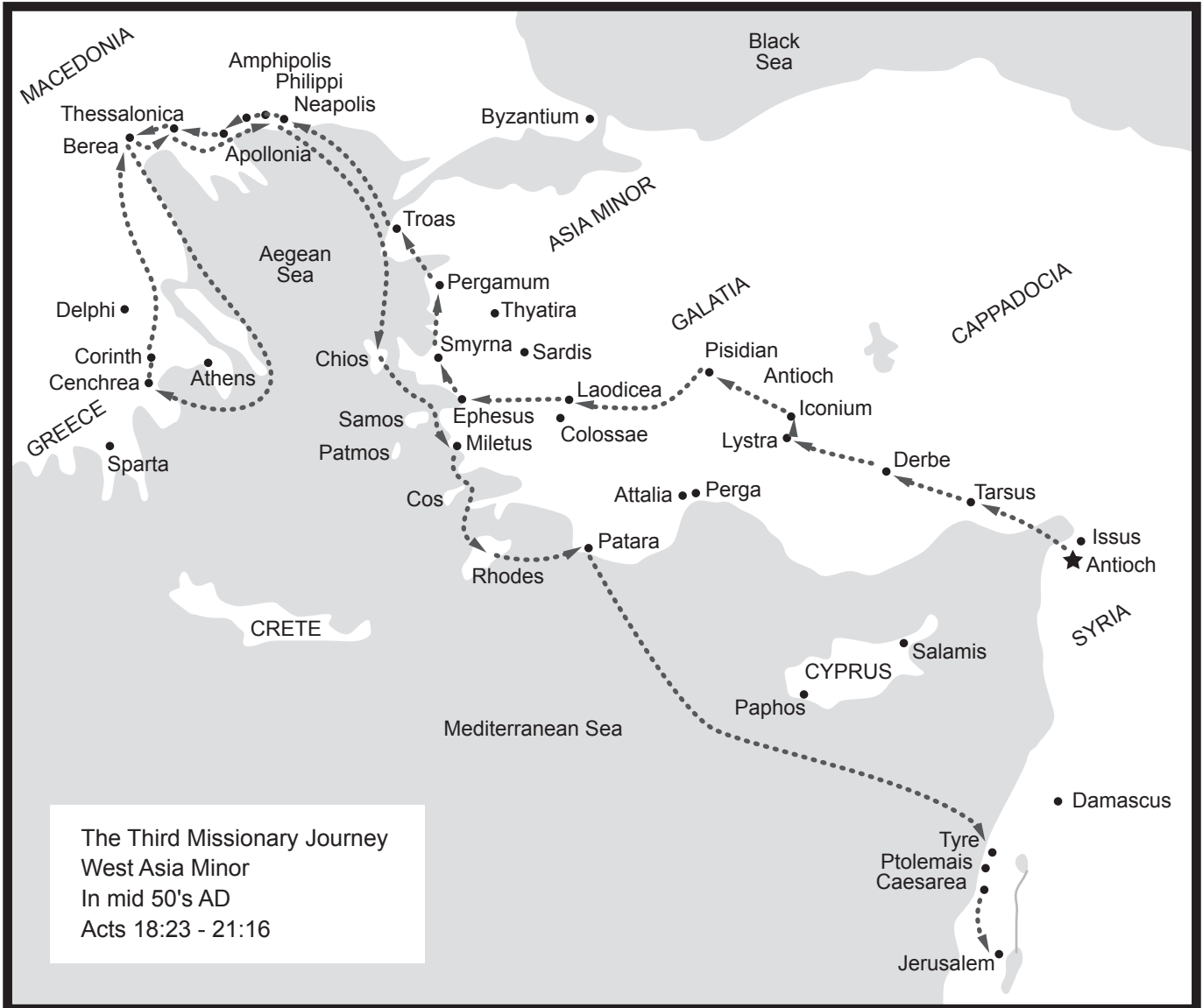
Acts 21:17 Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and confined in Caesarea.

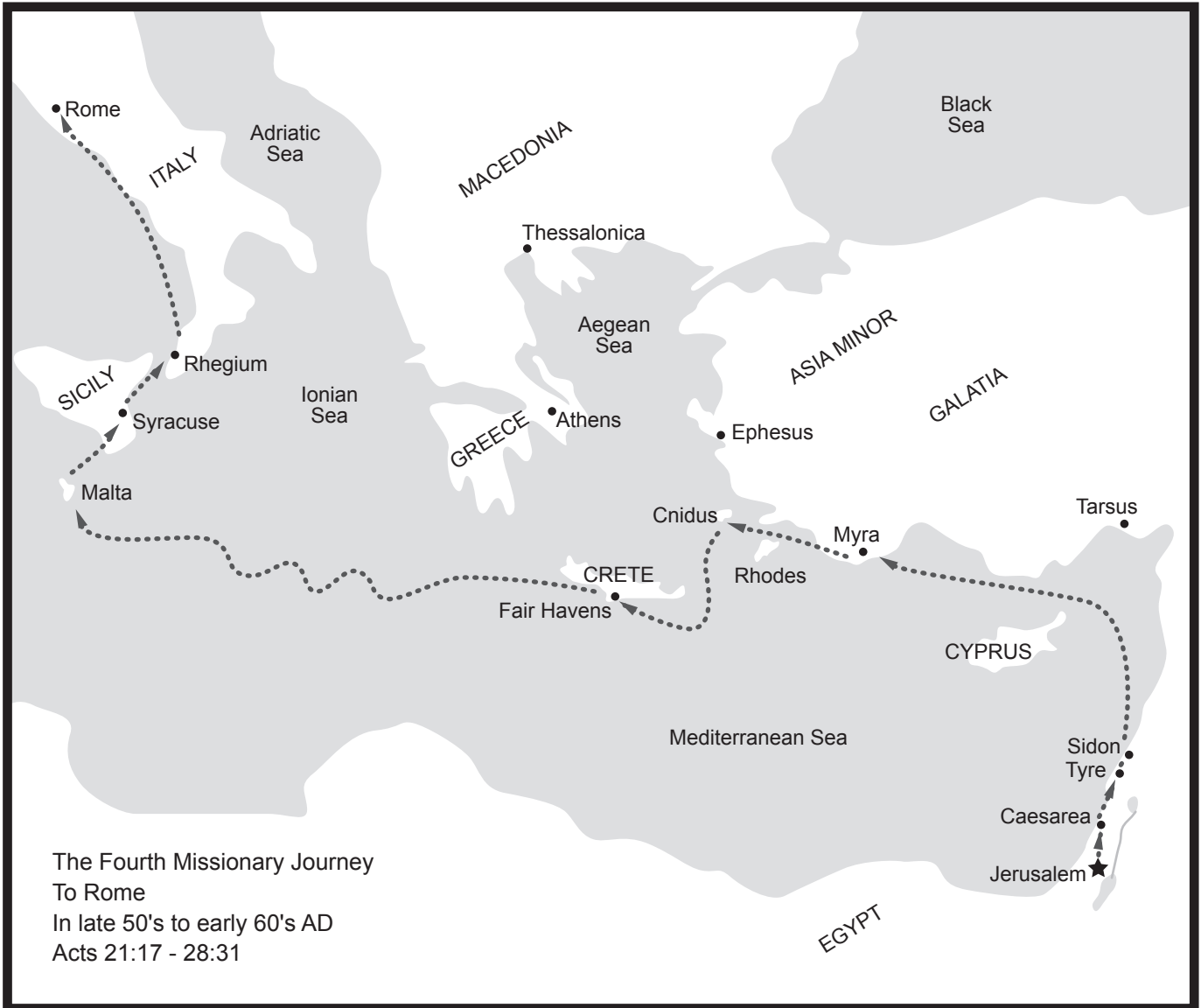
Acts 27-28 Paul's fourth missionary journey ... to Malta and Rome

"... and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8









The Fourth Missionary Journey
To Rome
In late 50's to early 60's AD
Acts 21:17 - 28:31

PAUL'S LETTERS TO GROUPS

The author Saul of Tarsus was a highly educated Jew of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a Pharisee. He was a Roman citizen by birth. This persecutor of the early church was converted after his experience on the road to Damascus. Also known as Paul, from Acts 13:9 on, he became a missionary to the Gentiles and author of 13 books of the New Testament.

Romans - Paul wrote this letter *"to all who are beloved of God in Rome"*. He wrote to them before he had visited their great city. This letter was written from Corinth, near the end of the third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD. The book of Romans is the most doctrinal and formal of Paul's letters. He wrote detailed foundational truth covering the subjects of sin (chapters 1-3) ... salvation (chapters 3-5) ... sanctification (chapters 6-8) ... sovereignty (chapters 9-11) ... and service (chapters 12-16).

1 Corinthians - This letter is written to *"the church of God at Corinth"*. It was a church founded on Paul's second missionary journey. The church was struggling in the midst of that very immoral port city. Paul wrote this letter to them from Ephesus during the third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD. The worldliness of Corinth had infiltrated their church. Paul wrote about factions, sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage, food, the Lord's Supper, and the use of spiritual gifts. Chapter 15 provides comprehensive teaching on the importance of the resurrection.

2 Corinthians - Apparently the believers in Corinth had not responded favorably to Paul's first letter. He made a trip to see them. He wrote another strong corrective letter to them. That letter is not included in the Bible. Following the repentance of the majority, Paul wrote another letter, 2 Corinthians, during his third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD from somewhere in Macedonia. Paul wrote of his joy that they had repented ... defended his character and his ministry ... taught on giving ... and defended his authority as an apostle.

Galatians - Paul wrote this letter to *"the churches of Galatia"*. He had visited them on either his first or second missionary journey. However, the date and location of the writing of this letter are unclear. The believers in Galatia had been misled to mix the law (works) into salvation. Paul strongly presented salvation by faith alone. He warned against the dangers of legalism. He also warned against license ... as he explained Christian liberty.

PAUL'S LETTERS TO GROUPS .(continued)

Ephesians - This letter was sent to the *"saints who are at Ephesus"*. Paul had been there on both his first and third missionary journeys. He wrote this letter to them from his first Roman imprisonment in the early 60's AD. Paul described the believers' spiritual wealth ... chosen, sealed, saved by grace, and united in one Body of believers. Then he exhorted them to walk worthy of the heavenly calling and position given to them in the Body. He described how to follow God in life, against sin, in the Spirit, at home, at work, and in the warfare.

Philippians - Paul wrote to *"all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi"*. He had been to Philippi during his second missionary journey. He wrote to them from his second Roman imprisonment in the mid-60's AD. Paul expressed his thankfulness for their consistent testimony ... and for their support of his ministry. He encouraged them to be at peace ... to be humble like Christ ... to be on guard ... and to rejoice.

Colossians - Paul wrote to *"the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae"*. Epaphras, a convert during Paul's ministry in Ephesus, brought Christianity to Colossae. Philemon was part of their church. This letter was written during Paul's first Roman imprisonment in the early 60's AD. He stressed the deity and supremacy of Christ to correct the hybridizing effect of false teaching ... which had brought the bad influences of legalism, philosophy, and mysticism into the church. Paul wrote that Christ is supreme (chapters 1-2), and therefore believers should seek the things above and live accordingly (chapters 3-4).

1 Thessalonians - Paul wrote to *"the church of the Thessalonians"*, founded during his second missionary journey. He had been forced to leave them, Acts 17:1-10. He wrote from Corinth in the early 50's AD. Paul's personal comments about their ministry (and about his own ministry) gave examples of a walk worthy of the God who calls each believer. He exhorted them to withstand sexual temptation ... to lead quiet lives ... to work ... to be at peace about the return of Christ ... and to fulfill their duties toward spiritual leaders, in conduct, and in worship.

2 Thessalonians - Paul wrote this second letter to *"the church of the Thessalonians"* shortly after his first letter ... from Corinth in the early 50's AD. He encouraged them in growth and in endurance under persecution. Some had misunderstood his teaching on the return of Christ and had ceased their work, thinking the Day of the Lord had come. Paul wrote about the coming events of the last days. He commanded them to work if they expected to eat ... working and waiting as they lived holy lives.

PAUL'S LETTERS TO INDIVIDUALS

Paul and people: Paul's letters followed a basic pattern. First, he presented his personal concerns and greetings. Then he taught spiritual truth. Then he taught application of that truth. He concluded with personal comments. Paul's commitment to God's truth was equaled by his concern for people. He would give the truth ... then teach them to live the truth. Even in Romans, his most formal and doctrinal letter, he devoted an entire chapter (16) to personal greetings and concern. Paul was committed to the three things in life that will last forever . . . God, God's Word, and people. The four letters described in this section are particularly committed to his concern for four men Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus.

1 Timothy - Paul wrote to Timothy as his "*true child in the faith*". Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother and was associated with Paul from the second missionary journey. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to oversee the ministry there. This letter was written in the early 60's AD after Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Paul instructed and encouraged Timothy to be a good leader. Many subjects are covered . . . prayer, women in the church, leaders, dangers and defenses, the older men and women, widows, elders, masters and slaves, false teachers, and money. Paul exhorted Timothy to "*fight the good fight of faith*".

2 Timothy - Paul wrote this final letter in the mid to late 60's AD from his second imprisonment in Rome. He wrote it shortly before his death. This is an extremely personal letter from Paul to his "*beloved son*" Timothy. Paul encouraged Timothy to be strong . . . to not to be ashamed . . . to minister faithfully . . . to stand true in the coming apostasy. . . to do the work of an evangelist . . . and to fulfill his ministry.

TITUS - Paul wrote to Titus, his "*true child in a common faith*", in the mid-60's AD after Paul's first Roman imprisonment. He left Titus in Crete to "*set in order what remains*" and to "*appoint elders in every city*". Paul encouraged Titus to carry out that task. Paul taught Titus about elders ... about rebellious, empty talking, deceiving men ... and about older men, older women, younger men, younger women, and slaves. He wrote about subjection to governments, consideration for all men, false teachers, and salvation producing a people zealous for good works.

PHILEMON - Paul wrote this letter in the early 60's AD during his first Roman imprisonment. It is Paul's personal plea to his friend Philemon in Colossae. The slave Onesimus had run away from his master Philemon. Onesimus came to faith in Christ through Paul's ministry while Paul was in prison in Rome. Paul sent the new believer back to his master with this personal plea for forgiveness of the slave who had become a beloved brother. Paul offered to repay anything that Onesimus owed.

KEY EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF PAUL

	Event	Age	Acts
1	At Stephen's stoning	Mid 30's	7-8
2	Persecuted the early church		8
3	Blinded on road to Damascus		9
4	Converted and healed		9
5	Brought to apostles in Jerusalem		9
6	Life threatened – sent to Tarsus		9
	A gap ... Galatians 1:17-2:1		
7	Retrieved by Barnabas	Early 40's	11
8	Carried money to Jerusalem	Mid 40's	11
9	Commissioned in Antioch		12-13
10	1st Missionary Journey – to Southeast Asia Minor	Late 40's	13-14
11	Jerusalem circumcision council		15
12	2nd Missionary Journey – to Macedonia and Greece	Early 50's	15-18
13	3rd Missionary Journey – to West Asia Minor	Mid 50's	18-21
14	Arrested in Jerusalem	Late 50's	21-23
15	Confined in Caesarea ... Gospel to Felix, Festus, and Agrippa		23-26
16	Sailed to Rome, Malta shipwreck	About 60	27-28
17	Under house arrest in Rome	Early 60's	28
18	Released to minister	Mid 60's	Beyond Acts
19	In Roman prison	Late 60's	Beyond Acts
20	Executed by Nero	~ 70	Beyond Acts

9 BOOKS BY OTHER WRITERS

The Authors: Five men authored the nine books that complete the 27 books of the New Testament. The author of Hebrews is unknown to us ... but was known to the original readers. It was probably not Paul because the content is more Jewish ... uses a definitively different vocabulary ... and is structurally different from Paul's writings. The author was an acquaintance of Timothy. Possibly, it was Luke, Barnabas, Silas, or someone else. James (not the apostle) and Jude were half-brothers of Jesus ... each wrote one book. Peter, a Galilean fisherman turned disciple, authored two books. John, a Galilean fisherman and "*the disciple whom Jesus loved*", wrote three letters and Revelation.

Hebrews - This book was written particularly to Jewish believers probably in the mid- to late-60's AD. The author, location of writing, and the location of the original readers are unknown to us today. The theme of the book is that the superior Christ gives us a superior life in Christ. Jesus is presented as better than ... better than the prophets ... better than the angels ... better than Moses ... better than Joshua ... and better than the Levitical priests. This eternal superior priest made a superior sacrifice. Moreover, He gave us an eternal, superior life with Him.

James - This book was addressed to Jewish readers ... to "*the twelve tribes who are scattered abroad.*" It is one of the earliest New Testament books, written in the late-40's AD. James wrote very practical instruction in everyday Christian living. He covered trials and temptations ... being a doer of the Word ... not showing personal favoritism ... and turning faith into works. He also gave instruction on the use of the tongue ... using wisdom from above ... and not being worldly. James concluded his letter, pointing out the power of prayer.

1 Peter and 2 Peter - These two letters, written in the mid-60's AD, deal with the difficulties and dangers facing Christians. Opposition from outside the Body is explained in 1 Peter. And 2 Peter covers opposition from inside the Body. In his first letter, Peter pointed out that salvation gives new hope in the face of outside persecution. He exhorted, "*Gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" He continued with instruction in holiness, fear of God, love for one another, growth, submission, suffering, and service. In his second letter, Peter attacked the problem of internal opposition. He stressed the need for continued growth rooted in Jesus Christ and in the Word of God. He presented a strong case against false teachers ... reminding the readers to expect them in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ. Peter exhorted them to look for His promised return and to be diligent to be found holy at His return.

9 BOOKS BY OTHER WRITERS (continued)

1 John - This book explains that believers can know that they have eternal life. John wrote that believers should live in light rather than darkness ... in forgiveness and obedience rather than sin ... in love rather than hate ... and in assurance rather than fear. This and John's other two letters were written around 90 AD ... probably from Ephesus.

2 John - This is a short note to the "*chosen lady and her children*," exhorting them to love one another ... obey His commandments ... and be on guard against false teachers, showing them no hospitality.

3 John - This is a note to John's dear friend Gaius. John commented on the good report that he had received stating that Gaius had been walking in the truth and that he had been kind to the visiting teachers. John also wrote a strong criticism of Diotrephes ... for his desire to be first.

Jude - This book was written sometime between the mid-60's and late-70's AD. This very short letter was a strong appeal to "*contend earnestly for the faith*" because of the dangers from false teachers. Jude wrote that they "*have crept in unnoticed*" ... and are "*hidden reefs*", grumblers, lustful, arrogant, and flatterers for the sake of gain. Such false teachers should be expected in the last days. Jude exhorted the believers to walk obediently.

Revelation - John's final book is the concluding book of the New Testament. He wrote it during his exile on the Island of Patmos in the 90's AD. The probable outline of the book is, "*the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things.*" Revelation 1:19. Chapter 1 contains, "*The things which you have seen*". Then, "*The things which are*" are the letters to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3. Then chapters 4-22 record "*The things which shall take place after these things.*" In these chapters are described. John wrote about the throne and the book in heaven ... and the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls of judgment. The latter chapters describe the return of Christ, the millennium, the white throne judgement, and the New Heaven and the New Earth. In the last verses of Revelation are the words of Jesus, "*Yes, I am coming quickly.*" John added his "*Amen*" and his prayer, "*Come, Lord Jesus.*"

THE NEW TESTAMENT





Page 7-1

Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

KNOWING GOD

"Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises loving-kindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things." Jeremiah 9:23-24

Knowing God is more important and more valuable than human wisdom, might, and riches. However, we must consider the perplexing question in Job 11:7, *"Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?"* The answer is obvious ... we cannot understand and cannot know the infinite, unlimited God without His initiative. Our finiteness limits our comprehension of the infinite.

God has taken the initiative to reveal Himself to us. Therefore, we can understand and know Him. God has given us the Spirit to guide us into truth, John 16:13. He has revealed Himself in creation, Romans 1:20 ... in that we see His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and His divine nature. We see something of God in man. He made man in His image and His likeness, Genesis 1:26-27. The Bible is God's Word to us and for us, Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12. In addition, God has revealed Himself to us through Jesus Christ, Hebrews 1:1-12, 1 John 5:20. Jesus said, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father."* John 14:9. We can know the true and infinite God. Jesus said, *"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* John 17:3. God has given us these five means to learn of Him ... the Spirit, creation, man, the Bible, and Jesus.

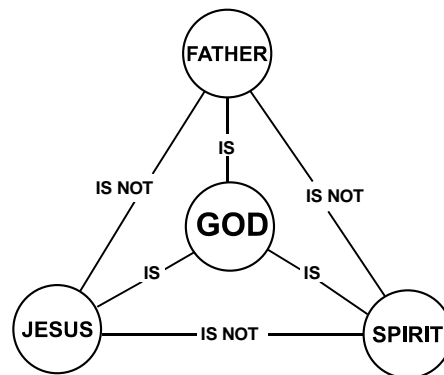
There is so much of God that we can know even within the inadequacies of our limited, finite words. We can know that God is one. We can know that He is three. In addition, we can know that He is three-in-one. However, we cannot know how that can be. The general attributes of God give us understanding about how great, how immense, how immeasurable He is ... but finite understanding falls short of the infinite.

Each of the members of the Trinity is equal to the others. Each is fully and totally God. At the same time, each is uniquely distinct from the others. The Father sent Jesus to us. He returned to the Father. Then Jesus sent the Spirit from the Father to help us ... to indwell us ... to empower us. Our life with the Spirit is of vital importance to our being all that the triune God wants us to be.

THE NATURE OF GOD

God is one. The Bible states that God is one. He is indivisible. There is only one God. *"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"* Deuteronomy 6:4. No other Gods exist. *"To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him."* Deuteronomy 4:35.

God is three. God is one. He is also three. He referred to Himself in the plural in Genesis 1:26, 3:22, 11:7, and Isaiah 6:8. The Father is God, John 6:27. Jesus is God, Titus 2:13. In addition, the Spirit is God, Acts 5:3-4. Each is distinct from the others, John 14:24-26, 15:26-27, and Isaiah 48:16. The Father is not the Son ... and the Father is not the Spirit. The Son is not the Spirit ... and the Son is not the Father. The Spirit is not the Father ... and Spirit is not the Son. However, each is fully God. Each member of the Trinity fully expresses all the attributes of God.



God is three-in-one ... a tri-unity ... a trinity. The combination of *God is one* and *God is three* leads to the three-in-one description of God known as the Trinity. The Trinity is alluded to in Matthew 28:18-20 which includes baptizing in the singular name of the Father, Son, and Spirit...*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit"*. All three are evident at the baptism of Jesus ... Jesus was baptized ... the Spirit descended ... and the Father spoke. *"And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.'"* Matthew 3:16-17. The three members of the Trinity are mentioned in Isaiah which was written about 700 BC. *"Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. Surely My hand founded the earth, and My right hand spread out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand together ... Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, from the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit."* Isaiah 48:12-13,16.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The following characteristics present a partial picture of God. These are shared attributes in that they describe God as one and as three. These equally describe each member of the Trinity. *"To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?"* Isaiah 40:18.

God is infinite. He has no limitations. He cannot be contained in any way. He is not bound by space and time. His existence is immense ... immeasurable in all ways.

"Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable." Psalm 145:3

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built!" 1 Kings 8:27

God is eternal. He is infinite in time. He always was. He is. He always will be. God extends endlessly from eternity past to eternity future.

"Before the mountains were born, or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." Psalm 90:2

"But Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end." Psalm 102:27

God is omnipotent. He is infinite in power. He is all-powerful. His strength is without limit. He can do anything that He chooses to do. No one and no thing have, is, or ever will be as strong or stronger than God.

"I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted." Job 42:2

"Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee." Jeremiah 32:17

God is sovereign. He is infinite in authority, power, control, and autonomy. He is the highest authority. He is the supreme ruler. He has ultimate, independent, and final control of all things.

"Whatever the Lord pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps." Psalm 135:6

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (continued)

"Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O Lord, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all."
1 Chronicles 29:11 (This verse completes the previous page.)

God is immutable. He is infinite in constancy. He has never changed. He is not changing. In addition, He will never change. God's character, His self-existence, is constant ... not changing, growing, or developing. This does not mean that what He does (His behavior) is unchanging.

"Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow." James 1:17

"For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed." Malachi 3:6

God is omniscient. He is infinite in knowledge. He is all-knowing. His knowledge is without limits. God knows all things that have happened ... could have happened ... are happening ... could happen ... and will happen. His knowledge is unlimited, extending infinitely beyond the realm of the created universe ... beyond space ... and beyond time.

"For God is greater than our heart, and knows all things." 1 John 3:20

"No creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13

God is omnipresent. He is infinite in presence and location. He is everywhere. God is present everywhere with His whole being. This does not mean that God is partially or fully made up of the things that He created (that is pantheism). God is different from the universe ... but He is everywhere present in and beyond the universe.

"'Am I a God who is near,' declares the Lord, 'and not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places, so I do not see him?' declares the Lord. 'Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?' declares the Lord." Jeremiah 23:23-24

"Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Thy hand will lead me, and Thy right hand will lay hold of me." Psalm 139:7-10

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (continued)

God is holy. He is infinite in purity. He is separated from all that is evil. He is good, pure, and right. He is not affected by that which is evil, unclean, and common. Holiness is much more than the absence of evil. Holiness is the positive existence of purity.

"For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am holy." Leviticus 11:44

"For holy is the Lord our God." Psalm 99:9

God is truth. He infinitely represents Himself in a way consistent with His being. He is totally trustworthy and reliable in any way that He reveals Himself. His words are consistent with His nature.

"In the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago." Titus 1:2

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Numbers 23:19

God is just. He is infinitely righteous in Himself and in His treatment of good and evil. He is righteous in His treatment of all that He has created.

"The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He." Deuteronomy 32:4

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether." Psalm 19:9

God is love. He is infinite in the expression of holiness. He accomplishes the best for Himself and the best for man. God is love. The reverse of that, *love is God*, is not true.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."
John 3:16

"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."
1 John 4:8

THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH MEMBER OF THE TRINITY

Each member of the Trinity is a full expression of God. However, each one is distinguished from the others. However, each is equal to the others. One is not less than or more than another is. However, each has done, is doing, or will do things that distinguish that member from the others ... and that is the emphasis in the next three segments of this lesson. Two or three members of the Trinity share many of these actions and activities. The order of each list is not that of importance ... nor are all possible distinguishing positions and actions covered. There are many other things that God has done, is doing, and will do.

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE FATHER. The Father has always been, is, and always will be fully and totally God. However, we see Him uniquely doing particular things that distinguish Him from the Son and the Spirit.

He is the father of all mankind in the creator/creature sense. This refers to the physical fatherhood rather than spiritual fatherhood of God. God's spiritual fatherhood is different from this ... and it is conditioned on faith. Malachi 2:10, Acts 17:29

He is the father of Israel. He is the father of Israel as nation of people. This does not imply that He is the spiritual father of each person of Israel ... that is based on individual faith. His being the father of Israel is not the same as His being the father of the Church. The Church is the bride of Christ ... Jesus is the bridegroom ... and God the Father is the father of the bridegroom. Exodus 4:22, Isaiah 63:16

He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. All members of the Trinity are equal ... but God the Father is positionally the Father of Jesus Christ. This does not mean that the Father is greater than the Son is. Ephesians 1:3, John 3:16, John 5:37

He is the Father, the spiritual Father, of all who believe in Christ. We are His children. Psalm 103:13, John 1:12, Galatians 3:26

He delegates authority to world rulers and sets the boundaries and times for nations. Acts 17:26, Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-14

He is the author of salvation. He is the one who chooses ... the one who elects ... the one who calls men to believe. Ephesians 1:3-12, Romans 8:28 - 9:24

He gives us direction. The Father gives us His will for our days and lives. Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 32:8, Jeremiah 29:11

The uniqueness of the Father (continued)

He is our protector. He protects us in our battles against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Psalm 23, Psalm 37, Psalm 56:3-4

He is our provider. He provides for our physical and spiritual well-being. He is the source of all good gifts. Matthew 6:25-34, James 1:17

He gives us eternal security. We are safe in God's hands forever ... safe because no one is strong enough to take us out of His hands.
John 10:27-29

He hears our prayers. Jesus taught that we should pray to the Father.
Matthew 6:8-9, John 16:23

He disciplines His children. As a loving Father, He disciplines us to be all that we can be. He is the vinedresser who prunes us to bear more fruit.
Hebrews 12:4-13, John 15:1-2

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE SON. The Lord Jesus Christ has always been, is, and always will be fully and totally God. However, we see Him uniquely doing particular things that distinguish Him from the Father and the Spirit.

He is the Creator. Jesus is the Creator and sustainer of all things created.
John 1:3, Colossians 1:16-17

He is the defender and deliverer of Israel. Joshua 5:13 - 6:2,
Psalm 34:7

He became the God-Man. Jesus became a man ... adding humanity to His undiminished deity. He became the *logos*, the physical representation of God, on earth. Philippians 2:5-8, John 1:1-2,14

He is the Apostle of our faith. He is the founder and forerunner of our faith.
Hebrews 3:1

He is the High Priest of our faith. He is the superior and permanent priest.
Hebrews 3:1, 4:14-15, 7:23-24, 9:11-12

He was a prophet predicted by Moses, Deuteronomy 18:15. He authoritatively declared God's Word in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7 ... on the Mount of Olives, Matthew 24-25 ... and in the upper room, John 13-16. He predicted Judas' betrayal, Matthew 26:21. He predicted His death and resurrection, Matthew 16:21, 20:17-19.

The uniqueness of the Son (continued)

He is the Head of His Body, which is the combination of all believers.

He is building His Body ... building His universal church. Ephesians 1:20-23, 4:15, Matthew 16:18

He gives equipping gifts to His Body. These gifts are specialized people. They are apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers. They are given to equip believers for service. These are different from the empowering gifts (special abilities) given by the Spirit to believers individually. Ephesians 4:11-13

He is praying for us. Jesus intercedes for us. Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25

He is preparing a place for us in the presence of God. John 14:1-3

He is King ... and will rule as King. John 12:14-15, 1 Timothy 6:13-16, Revelation 19:15-16

He will return for us. John 14:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

He will judge all people. He will judge believers and non-believers. John 5:22,27, 1 Corinthians. 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Revelation 20:11-15

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE SPIRIT. God the Spirit has always been, is, and always will be fully and totally God. However, we see Him uniquely doing particular things that distinguish Him from the Son and the Father.

He inspired the men who wrote the Bible. He carried them along to produce the written Word. The Word is God-breathed by the Spirit through the men that wrote the Word. God's Word is the sword of the Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21, Matthew 22:43, Acts 28:25, Ephesians 6:17

He was in and upon certain people in Old Testament times. These people included Joseph, Genesis 41:38 ... Joshua, Numbers 27:18 ... Daniel, Daniel 4:8 ... Gideon, Judges 6:34 ... Samson, Judges 13:25 ... and Saul, 1 Samuel 10:10.

He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgement. The Holy Spirit convinces and convicts people of the sin of their unbelief. He convinces and convicts people of the righteousness of Christ. He convinces and convicts people of the surety of judgment. John 16:8-12

The uniqueness of the Spirit (continued)

He glorifies Christ. He specifically directs people to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit glorifies Jesus rather than Himself. John 16:14

He is the agent of our spiritual birth. He regenerates us. He gives us new birth. This birth into the Body is described in the Bible as baptism in the Spirit. Titus 3:3-5, John 3:5-6, 1 Corinthians 12:13

He indwells all believers. He permanently, irrevocably, and without variation indwells each and every believer from the moment of salvation. This constant and unconditional indwelling of the Spirit is different from the variable filling of the Spirit. John 14:16-17, 1 Corinthians 6:19

He fills believers. This is our voluntarily coming under the influence and control of the Spirit. It is our allowing the Spirit to work in and through us. His filling is conditional ...varying according to our response and availability. This filling of the Spirit is different from the indwelling of the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

He assures us that we are God's children. He is our pledge and seal that we are safe forever. He gives us the assurance of our salvation. Romans 8:16, Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30, 2 Corinthians 5:5

He gives empowering gifts to the Body. The Spirit gives at least one special empowering ability to each believer. These gifts enable each part of the Body of Christ to do its part to build up the Body in love. These are different from the enabling gifts given by Jesus. The gifts given by Jesus are specialized people. The gifts given by the Spirit are special abilities. Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 12:11

He leads believers. The Spirit gives guidance to believers ... as He did with Jesus during His earthly life. Luke 4:1, Romans 8:14, Acts 8:29

He teaches believers. The Spirit teaches believers in their own private study ... and teaches them through their teachers. He leads them into truth ... giving them an understanding of God's Word. John 14:26, 16:13

He comforts us. He is called along side to help us. John 14:16-17

He prays for us when in our weakness we do not know how to pray. He prays for us ... prays for us when we do not know how we should pray. This does not imply that He prays through us. Romans 8:26

He bears fruit in our lives. The Spirit's characteristics of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control become visible as we live under His influence. Galatians 5:22-23

THE BELIEVER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, *"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you."* John 14:16-17. The Spirit, our helper, is with us and in us. The Spirit gives believers special abilities to serve the common good. However, there is much more to our life with the Spirit than spiritual gifts. We must respond to Him properly to gain the benefits of His ministry to us and through us.

Be filled with the Spirit. Be under the influence of the Spirit. Give Him freedom in your life. Be available to His filling by emptying yourself of the influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Ephesians 5:18

Follow the Spirit. Pray for the Spirit's leading. Be attentive to His leading. Let Him lead you, Psalm 143:10, Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:18. When the Spirit leads you ... follow Him. Allow Him to guide your steps. Walk by the Spirit, Romans 8:4, Galatians 5:16,25.

Pray in the Spirit. This is praying under the influence of the Spirit. You should pray under His influence ... just as you should do all things under His influence. Ephesians 6:18, Jude 1:20

Set your mind on the Spirit. Direct your mind to the Spirit instead of to the flesh. Your life will follow the aim of your mind. Romans 8:6

Sow to the Spirit. You will reap whatever you sow. Invest your life in the things of the Spirit. Sow in the field of the Spirit instead of in the field of the flesh. Galatians 6:7-8

Quench not and grieve not the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 ... quench not the Spirit. Do not extinguish, dampen, or crush His influence in your life. Unavailability to the Spirit quenches the Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 ... grieve not the Spirit. Don't give Him sorrow and distress. Sin grieves the Spirit. Don't cause Him to grieve ... cause Him to rejoice.

Preserve the unity of the Spirit. Unity is of the Spirit. We do not have to create unity. We are called upon to preserve unity. We are to be one with other believers ... one in heart, in soul, and in mind. Ephesians 4:3-4



Page 8-1

Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

GOD'S WILL

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:1-2

Knowing God's will is very important to every believer. However, our goal must not be just *knowing* His will. Our goal must also be *doing* His will. Much of His direction for our lives is of a general nature that applies to all believers uniformly. He also has an individualized will for each believer. There are no shortcuts, no gimmicks, and no magic formulas in determining His will. Most often God gradually unfolds His will to us as we grow in our walk with Him. It is a product of routine faithfulness.

The importance of following God's will is seen in the life of Jesus. He said, *"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me."* John 4:34. Jesus also said, *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."* John 6:38. Obviously, before we can do His will we must know and understand what His will is. Paul stressed the importance of knowing God's will ... *"So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."* Ephesians 5:17.

We can know God's will. *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go."* Psalm 32:8. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."* Proverbs 3:5-6. Moreover, the Bible assures us that His will is good. *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."* Romans 8:28. *"The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the one who holds his hand."* Psalm 37:23-24. *"For I know the plans that I have for you', declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'" Jeremiah 29:11.*

We know the general will of God for us (and for all believers) directly from the Bible. His general will is the same for every believer. We know God's individualized will for our individual lives as a product of a faithful life in the general will of God. From that base of obedience, we follow three steps to determine His individualized will ... we ask the Father ... we acquire guidance from His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace ... and we act when we know His will.

HIS GENERAL WILL. Much of God's direction for our lives is His general will that applies to all believers without variation. We understand His general will directly from the Bible. We learn of His general will from the commandments, principles, and examples in His Word.

Commandments. There are clear commandments in the Bible for every believer. *"For this is the will of God ... that you abstain from sexual immorality."* 1 Thessalonians 4:3. *"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. *"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution ... for such is the will of God."* 1 Peter 2:13-15. Jesus expects us to obey these and the others... *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* John 14:15. Obedience should be our way of life.

Principles. There are principles in the Bible covering varied situations. There is the principle of good stewardship described at the beginning of Luke 16. The cost of discipleship is at the end of Luke 14. The principle of spending time with lost people is presented in the three parables of Luke 15. We need to understand and apply all the other principles given in the Old and New Testaments. The principles and commandments give us His general will.

Examples. The Bible contains good examples to follow ... and bad ones to avoid. The best example is that of Jesus Christ. Washing the disciples' feet Jesus said, *"For I gave you an example that you should also do as I did to you."* John 13:15. We should follow the His example of humility, Philippians 2:5. We should walk in His steps in 1 Peter 2:21, 1 John 2:6. We should follow Daniel's good example of honoring and serving God in a godless place. Paul gave a good witnessing example in Acts 17. Paul wrote, *"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."* 1 Corinthians 11:1. In addition, there are bad examples to avoid such as King Saul giving partial obedience to God ... David's adultery with Bathsheba ... and the 17 cycles of failure during the time of the judges.

HIS INDIVIDUALIZED WILL. We need to follow three steps to learn and to do His individualized will. First, we are to ask Him to tell us. Second, we need to acquire guidance from His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace. When we know His individualized will, we need to act ... to do what He has told us to do.

Ask. The starting point of knowing His individualized will is prayer. The Psalmist's prayer should be ours ... *"Teach me to do Your will."* Psalm 143:10. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, *"Your will be done."* Matthew 6:10. Paul prayed that the believers at Colossae would *"be filled with the knowledge of His will."* Colossians 1:9. Epaphras labored earnestly in prayer for them that they would *"stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God."* Colossians 4:12. Our earnest prayer for ourselves, and for others, should be to know and do the will of God.

Acquire guidance. God gives us His individualized will through His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace. We ask God to reveal His will to us ... and He answers those prayers through the four means described below.

1. His Word... Knowing God's individualized will is often a product of routine Bible study. Or it can be from a study relating to a specific situation. God's individualized will for each believer becomes clear as we gain wisdom and understanding from God's Word. He will never lead us to do something contrary to His Word.

2. His Wisdom... God's wisdom comes from an obedient spiritual life, 1 Corinthians 2:14 - 3:3. The more obediently we walk with Him, the more we can understand His Word and His will. Paul wrote, *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."* Romans 12:2. Ask God for His wisdom. *"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God ... and it will be given to him."* James 1:5.

3. His People... God's people are a resource for understanding His individualized will. Those who teach His Word through speaking or writing can help, Colossians 1:28. It is good to get counsel from mature believers. More than one counselor is a good idea ... *"Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed."* Proverbs 15:22. Remember that advice is only advice. The majority vote of a number of counselors may be right ... or may be wrong. Ten of the twelve spies sent into Canaan in Numbers 13 and 14 were wrong. Mature believers can give us meaningful insight to help us understand God's will.

4. His Peace... God's peace in our hearts can be the final confirmation of His individualized will. *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts."* Colossians 3:15. *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* Philippians 4:7. This peace is a God-given deep sense of rightness about a decision. It is not rooted in emotionalism or human desire. It does not stand alone. His peace is the confirmation that follows prayer, study of the Bible, spiritual wisdom, and insights from a number of spiritually mature counselors. We must seek and wait for His peace.

Act. It is time to act when we know His will. The answer may be *no* as it was for Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. It may be *wait* ... then we must continue to seek His will. His answer of *wait* can result in great blessing, Isaiah 40:31. When His answer is *yes*, we must do His will even if it is difficult, uncomfortable, unpopular, or costly. We should delight to do His will ... and do it from our hearts, Psalm 40:8 and Ephesians 6:5-6.

WARNINGS

His Word. God will *never* give individualized guidance that is contrary to His written Word. He will *not* lead contrary to His Word ... no matter what wisdom we think we may have ... no matter what advice we get ... and no matter what peace we feel.

Fleeces. Gideon put out a fleece to get physical confirmation of God's will. It is a dangerous thing to do. Gideon's own words revealed his hesitancy, Judges 6:36-40. Gideon feared God's anger as he asked Him twice to confirm His will. Putting out a fleece seems to be more popular among believers today than it ever was in the Bible. We should put out a fleece very infrequently ... and only after much prayer and consideration.

Suffering. Suffering is not necessarily out of the will of God. It may be God's will that you suffer, 1 Peter 3:17, 1 Peter 4:19. Suffering may help you do His will, 1 Peter 4:1-2. An example is the persecution of the early church, Acts 8:1-4, that caused believers to take the Gospel out of Jerusalem in obedience to Jesus in Acts 1:8. Pure silver is purified in the furnace of suffering, Isaiah 48:10.

Progressive stewardship. Most often God's will for us involves our steady growth as we learn and gain experience in our walk with Him. Moses spent 40 years in preparation, tending obstinate sheep before he was ready to tend God's people for 40 years in the wilderness. After his conversion, the Apostle Paul spent possibly up to 14 years growing in his walk with God before he went on his first missionary journey. Jesus taught this principle in Luke 16:10-13.

Polarization. Determining God's will requires balance. It is dangerous to focus on one part of knowing God's will (polarizing to an unbalanced extreme) while ignoring the other parts of knowing His will. To focus all our attention on applying wisdom to the exclusion of God's peace is dangerous ... we could be tempted to exclude the leading of the Spirit. To focus all our attention on the inner confirmation of peace is dangerous ... tempting us to ignore the Word and the wisdom He has given us.

Counterfeit answers. Be careful of the counterfeit answers taught in the name of Christianity. There are no shortcuts, no gimmicks, and no magic answers to knowing God's will. No one experience gives all wisdom.

**Page 9-1****Disciplemaking 1
Abiding in His Word****IN THE BODY**

"We are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." Ephesians 4:15-16

Our spiritual birth delivered us into the family of God ... into the Body of Christ. Tremendous and wonderful things happened when we believed in Jesus Christ. Before that we were dead ... and then we became alive. We were enemies of God ... and afterwards we became His friends. We were in darkness ... and then we came into the light. However, our new life has much more significance than just the personal, individual changes. We also became part of His Body. We became equal and important parts in the Body with other believers.

Our life in the Body with other believers has particular privileges and responsibilities. The Bible gives us several illustrations to help us understand what it means to be in the Body. We are part of the Body of Christ ... the family of God ... the bride of Christ ... the house of God ... the temple ... the light ... a nation ... the vine ... and a flock. Understanding the implications of these helps us function properly as members of the Body.

The Bible gives us clear directives on how to function in the Body. In obedience to God's Word, we should follow our spiritual birth with water baptism as an outward sign of our identification with His death, burial, and resurrection. Moreover, we need to be together ... sharing our resources ... being taught ... worshipping ... praying ... and remembering His death through communion. We are also commanded to love one another, to preserve unity, to be pure, and to put love into action.

God has given us the resources that we need to function properly in the Body. He has given four kinds of specialized people, leaders, to equip us. In addition, He has given special abilities, spiritual gifts, to believers ... empowering us to do our part in the Body of Christ. Our proper use of these resources, as we fit into our proper place in His Body, causes the whole Body to grow up in all aspects to bring honor to Christ.

NINE ILLUSTRATIONS OF LIFE WITH OTHER BELIEVERS

These illustrations give understanding about our position, privileges, and responsibilities in the Body of Christ. Think about the implications of each of these illustrations that apply to our relationship with God ... with other believers ... and with lost people.

1. Body of Christ. Jesus is the Head of the Body, Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18. No other member is the Head ... only Jesus is. Each believer is an important part of the Body, Romans 12:4-5, Ephesians 5:30, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. There are many different parts of the body. All parts are not identical... each part must do its own job. There is no place for individualism or favoritism. Our goal is growth in love until the Body reaches full stature matching the Head, Ephesians 4:11-16.

2. Family of God. God is our father, Matthew 6:9, 23:9, 2 Corinthians 6:18. We are His children, Galatians 3:26, 1 John 3:1-2. Jesus is our first-born brother, Hebrews 1:6, 2:17. First-born is a position of authority in the family ... it does not imply that Jesus did not exist before Bethlehem. He was born there as the God-man. He was born as our first-born brother. However, He always existed. In addition, we are fellow-heirs with Him, Romans 8:14-17, Galatians 4:7. We have fellowship with the Father, Jesus, and each other, 1 John 1:3, 1 Corinthians 1:9, Matthew 23:8. We are part of the wonderful family of God.

3. Bride of Christ. Jesus is the bridegroom, John 3:29, Matthew 25:1-13, Luke 5:34. We are the bride, betrothed to Christ, being prepared for the wedding, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:25-33. This illustration is one of anticipation. We are waiting for our Bridegroom's return ... anticipating the marriage supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:7-9.

4. House of God. We are being built to be His dwelling place. God is the builder of His house, Hebrews 3:2-6. Christ is the cornerstone ... and the apostles and prophets are the foundation, Ephesians 2:19-22. We are the living stones used to build His house, 1 Peter 2:4-5. The house of God is not made of bricks and sticks ... it is being built of flesh and blood. *"You also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."* Ephesians 2:22. *"But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are."* Hebrews 3:6.

5. Temple of God. Israel had a temple. We are a temple. Jesus is our High Priest, Hebrews 3:1, 4:14-15, 5:5-6, 9:11-12. We are individual priests representing ourselves directly to God. As priests in His Temple, we should offer six sacrifices. **Sacrifice #1** is *our bodies as living sacrifices* ... holy and acceptable to God, Romans 12:1. **Sacrifice #2** is *our praise* ... our grateful acknowledgement of God for who He is, Hebrews 13:15.

NINE ILLUSTRATIONS (continued)

5. Temple of God ... continued. **Sacrifice #3** is *our good works* ... as our response to salvation, Hebrews 13:16. **Sacrifice #4** is *our koinonia* ... a Greek word meaning our full participation in shared resources and in fellowship with other believers, Hebrews 13:16. **Sacrifice #5** is *our broken and contrite hearts* ... lowly, bruised, and crushed, Psalm 51:17. And **Sacrifice #6** is our new believers ... those that we help come to faith in Christ, Romans 15:16.

6. Light. God is light ... and in Him there is no darkness, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 21:23. We are sons of light, 1 Thessalonians 5:5. John stated that Jesus was the true light, John 1:4-5, 9. Jesus described Himself as the light of the world, John 8:12, 12:46. He said, "*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*" John 9:5. At His ascension, we became the light of the world. Jesus said, "*You are the light of the world.*" Matthew 5:14. We must walk in the light, Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7. We are lights shining to a world living in darkness, Matthew 5:14-16, Philippians 2:15.

7. Nation. Israel is a special nation to God ... she is the apple of His eye, Zechariah 2:8. The Church is also referred to as a holy nation, 1 Peter 2:9. That does not mean that Israel and the Church are the same ... they are not. As believers, our citizenship is in heaven, Philippians 3:20. We, as Christians, are fellow-citizens with the saints, Ephesians 2:19. Moreover, we are aliens and strangers in this world. We are in the world ... but not of the world, John 17:14-16. We are on assignment in this foreign land as ambassadors of the King, 2 Corinthians 5:20. As ambassadors, we have both the ministry and message of reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19.

8. Vine. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches, John 15:1,5. This illustrates our dependency on Him. It also points to our responsibility to bear fruit, John 15:1-16. We glorify the Father by bearing more fruit, John 15:2 ... much fruit, John 15:8 ... and fruit that remains, John 15:16. Our Father is the vinedresser, John 15:1. He prunes us to bear more fruit, John 15:1-2. Bearing fruit enhances our prayers, John 15:16.

9. Flock. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd, 1 Peter 5:4, Hebrews 13:20. He is the Good Shepherd, John 10:14-16. He is the door of the sheep, John 10:7. We are His sheep ... following His voice, John 10:3-4, 27-28. The Shepherd protects His sheep. He gave His life to protect us from the eternal danger of sin, John 10:11. God's wonderful care for His sheep is explained in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34:1-31, and John 10:1-30. God said, "*As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God.*" Ezekiel 34:31. God is our shepherd ... that is a great comfort. One day we will become one flock with Israel, John 10:6.

LIFE IN THE BODY

Birth. Our starting point is spiritual birth. Jesus told Nicodemus, "*You must be born again.*" John 3:7. No one is part of the Body until he or she is personally born again. We are born into the Body of Christ. Paul described this as a spiritual baptism in 1 Corinthians 12:13, "*By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body*". From that beginning point, each believer needs to grow to become a properly functioning part of the Body ... fitting in ... serving and being served.

Baptism. The outer demonstration of our inner spiritual baptism is water baptism. Jesus was baptized, Matthew 3:13-17. Every believer should be baptized. The Great Commission includes the commandment for "*baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*" Matthew 28:19. Water baptism is a statement of our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, Romans 6:1-7. A simple application of this Biblical commandment is baptism by immersion after spiritual rebirth.

Early Church Examples. The early church gave good examples to us ... examples of what our collective lives should include.

- Gathering together, Acts 2:1.
- Being taught, Acts 2:41.
- Fellowship, Acts 2:41.
- Breaking bread (the Lord's Supper), Acts 2:41.
- Praying together, Acts 2:41.
- Sharing their material resources, Acts 2:44-45.
- Eating meals together, Acts 2:46.
- Praising God, Acts 2:47.
- Growing in numbers, Acts 2:47.

Worship. Worship should be an integral part of our individual and collective lives as believers. The men and women of the Old and New Testaments worshipped God in many different places and situations. Worship can be in spoken word or song. Jesus said, "*God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*" John 4:24.

Communion. The example and teaching of Christ at the Last Supper, and Paul's explanation of them, established communion as a special time of remembrance for Christians when we gather together. When we eat the bread and drink the cup at communion, we look back at Christ's sacrifice of His body and at the shedding His blood for us. We commemorate the great price He paid for us. In communion, we also should look inside ourselves in self-examination ... and we should look forward to the day when we will share this meal with Jesus in His kingdom, Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:14-20, and 1 Corinthians 11:23-24.

LIFE IN THE BODY (continued)

Four Commandments. Jesus said, *"If you love Me, you will keep my commandments."* John 14:15. These four commandments are very important for the Body to function properly. These commandments are both individual and collective. The Body functions properly if each part is individually working properly, Ephesians 4:16. We are commanded to love one another ... to preserve unity ... to be pure ... and to put love into action.

Commandment #1 ... Love one another. Jesus said, *"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you."* John 15:12. This commandment is the basis of the other three. Love should be our individual and collective attitude. It should be the motivation for all of our actions toward our fellow-believers. God loved us ... therefore, we should love each other, 1 John 4:11. We should love each other fervently from the heart, 1 Peter 1:22. As Christ laid down His life for us, we should lay down our lives for each other, 1 John 3:16. The world will know that we are His disciples because of our love for one another, John 13:34-35. Loving each other begins with an attitude change. *"With humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself."* Philippians 2:3. We are commanded to put that love into action ... *"Through love serve one another."* Galatians 5:13.

Commandment #2 ... Preserve unity. We are not commanded to create unity. Unity comes from the Spirit ... not from us. Individually and collectively, we must be *"diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* Ephesians 4:3. Jesus prayed that we would be one, John 17:11,21-23. His prayer in verse 23 was literally that we would be perfected into a unit ... so that the world would believe that He came from the Father. We are to be of one heart and one soul, Acts 4:32, Romans 15:5. We are to be of one mind, 1 Corinthians 1:10. Preserving unity is not easy. Preserving unity takes continuous action.

"Pursue the things which make for peace". Romans 14:19.

Show *"forbearance to one another in love"*. Ephesians 4:2.

"Accept one another". Romans 15:7.

"Let us not judge one another". Romans 14:13.

Do not put *"a stumbling block in a brother's way."* Romans 14:13.

Don't let liberty be *"a stumbling block to the weak."* 1 Corinthians 8:9.

"Let no one act as your judge". Colossians 2:16-17.

Don't show *"personal favoritism"*. James 2:1-9.

"Do not speak against one another". James 4:11.

"Do not complain ... against one another". James 5:9.

Do not *"bite and devour one another"*. Galatians 5:15.

Be *"subject to one another in the fear of Christ."* Ephesians 5:21.

LIFE IN THE BODY (continued)

Commandment #3 ... Be pure. *"Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough?"* 1 Corinthians 5:6. This rhetorical question stresses the effect of an individual's sin on the group. Love does not mean overlooking sin and the damage it causes. Unity is not unity if it requires the sacrifice of purity. We must love one another and preserve unity ... in part by dealing effectively with the sin in our midst. Three types of sin must be purged from the Body ... our personal sin ... each other's sins ... and the sin of a divisive or unrepentant man.

First ... we must purge our **personal sin**. One person's sin can devastate the group as in Joshua 7 ... where one man's greed brought defeat to the entire army of Israel. The Body can be hurt by lying to one another ... and by immorality, impurity, greed, filthiness, silly talk and coarse jesting, Colossians 3:9, Ephesians 5:3-4. In addition, the one who commits sexual immorality transgresses and defrauds his brother, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6. There is a cure for our personal sin ... God will forgive and cleanse us if we confess our sins, 1 John 1:9.

Second ... we must purge **each other's sins**. In doing this we need to *"put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other."* Colossians 3:12-13. Sometimes someone must be rebuked. *"If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him."* Luke 17:3. There is a three-step Biblical process for rebuking a brother, Matthew 18:15-17. First ... go to him individually. If he repents, forgive him ... and it is finished. This is private. It is not public in any way. If this attempt fails then go on to step two. Confront the brother again ... but this time with one or two witnesses. These are more than witnesses of the confrontation. They must be witnesses of the sin of the brother. If the brother repents, forgive him ... and it is finished. This is also a private event. Finally, if the problem is still unresolved, *"tell it to the church"*. If the brother repents, forgive him. *"If he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and tax-gatherer."* ... that is as an outsider, Matthew 18:17. The goal of each of these steps is to *"restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness."* Galatians 6:1. In every step of this process keep verses like Ephesians 4:26,32 and 1 Peter 4:8 in your mind and heart.

Third ... we must purge the **sin of a divisive or unrepentant man**. An unrepentant, immoral, or a factious man cannot be tolerated. We are instructed to *"reject a factious man after a first and second warning."* Titus 3:9-11. Then we are to *"turn away from them."* Romans 16:17. We are instructed to *"keep aloof from every brother who leads an unruly life."* 2 Thessalonians 3:6. We must *"remove the wicked man from among yourselves."* 1 Corinthians 5:11-13.

LIFE IN THE BODY (continued)

Commandment #4 ... Put love into action. *"Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and in truth."* 1 John 3:18. Love without action is not love at all. Real love is more than words. Real love results in real action. Jesus was the ultimate expression and example of love. He laid down His life for us, 1 John 3:16. To be like Jesus, we should give our lives away in serving one another. To serve one another in love we need to be with one another. We should gather together with other believers. Do not try to live the Christian life alone. We must not be *"forsaking our own assembling together."* Hebrews 10:25. This means much more than attending religious meetings. We should *"pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."* 2 Timothy 2:22. Jesus said, *"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst."* Matthew 18:20. He is with us when we are gathered together in any place or in any location ... not just when we meet in a religious building. Gather together with other believer ... and put love into action. The following are ways to put love into action:

Admonish one another, Romans 15:14.

Be hospitable, Romans 12:13.

Build up one another, Romans 14:19.

Comfort one another with words of His return, 1 Thessalonians 4:18.

Do good to each other, Galatians 6:10.

Encourage one another, 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

Meet each other's material needs, Romans 12:13.

Rejoice and weep together, Romans 12:15.

Sing together, Colossians 3:16.

Stimulate one another to love and good deeds, Hebrews 10:24.

Suffer with one another, 1 Corinthians 12:26.

Support teachers and workers, Galatians 6:6, 1 Corinthians 9:11,14.

Support widows, 1 Timothy 5:8-12.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

God has provided two kinds of gifts to His Body. Jesus gives specialized people, four types of leaders, "*for the equipping of the saints for the work of service.*" Ephesians 4:12. In addition, the Spirit gives special abilities for service ... in varied combinations to each believer. What we know about both categories of gifts we know from the Bible. We cannot allow our experience or that of others to determine what we believe about spiritual gifts.

Specialized people ... given by Jesus ... to equip the body. These are specialized people ... the leaders described in Ephesians 4:11-16. Not every believer is one of these four. These are not positions or offices to which people are elected. Only some believers are these specialized people. They are given by Jesus to the Body to equip believers. They are not hired guns to do the ministry for us. They are given to train us ... to equip us for the work of service. The four types of leaders are apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers. *Apostles* are those that are sent out to be foundational in beginning a new ministry. *Prophets* declare God's Word to the Body. *Evangelists* declare His Word to the lost. *Pastor-teachers* watch over and feed God's people. To understand a leader's role in the Body, consider the evangelist. The evangelist should do the work of evangelism ... and he should equip believers to do evangelism.

Special abilities ... given by the Holy Spirit ... to empower the body. These special abilities, given by the Holy Spirit, empower believers ... enabling them to do the work of service. These gifts are not to be confused with natural or learned abilities and talents. For example ... some believers may have a God-given talent of singing. They may have learned much about music. They may have trained and exercised their voices. However, those believers do not have the spiritual gift of singing ... there is no such gift. Certain basic facts are true about spiritual gifts.

Every believer is given at least one spiritual gift.
1 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Peter 4:10.

The gifts are given at the Spirit's desire rather than our own desire.
1 Corinthians 12:11

They are for the common good rather than individual benefit.
1 Corinthians 12:7, Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

There is a possibility that they may be lost. Matthew 25:14-29
Note: Romans 11:29 deals with Israel, not the Body

The spiritual gift (or gifts) that you have is (or are) determined by the Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:4. The ministries in which you use them are determined by Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:5. Effectiveness is the Father's work, 1 Corinthians 12:6. Your responsibility is obedience.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (continued)

Determining which gift(s) you have takes time and experience. You can discover your gift(s) by learning what the gifts are ... by being involved in ministry ... and by evaluating what God is doing through you. Make an educated spiritual guess as to which gift may be yours ... get involved in that type of ministry ... give it some time ... and then evaluate what God has done. Your gift(s) will become obvious as you minister.

Spiritual gifts are described in the Bible in two major references, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12-14. Knowing our natural tendency for divisiveness, the Holy Spirit put the great chapter on love, 1 Corinthians 13, in the middle of His teaching on gifts. Let the Bible define spiritual gifts. Pray and study the Bible to form your beliefs about gifts. Don't decide by osmosis ... absorbing your beliefs from your spiritual environment. Let the Bible invade your experience. Don't let your experience invade the Bible. Each believer has been given one or more spiritual gifts. These special abilities are listed below in general alphabetical order ... not in any order of significance. Each believer does not have all of the gifts. However, all believers have responsibilities in each of these areas.

1. Discerning of Spirits. Some have a special ability to distinguish between good and evil ... between that which is of God or of the world, the flesh, and the devil. All believers should be discerning, Hebrews 5:14, 1 John 4:1.

2. Exhortation. This is a special ability to incite, urge, or encourage others. It could be called the gift of encouragement. Some have this gift ... but all believers should encourage one another, Hebrews 3:13, 10:25.

3. Faith. This is an extra ability to trust God steadfastly for the humanly improbable or impossible. It might be seen when someone holds on when others let go ... or lets go when others hold on. This faith is not forming an image of something in your mind that obligates God to give it to you. This faith is not *naming* something that obligates God to give it to you because you have spoken. This faith is whole-hearted trust in Him to do what He chooses. Some have this gift ... but all should have faith, 2 Corinthians 5:7.

4. Giving. This is the special ability to give back to God, through others, what He has given to us. This is a special ability to know what to give ... to whom to give it ... and when to give. It has more to do with the quality of the giving than it does with the quantity of the gift. Sometimes God combines the gift of giving with extra material resources ... an awesome opportunity and responsibility for the person with the gift. Some have this gift ... but all should give, 2 Corinthians 9:7.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (continued)

5. Healing. This is the special ability to be used by God in the physical, emotional, or spiritual healing. Do not expect all to be physically healed. Paul was not healed, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Trophimus was not healed, 2 Timothy 4:20. In addition, we have never seen the great men and women of faith healed of the diseases of old age ... all eventually die. Sometimes God heals some people through those with the gift of healing. All do not have this gift ... but all can seek healing, James 5:14-16.

6. Knowledge. This is a special ability to understand God's Word. If it were knowledge directly given by God, it would be uncompromisingly consistent with the written Word. If it is inaccurate, or if it contradicts the Bible in any way, then the knowledge is not from God. Paul wrote that this gift would be done away with at some time, 1 Corinthians 13:8-10. Some may have this gift ... but all should pursue greater knowledge of God's Word, 2 Timothy 2:15, Colossians 1:9-10.

7. Leadership. This is the special ability to lead others in accomplishing God's work. Look behind you. Is anyone following? Are you effectively leading others to accomplish God's will? Leadership ability in the world is not the same as the gift of leadership. Being an elected, or appointed, leader in the church does not necessarily mean that one has the gift of leadership. This gift is given to some believers ... but all have leadership influence on the people around them, Proverbs 12:26.

8. Mercy. This is a special ability to perform deeds of love. Mercy is active compassion directed to the undeserving ... whether or not they are unlovely, destitute, or humanly distressed. Only some believers have this gift ... but all believers should be merciful, Jude 1:2-23.

9. Miracles. This is the special ability, given by the Holy Spirit, to perform humanly impossible acts of power. The power for miracles can come from other sources, Exodus 7:10-13, Matthew 7:21-23. All believers don't have this gift ... but we all do have power, John 14:12, Acts 1:8.

10. Prophecy. This is a special ability given to some to declare God's Word. Prophecy may be an authoritative declaration with the force of *thus saith the Lord* ... as it was with the New Testament authors. In addition, prophecy may be the divine prediction of future events. Foretelling the future in the name of God is dangerous, Deuteronomy 18:22. It seems to be limited, Revelation 22:18-19. Paul wrote that this gift would be done away with at some time, 1 Corinthians 13:8-10. Prophecy may simply be the forth telling, or declaring of God's Word ... similar to preaching or public declaration. All believers should do some of that, Psalm 145:4-12.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (continued)

11. Serving. This is a special ability for helping and assisting others. It is not limited to helping those in ministry ... but it is certainly needed in that context. This kind of ministry can be a way to get involved... and from it grow into other areas as their gifts become apparent. Philip did this when he helped serve food to the widows ... and in doing so took a burden off the leaders which gave them time for prayer and the Word, Acts 6:1-6. A short time after that Phillip was an evangelist giving the Gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch ... and then to the people along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Azotus to Caesarea. Some have a special gift of serving ... but we should all serve one another, Galatians 5:13.

12. Teaching. This gift is the ability to help others learn and apply God's Word. Biblical teaching is more than the public declaration of facts ... it is making disciples. Mentoring, tutoring, and apprenticing can be part of this process. Teaching can be to large groups, to small groups, or to one person at a time. Numbers and popularity are not the measure of good teaching, 2 Timothy 4:3. The true measure of good teaching is in changed lives. Some have the gift of teaching ... but every believer should teach someone, Matthew 28:18-20.

13. Tongues. The spiritual gift of tongues is the ability to speak in a real language, which is unknown to the speaker. Tongues are not messages from God to man ... but are prayers addressed to God, 1 Corinthians 14:2,14. Tongues is a sign for non-believers, 1 Corinthians 14:22. It does not edify the Body ... but does benefit the speaker, 1 Corinthians 14:4. Tongues are limited to two or at most three in one meeting ... spoken one at a time ... and spoken only with interpretation, 1 Corinthians 14:27-28. Use of the spiritual gift of tongues should not be frenzied or chaotic ... but should be used properly and in order, 1 Corinthians 14:40. Paul wrote that this gift would cease at some time, 1 Corinthians 13:8-10. All believers do not have the spiritual gift of tongues, 1 Corinthians 12:30 ... but all should control the tongue they do have, James 1:26, 3:5-6.

14. Interpretation. This is the Spirit given ability to translate someone else's gift of tongues into the language of the hearers. It is not clear Biblically if the interpreter knows either or both languages. Tongues should never be used without interpretation, 1 Corinthians 14:27-28. At the time that tongues cease, interpretation will also cease.

15. Wisdom. This is a special ability to apply knowledge of God's Word to the complexities of life. Some have this gift ... but we all should conduct ourselves with wisdom, Colossians 4:5 ... and if we lack wisdom we should pray for it, James 1:5.

Questions and Answers Addendum

Note: This addendum is not necessarily part of the regular teaching of the lesson. It is provided to answer some frequently asked questions.

Answers to questions about gifts and signs. There is confusion, misunderstanding, and disagreement among Christians about signs, wonders, miracles and the gifts of the Spirit. God used these things in the early church to confirm His message, Hebrews 2:2-4. Since that time, the church has given them varying emphasis ... from ignoring them to overuse and misuse. Use the Bible as the basis for what you believe about these things. Several questions are answered in this section to help you discover the truth. Don't adopt these answers as your beliefs simply because they are written here. Moreover, don't reject any of these answers simply because they contradict your experience or that of your friends. Form your own beliefs through much prayer and much Bible study. Do not be involved in any experience that is inconsistent with or contradicts Biblical truth. Be very careful about any experiences that are not in the Bible ... certainly do not emphasize those.

1. *If I don't have the gift of evangelism should I witness anyway?* Yes, you should witness. You are commanded to witness. Moreover, you don't have the gift of evangelism. No one has that gift because there is no gift of evangelism. There are evangelists, given by Jesus to equip believers, Ephesians 4:11-13. However, the Bible never mentions a Spirit given gift of evangelism. Evangelism is a responsibility ... not a gift.

2. *Are gifts of the Spirit available today?* Some Christians believe that the gifts were given only to the first century church. They use Hebrews 2:2-4 to include signs, wonders, miracles and gifts in the founding of the church. Then they extend their interpretation of those verses to exclude these things from all following generations. They point to a pattern of miraculous events concentrated at times of change ... the Exodus, the prophets, the life of Jesus, and the formation of the church. However, there is no convincing Biblical evidence that these things were only for the first generation of the church. Moreover, if we are in the *end times*, then this too is a period of change.

3. *Are all the gifts available today?* Christians disagree about the availability of prophecy, knowledge, tongues, and interpretation ... coming from two interpretations of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. Those verses state that these gifts would end when the "*perfect*" comes. One opinion is that the *perfect* was the completion of the New Testament, noting Revelation 22:18-19 as the close of prophesy, and therefore these four gifts are no longer available. The other opinion is that the *perfect* is the return of Christ, and therefore these gifts will be available to believers until He returns. The Bible is not clear on what the "*perfect*" is ... or when it has or will come. Therefore, there is some doubt about the availability of these four gifts. It isn't clearly defined. Therefore, it is best to base our obedience and experience on a simple and full application of the Bible's rules and limitations. If a gift is available today, and is from Him, then all of His directives for that gift will be met. If they aren't met, the gift isn't of Him.

Questions and Answers Addendum (continued)

4. Are all signs, wonders, and miracles of God? No! Satan's agents can do the miraculous. Pharaoh's magicians could duplicate Moses' miracle, Exodus 7:10-12. Simon, an unsaved man, astonished people with his magic arts in Samaria, Acts 8:9-13. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and his servants disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, 1 Corinthians 11:13-15. These and other false apostles and deceitful workers can perform signs and wonders, Matthew 7:22-23. Many false religions and cults include signs, wonders, and even tongues as enticements to attract people away from the true God.

5. What do people mean when they justify their experiences with the phrase "God is not the author of confusion"? Their experience may or may not be of God. However, their use of that phrase to defend some experience is illogical. It is true that God is never the author of confusion, 1 Corinthians 14:33. However, there are other authors. There are deceitful spirits and doctrines of devils, 1 Timothy 4:1-3. There are false teachers, 2 Peter 2:1. The Bible should be the basis of experience. Experience, even in the name of Christianity, is not self-authenticating.

6. Is being slain in the Spirit of God? Being *slain in the Spirit* refers to someone falling over at the touch of a leader. *Falling down in the Spirit* is a similar experience ... without a leader's touch. Nonbelievers falling to the ground, John 18:6, and the Spirit snatching Philip away from the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts 8:39, are not examples of being *slain in the Spirit*. There are no Biblical examples of, and no Biblical teaching about, this phenomenon. Being *slain in the Spirit* is extra-Biblical ... seen in experience but not found in the Bible.

7. Is the phenomenon of church group laughing a manifestation of the Spirit? In addition, what about those who roar like lions in church services ... is that of the Spirit? Hopefully, these have been nothing more than passing fads in the history of strange experiences in some churches. No such unusual experiences are found in the Bible's teaching or in its record of early church experiences. Such happenings are extra-Biblical. Paul's exhortation may apply, "*But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.*" 1 Corinthians 14:40. This verse should not exclude fervor and emotion ... but it should exclude chaos and disorder.

8. Shouldn't tongues be as popular today as it was in the book of Acts? About 30 years of church history is recorded in Acts ... with more than 50 geographical locations mentioned ... and with missionary travels covering more than 7,500 miles (12,000 km). However, in all of that, tongues are mentioned only three times ... at Pentecost in Jerusalem, Acts 2 ... and when the Gospel came to Gentiles, Acts 10:43-48 ... and in Ephesus when some of John the Baptist's disciples believed in Jesus, Acts 19:1-7. Tongues are not prevalent in the book of Acts.

Questions and Answers Addendum (continued)

9. *Are tongues a real language ... or can they be any kind of verbal utterances?*

There is nothing in the Bible that indicates that tongues would be anything but a real language. The word *unknown* was used in conjunction with the word *tongue* several times in the King James translation of 1 Corinthians 14. However, there is no Greek word for *unknown* in those verses (2,4,13,14,19, and 27). The language of tongues was unknown to the one speaking ... but probably not unknown in the history of mankind. Some say it might be in the language of angels, 1 Corinthians 13:1 ... but there is no indication that angels speak in some disorganized babbling. Angels speak coherently, Luke 2:8-14, Revelation 5:11-12. The word used for *tongue* in Greek means either the physical organ in one's mouth ... or it means language as used in Revelation 5:9, 13:7 and 17:15.

10. *How do I know if a manifestation of the gift of tongues is real?* The source of tongues is important. Real language tongues may come from the Holy Spirit or from Satan. Chaotic, babbling-type tongues may be from the emotional side of the flesh or from Satan. Tongues from the Holy Spirit will be consistent with all the Biblical rules.

Tongues are prayers addressed to God, 1 Corinthians 14:2,14.

Tongues are a sign for non-believers, 1 Corinthians 14:22.

There are three tongues maximum per meeting, 1 Corinthians 14:27.

Tongues are spoken one at a time, 1 Corinthians 14:27.

Tongues are spoken only with interpretation, 1 Corinthians 14:27-28.

Tongues should be used properly and in order, 1 Corinthians 14:40.

And tongues from the Spirit will be consistent demonstrations of the fruit of the Spirit ... *"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."* Galatians 5:22-23.

11. *Should I seek the gift of tongues?* All believers are not given the gift of tongues, 1 Corinthians 12:30. All the gifts are given at the Spirit's desire rather than our desire, 1 Corinthians 12:11. Paul listed several gifts ... putting tongues at the end of the list. He then wrote *"but earnestly desire the greater gifts."* 1 Corinthians 12:28-31. Paul put love above tongues, 1 Corinthians 13:1. He preferred prophecy to tongues, 1 Corinthians 14:5. He also wrote that he would prefer to speak five words with his mind than 10,000 words in a tongue. Paul acknowledged the gift of tongues in the lives of others and in his own life. However, he often warned of the misuse of this gift. Paul wrote, *"Do not forbid to speak in tongues."* 1 Corinthians 14:39. A good approach to tongues is this ... seek not and forbid not.

12. *What about private prayer tongues?* Some Christians experience a mysterious language when they pray alone. Romans 8:26 teaches that the Holy Spirit prays for us ... not through us. Jude 1:20 teaches that we should pray in the Spirit ... but we should do all things in the Spirit. Justifying private tongues from these verses is an interpretive stretch. Paul wished that all spoke in tongues, 1 Corinthians 14:5. However, all cannot speak in tongues.

Questions and Answers Addendum (continued)

12. What about private prayer tongues? ... continued. Tongues are limited to two or at the most three in a meeting ... spoken in turn ... and spoken only if someone interprets, 1 Corinthians 14:27-28. From verse 28, *"if there is no interpreter, let him speak to himself and to God."* That refers to the two or three people with a public tongue who are silenced by the absence of an interpreter. In that situation, those specific people are told to pray privately rather than publicly. This falls significantly short of teaching private prayer tongues for all believers. Some say that private prayer tongues were so popular in the early church that there was no need to document them in the Bible ... however, that cannot be substantiated.

13. Why is there so much disunity about signs, wonders, and gifts of the Spirit?

Paul put the great verses on love, 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, in the middle of his teaching about gifts. Lack of love rather than lack of truth causes much disunity. Some have gained their opinions on these subjects by osmosis from other Christians rather than from unprejudiced study of the Word ... promoting disunity from lack of Biblical knowledge. In addition, some Christians have adopted the opinions of their leaders or favorite authors ... rather than forming their own opinions through prayer and study of the Word. Persuasive shepherds can divide the flock ... promoting disunity because of their personal opinions.

14. Why do the gifts exist? The Holy Spirit has given us special abilities to empower us. In addition, Jesus has given us specialized people to equip us. The gifts of the Spirit and the gifts of Jesus make it possible for us to live successfully in the Body of Christ so that we can *"grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."* Ephesians 4:15-16.



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Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

IN THE WAR

"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

We are in a war against three enemies. The Christian life can be described accurately by good words such as ... comfort, contentment, forgiveness, gentleness, goodness, hope, joy, kindness, love, mercy, peace, and satisfaction. However, these words present only a partial picture of the reality of living the Christian life. Don't lose sight of the bigger picture ... you are in a war. The Bible states that you are in a war against three fallen foes ... the fallen world, your fallen nature, and the fallen angel. You have been born behind enemy lines ... born into a fallen world. Your fallen nature is a traitor ... your flesh wars against you from inside. In addition, you fight an invisible enemy ... the Devil. These three enemies present obstacles to your living to the glory of God. You must understand your enemies. You must understand your enemies' tactics. You can win your battles if you follow God's battle instructions.

The battle lines of sin and temptation. The war against your three enemies is often fought at the battle lines of sin and temptation. You need to strive against sin. You need to know how to resist temptation. Many sins are easy to identify. However, some things may be right in one situation, wrong in another ... or right for one person, and wrong for another. You need to understand how to identify sins as sins. As Christians, we will be tempted. We will go through trials and tests. The war is dangerous. Our sins are the wounds we suffer in battle. We will be wounded. We must tend to our wounds ... confessing our sins to God. Confession is a prerequisite for forgiveness. Forgiveness is a great blessing from God. Unconfessed sins have serious consequences. Believers are wounded in the battles. We need to tend to our own wounds ... and to their wounds.

We will have final victory. We fight in a war that is already won. Jesus conquered our enemies on the cross. However, we must fight our own battles on a daily basis. God is our refuge and strength on the battlefield. *"For Thou hast been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy."* Psalm 61:3. Our daily battles can be won if we fight them according to God's battle instructions. Then when our days on this earth are over, we will be able to say what the Apostle Paul said near the end of his life, *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."* 2 Timothy 4:7.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE WORLD

"Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts." 1 John 2:15-17

Understanding the enemy. The world is our enemy. We were born into a fallen world. The world is not easy and it is not perfect ... it has been cursed by God. *"For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God."* Romans 8:19-21. We were born behind enemy lines into a fallen world that is under the control of Satan, 1 John 5:19. Our world is ruled by Satan, John 12:31. Satan is the prince of the power of the air, Ephesians 2:1-3. We are soldiers in a hostile foreign land.

Understanding the enemy's tactics. The world is busy and complex. However, it is only temporary. The world can distract us from the things that are important for eternity ... God, His Word, and people. We can be tempted to become so entangled in the temporary things of this world that we do not obey God. For many believers, the entanglements of the world can be measured by the clock. Life can be so busy and demanding that we can be tempted to have no time for the things of God. Moreover, our devotion can be misdirected from the Creator to the creation. Love of God can be replaced by love for the things of this world ... good or bad things. Many of the world's temptations are direct and obvious. However, many others are subtle and indirect. We ought to be growing to be more like Jesus ... but we live in a world of so many destructive influences. The people and things of this world can influence us directly and indirectly. We must be very careful to prevent the people and things of the world from squeezing us into their mold.

Defeating the enemy. Winning our battles against the world begins with knowing that final victory is already won. Jesus said, *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."* John 16:33. We can be victorious in our daily battles against the world. *"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"* 1 John 5:4-6. Ultimate victory over the world has been won. Daily victory can be ours if we follow God's battle instructions for our war against the world.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE WORLD (continued)

God's battle instructions...

"Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you." 1 John 3:13. Don't think that you should be accepted by the world. Jesus said, *"If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."* John 15:18-19. His kingdom is not of this world, John 18:36. Our citizenship is in heaven, Philippians 3:20. We are in the world ... but we are not of the world, John 17:14-18. You are an alien and stranger in this world. Don't expect to feel like you are at home. You are not home yet.

"Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier." 2 Timothy 2:3-4. Do not be entangled in the affairs of everyday life. This does not mean that you should not be involved in life. However, it does mean that you should not allow your activities, possessions, and relationships to prevent you from obeying God. Entanglement in the world causes some Christians to be unfruitful, Mark 4:19. If you are too busy to do God's will ... you are too busy doing the wrong things. Make the most of your time, Ephesians 5:15-16. Entanglement in sin will pull you down. In addition, entanglement in good things could prevent you from doing God's best. How much surgery is needed on your entanglements? Do you need minor or major surgery? Don't be entangled. Be available.

"Do not love the world, nor the things in the world." 1 John 2:15. Our devotion to the temporary things of this world can cause us to ignore the eternal things ... God, His Word, and people. A good test of this is the use of our resources, time, and money. As Jesus said, *"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."* Matthew 6:20-21. Loving the things of the world is very dangerous. *"You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."* James 4:4. Don't love the world. Love God.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2. Do not let the world squeeze you into its mold. Don't get caught up in what everyone else is doing or not doing. The world is pursuing the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. Be different from the world. Spend time in God's Word. Renew your mind. Set your mind on the things of God. Don't be conformed. Be transformed.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE FLESH

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please." Galatians 5:16-17

Understanding the Enemy. Our own flesh is our enemy. The flesh is that inner part of each person that opposes God. When someone believes in Jesus Christ, a new nature is born within that person. However, an old nature is still there ... that is the flesh. The deeds of the flesh include *"immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envyings, drunkenness, carousings."* Galatians 5:19-21. Deeds of the flesh come from the heart of man. Jesus said, *"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders."* Matthew 15:19. He said, *"That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."* Mark 7:20-23. All of these things can come from the enemy inside us ... from our flesh.

Understanding the enemy's tactics. The flesh is our inner enemy. Our flesh is a traitor in our bodies. It battles against our new nature. The flesh wages *"war against the soul."* 1 Peter 2:11. It is at war with the Spirit within us. *"For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another."* Galatians 5:17. Each of our two natures, the old and the new, seeks to dominate our lives from within us, Romans 7:15-25. Our flesh tempts us to sin. Our new nature urges us to live for God.

Defeating the enemy. Our battle against the flesh is a battle that is already won by Christ. *"Our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."* Romans 6:6. That victory is reinforced by our actions as we love and obey God. Our bodies are dead because of sin, Romans 8:10. In a sense, the battle is between the dead and the living ... our dead flesh against our living spirit. In this battle we must sow to the Spirit ... not to the flesh. We have the promise and the warning that we will reap what we sow. *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."* Galatians 6:7-8. We must fight vigorously against this inner enemy. God has given us His battle instructions for daily victory against the flesh.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE FLESH (continued)

God's battle instructions...

Lay aside the old and put on the new. *"In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self ... be renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new self."* Ephesians 4:22-24. It is more than demolition. It is also renovation. Tear out the old ... and build in the new, Colossians 3:9-10.

Set your mind on the Spirit and not on the flesh. *"For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."* Romans 8:5-8.

You must put no confidence in the flesh ... not in your body, not in your age, not in your strength, not in your heritage, not in your race, not in your ethnicity, and not in your nationality. *"Put no confidence in the flesh."* Philippians 3:3. Your confidence should be in God, Proverbs 3:26.

Stop yielding to the lust of the flesh. Run away from the lust of the flesh. *"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."* 1 Peter 2:11. *"Now flee from youthful lusts."* 2 Timothy 2:22. Put to death the deeds of the flesh, Romans 8:12-13. Crucify the flesh with its passions and desires, Galatians 5:24.

Make no provision for the flesh. Do not lay up supplies for the traitor. Don't feed your old nature. Starve it. Don't provide your flesh with friends that tempt it. Don't go to the places that provide opportunity for the flesh. Don't do the things that lead to sins of the flesh. Don't create your own temptations. *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."* Romans 13:14. Stop presenting your body to unrighteousness ... present it to righteousness, Romans 6:11-20.

Think of yourself as alive from the dead. You were dead before you believed in Jesus. *"You were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air."* Ephesians 2:1-2. Our attitude should reflect the great news that once we were dead, but now we are alive. *"Present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead."* Romans 6:13. You are alive from the dead. You are alive by the Spirit. *"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."* Galatians 5:25.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE DEVIL

"Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:10-12.

Understanding the Enemy. Satan is real. He is not a creation of human imagination. He is not a mythical personification of evil. Satan is referred to as a real being by Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, all New Testament authors, and in seven Old Testament books. Satan is not an equal and opposite of God. Satan is not eternal ... and he is not infinite. He is not all powerful, all present, or all knowing. However, Satan does have power. He is *"the ruler of this world."* John 12:31. He is *"the prince of the power of the air."* Ephesians 2:1-2.

Understanding the enemy's tactics. *"The devil has sinned from the beginning."* 1 John 3:8. He is a tempter, 1 Thessalonians 3:5 ... a deceiver, 2 Corinthians 11:3 ... and a schemer, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11. *"He was a murderer from the beginning."* John 8:44. *"The devil ... does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."* John 8:44. Satan and his agents can infiltrate the ranks of the leadership of the church. *"Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" and "his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness."* 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. He is a source of false teaching, 1 Timothy 4:1-5. Satan battles against the Gospel. He fights to prevent people from believing in Jesus. Satan holds nonbelievers captive, 2 Timothy 2:24-26 ... he steals the Word from them, Luke 8:12-13 ... and he blinds their eyes to the light of the Gospel, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. Satan or his demons can possess nonbelievers, taking control of them, Luke 22:3, Luke 8:30. Satan is an adversary of believers, 1 Peter 5:8. He accuses us before God, Revelation 12:10. He oppresses believers, Acts 10:38. However, there is no Biblical indication that Satan can possess a believer. We are not under his control. God has *"rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."* Colossians 1:13. When you believe in Jesus you are no longer under the dominion of Satan, Acts 26:18.

Defeating the enemy. Through His death, Jesus conquered Satan, Hebrews 2:14. God has not left us defenseless in our daily battles against Satan. He has put a limit on Satan. The devil must flee when we resist him, James 4:7. And we have the great promise ... *"greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."* 1 John 4:4. Daily victory can be ours if we follow God's battle instructions for our war against Satan.

OUR BATTLES AGAINST THE DEVIL (continued)

God's battle instructions...

Resist the devil. Take a stand against him. *"Resist him, firm in your faith."*
1 Peter 5:9. Stand firm against him, Ephesians 6:11-14.

Pray! The Lord's Prayer includes, *"Deliver us from evil."* Matthew 6:13. *Evil* in that prayer certainly includes Satan. The Greek word for *evil* in that verse is in the nominative case, which often indicates a title. Christ's statement was possibly *deliver us from the evil one*. Similarly, He prayed that God would *"keep them from the evil one."* John 17:15.

Be alert. Pay attention. Watch for the attacks of the enemy. *"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."* 1 Peter 5:8.

Give no opportunity to Satan. Give him no open doors. Give him no opportunity through unresolved anger, Ephesians 4:26-27. Don't let an unforgiving spirit give him an advantage, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11. Sexual denial in marriage provides Satan with an opportunity to tempt ... do not deprive each other, 1 Corinthians 7:5.

Do not be involved in anything of the occult. Totally avoid astrology, black magic, divination, horoscopes, mediums, necromancy, Ouija boards, sorcerers, spiritists, spells, witchcraft, white magic, and anything occult. *"I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons."* 1 Corinthians 10:20-21.

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil." Ephesians 6:11. Before the battle, gird your loins with the truth of Jesus and His Word ... put on the breastplate of faith, love, and righteousness ... and shod your feet with readiness to share the Gospel. In the battle, take up the shield of faith ... wear the helmet of the hope of salvation ... and use your one offensive weapon, the sword of the Spirit, the Bible. Take up the full armor of God, Ephesians 6:13-17 and 1 Thessalonians 5:8.

Tell people about Jesus ... even if it you must give your life for the Gospel. Satan will be defeated by the blood of Jesus and by your obedience to the Great Commission. *"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down ... the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down ... and they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."* Revelation 12:9-11.

STRIVING AGAINST SIN

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace."
Romans 6:12-14.

How can someone avoid sinning? We must be doers of the Word and not just hearers, James 1:22-25. God's Word will help us avoid sin ... but only if we obey it. Evaluate yourself by the instructions listed below. Have you been doing these things? Failure to follow His instructions can result in moral failure, in times of concentrated sins, and in habitual sin. Follow His instructions. You can overcome sin.

Pray. Pray that God will direct your path away from the people, places, and things that tempt you to sin. The Lord's Prayer includes the petition, *"And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."* Matthew 6:13. Pray that God will keep you from the influences of Satan. Pray that He will deliver you from all evil influences.

Know His Word. Meditate on His Word. Study His Word. Memorize His Word. More time in the Bible results in less sin. Less time in the Bible results in more sin. *"Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You."* Psalm 119:11.

Walk by His Spirit. You cannot avoid sin by living a self-directed life. You must live a God-directed life to avoid sin. *"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."* Galatians 5:16.

Set your mind on things above ... not on the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil. *"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."* Colossians 3:1-2. Your life will follow the focus and direction of your mind. *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."* Philippians 4:8.

Be careful of overconfidence. Don't think that you have reached a state of immunity to the dangers of sin and temptation. *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall."* 1 Corinthians 10:12. Don't be self-confident in your ability to resist sin. *"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."* Proverbs 16:18.

STRIVING AGAINST SIN (continued)

Take aggressive action against any sin in your life. *"Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* 2 Corinthians 7:1. Put *"aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness."* James 1:21. Don't get involved in any immoral behavior. Are you involved in some sexual sin? Then stop! *"Abstain from sexual immorality,"* 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Don't let yourself get involved in any form of evil. *"But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil."* 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22.

Abandon the battlefield. Running away from the battlefield is often the best way to win against sexual sin. Run from the people, places, and things that tempt you. *"Now flee from youthful lusts."* 2 Timothy 2:22. *"Flee immorality."* 1 Corinthians 6:18. Abandon the battlefield of idolatry. There are many idols in this world ... things that can become false objects of worship. There are the idols of false religion. Riches and possessions can become objects of worship. Even people can become idols. Worship God and God alone. God has commanded, *"You shall have no other gods before Me."* Exodus 20:3. Abandon the battlefield. *"Flee from idolatry."* 1 Corinthians 10:14.

Remember that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. When you are tempted ... imagine the Spirit saying to you, *Hey! This is My temple. Don't do that in My temple.* Keep His temple clean. *"Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"* 1 Corinthians 6:18-19.

Remember that you were bought with a price. Jesus shed His blood for you. *"If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."* 1 Peter 1:17-19. When you are tempted ... imagine that you are looking up at Jesus from the foot of the cross. Picture His bruised and battered body. See His thorn-crowned head. Imagine the blood dripping from His nail-pierced hands and feet. Imagine Him looking down into your eyes. Hear Him say, *Don't do that ... I'm shedding My blood for you. He died for you. Remember the price He paid for you. "For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."* 1 Corinthians 6:20.

IDENTIFYING SIN

Is it sin? *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23. Sin is any nonconformity to, or transgression of, the character, Word, or will of God. However, some things are sin in some situations ... but not in other situations. Some things are sin for some people ... but not for others. God has instructed us in how to identify sin as sin. The Bible clearly identifies many actions and attitudes as sin ... and contains guidelines for determining if questionable things are or are not sin.

It is sin if ... it grieves rather than glorifies God. *"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God"* Ephesians 4:30. *"Do all to the glory of God."* 1 Corinthians 10:31. Our lives should be consistent with our position as children of God. *"Walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."* 1 Thessalonians 2:12.

It is sin if ... it violates the written Word of God. *"Keep His commandments."* Psalm 78:7. *"You have ordained Your precepts, that we should keep them diligently."* Psalm 119:4. The quality of your relationship with Jesus is connected to your obedience. *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* John 14:15. *"You are My friends if you do what I command you."* John 15:14.

It is sin ... if you omit doing the right thing. Sins of omission are also sins. Holiness is more than a sinless vacuum. *"Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin."* James 4:17.

It is sin ... even if it is done in ignorance. Not knowing the Bible is no excuse. *"Now if a person sins and does any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, though he was unaware, still he is guilty and shall bear his punishment."* Leviticus 5:17.

It is sin if ... it damages or denigrates the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells you. *"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"* 1 Corinthians 6:19.

It is sin if ... it leads to slavery. Addictive behavior and enslaving substances are wrong. *"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything."* 1 Corinthians 6:12.

It is sin if ... you are committing it in your mind. It has been said that you cannot stop the birds from flying over your head ... but you can stop them from nesting in your hair. This illustrates the difference between *thought temptations* and *thought sins*. Jesus said, *"I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* Matthew 5:28.

IDENTIFYING SIN (continued)

It is sin if ... you think it is a sin. *"I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."* Romans 14:14. If you do something that you think is a sin, even if it is not intrinsically a sin, you are guilty of rebellion against God. Your doubt makes it a sin. However, the reverse of that is not true ... lack of doubt does not negate the sinfulness of a sin. A seared conscience can confuse your understanding about sin, 1 Timothy 4:2.

It is a sin if ... it is a negative influence rather than a positive influence. Build up. Do not tear down. Strengthen. Do not weaken. Help. Do no hurt. *"All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify."* 1 Corinthians 10:23. Ask yourself, "Is this profitable?"

It is a sin if ... it offends a nonbeliever. Do not offend non-believers. *"Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved,"* 1 Corinthians 10:32-33. The message of the Gospel may offend a non-believer ... but the messenger should not be the cause of offense. It is appropriate to be bold with the Gospel, Ephesians 6:19-20 and Proverbs 28:1. However, boldness without sensitivity to the listener is sin. Boldness and sensitivity are not mutually exclusive.

It is a sin if ... it puts an obstacle in a brother's way. At times, we must modify our behavior for the sake of other believers. *"But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak,"* 1 Corinthians 8:9. *"Determine this - - not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way ... For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died ... for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit ... All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense,"* Romans 14:13-21. Use your Christian liberty carefully. Freedom, as a believer, to eat a particular food or to drink a particular beverage is not freedom to eat or drink those in every situation.

It is not sin ... to modify your behavior in different situations and with different people. Modifying your behavior to maximize ministry is not hypocrisy. Jesus took on a different form ... He became a man. Jesus *"emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men,"* Philippians 2:7. Paul modified his behavior to witness to nonbelievers. *"To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews ... so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law ... so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some,"* 1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

IDENTIFYING SIN (continued)

It is sin if ... it is obedience to Bible-contradicting rituals, rules, or traditions. Traditions and rituals can be fine ... but they are neither equal to nor greater than the Bible. Jesus said, *"But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men."* Matthew 15:9. Some leaders defraud believers by teaching man-made doctrines as equivalent to the Bible, Colossians 2:18-23, 1 Timothy 4:1-5. Following a false teacher or false teaching, does not excuse a believer from responsibility and accountability for sin, Colossians 2:8.

Obedience is unacceptable if ... it is not done from the heart. Perfunctory prayers and worship are meaningless. *"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words."* Matthew 6:7. Jesus said, *"You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me.'"* Matthew 15:7-8. When you frequently say the Lord's Prayer, do you mean every word? Do you pray it from your heart? There are many great hymns and praise songs. Do you really mean the words that you sing? Do you sing from your heart?

Obedience is unacceptable if ... it is done to impress others. An audience can tempt us to try to impress them. *"Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven."* Matthew 6:1. Applause may be your only reward, Matthew 6:2, 5, and 16. Do not seek the recognition of others when you give, Matthew 6:2-4. Do not pray to impress the others with whom you pray, Matthew 6:5-6. Fast ... but do not try to impress others by your fasting, Matthew 6:2-6. Practicing your righteousness to be noticed by others is not really practicing your righteousness at all.

Obedience is unacceptable if ... it attempts to cover disobedience. Ananias and Sapphira gave a significant gift ... but it was unacceptable because of their sin, Acts 5:1-11. Disobedience negates the value of religious activity, Isaiah 1:11-16, Amos 5:21-24. The Pharisees covered their more serious sins with an outer veneer of obedience to smaller things, Matthew 23:23-28. Christians often have their lists of sins to avoid ... the nasty nine, the evil eight, or the terrible twelve. Often the things on those lists are sins. But what about some of the more serious sins? What about not witnessing? What about not making disciples? Are those on many of those lists? Jesus criticized the Pharisees by calling them blind guides who strain out the gnat (a tiny unclean insect) while swallowing a camel (a very big unclean animal). In our obedience, do we do strain out gnats and swallow camels?

TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS, AND TESTS

The Hebrew and Greek words translated in the Bible as various forms of *temptations*, *trials*, and *tests* are used somewhat interchangeably. These words have the meanings of testing, proving worth, refining, revealing weakness, stretching thin, enticing to do wrong, seducing, and inducing. However, the English word *tempt* is primarily understood to mean *induce or entice to do evil*. The three sources of the temptations to do evil are the world, 1 John 2:16 ... the flesh, James 1:14-15 ... and the devil, Matthew 4:3, 1 Corinthians 7:5. God does not tempt us to do evil. *"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."* James 1:13. However, He does allow us to be tempted and tested, Exodus 16:4, Deuteronomy 13:1-3, 1 Peter 1:6-7. God refines us by trials, Psalm 66:10, Isaiah 48:10. Temptations, trials, and tests are not sin ... but they can lead to sin if they are not dealt with in God's way. Jesus was tempted, tested, and tried ... but He did not sin. He is the *"One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin."* Hebrews 4:14. The various forms of the words *temptations*, *trials*, and *tests* are used interchangeably in the following guidelines.

Pray that you will not enter into temptation. Jesus included the request *"and do not lead us into temptation"* in the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:13. In Gethsemane He said to three of His disciples, *"Pray that you may not enter into temptation."* Luke 22:40.

Know that you are not alone in your struggle. Jesus understands what you are experiencing. He can sympathize with you because He too was tempted. *"Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things ... For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted."* Hebrews 2:17-18. *"For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* Hebrews 4:15-16. Other believers have been tempted and tried in similar ways. Your temptation is not unique. *"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man."* 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Plan on enduring. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can endure. God limits your trials so that you can endure. You do not have to fail. *"God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."* 1 Corinthians 10:13. With the temptation, He provides a way of escape. Why? He provides a way of escape so that you can endure the temptation. That verse contains no promise of immediate escape ... but it does promise that you can endure.

TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS, AND TESTS (continued)

Look forward to the future benefits. *"In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end."* Deuteronomy 8:16.

Look forward to being stronger. *"And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."* Romans 5:3-5.

Look forward to greater endurance. God is conditioning you to run faster and longer. *"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* James 1:2-4.

Look forward to being able to help others. *"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."* Luke 22:31-32.

Look forward to being blessed. *"We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful."* James 5:11.

Look beyond temporary difficulties to eternal blessings. *"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."* 1 Peter 1:6-7. *"For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."* 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Keep looking to Jesus. We have great examples of faith overcoming trials in Hebrews 11:1-40. Moreover, Jesus is our greatest example. Keep your eyes on Him rather than on your trials. *"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."* Hebrews 12:1-3.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness. Forgiveness is given to those who have believed in Jesus. *"Everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."* Acts 10:43. When we believed in Jesus we were freed from the penalty of sin ... but sin is still present in our lives, 1 John 1:8. That sin clouds our relationship with God. Our sins need be confessed to God.

Confession. Confession is more than just asking for forgiveness. It is agreeing with God that your sin is sin. It is admitting to Him that you have committed specific sins. It is more than admitting that you are a sinner ... it is concurring that your particular actions and attitudes are sins. Such confession is a condition for the forgiveness and cleansing mentioned in 1 John 1:9 ... *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

The blessings of forgiveness. *"How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered!"* Psalm 32:1. Forgiven sins are taken away. *"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."* Psalm 103:12. *"You have cast all my sins behind Your back."* Isaiah 38:17. *"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."* Isaiah 43:25.

The consequences of unconfessed sin. God knows everything about us, Hebrews 4:13. Confession is agreeing with that which God already knows ... that our sins are sins. It is futile to try to hide our sins from God. *"He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion."* Proverbs 28:13. God is compassionate to us when we confess. However, if we do not confess we can be filled with anxiety, Psalm 38:18. If we are silent about our sin then our health can suffer ... we can feel God's heavy hand upon us ... our vitality can be drained ... and guilt can overwhelm us, Psalm 32:3-5. God's indignation and our guilt can be a great burden. Unconfessed sin can cause illness and exhaustion, Psalm 38:4.

Forgiving others. We must not be an army that shoots its wounded. Tend to the wounds of others ... forgive and restore them, Galatians 6:1-2. God has forgiven you ... therefore forgive others, Ephesians 4:32. Do not withhold forgiveness from someone who repents, Luke 17:3-4. Peter asked, *"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"* Jesus said to him, *"I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."* Matthew 18:21-22. God's forgiveness of you is tied to your forgiveness of others, Matthew 6:14-15. We pray in the Lord's Prayer, *"forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."* Matthew 6:12.



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Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

Appendix ... TEACHING OTHERS

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:2

You should be better equipped to be a disciple if you have completed the ten *Disciplemaking 1* lessons. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, you should grow to become a disciplemaker. The two key words in the life of a disciplemaker are *apply* and *multiply*. Apply what you learn to your own life. Then multiply it to others ... helping them become disciples. Paul wrote about disciplmaking in the verse above. Paul had taught Timothy. Then he encouraged Timothy to teach the same things to faithful men ... faithful men who could teach those same things to others. The multiplication was from Paul ... to Timothy ... to faithful men ... to others. That is the goal of this *Disciplemaking 1* course.

The things that you have learned from me in this course, entrust these to faithful believers who will be able to teach others also. Become a disciplemaker by teaching *Disciplemaking 1*. Opportunities to teach may be all around you ... in a Bible study, in a Sunday school class, or one-on-one with a friend. One-on-one teaching can be the easiest place to start. You can teach new believers, young believers, or more mature believers who want to help others. Pray. Ask God for an opportunity. God will give you the right opportunities if you are equipped and willing.

This appendix is designed to help you make the transition from student to teacher ... from disciple to disciplemaker. If you have the right goal and follow a few simple guidelines, you can be a better teacher and you can enjoy the process of teaching. The goal of teaching is changed lives ... increased knowledge resulting in increased obedience. Simply stated, the product of good teaching is full lives, not full notebooks. Paul wrote this about his own teaching, *"And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ."* Colossians 1:28. This appendix gives some simple guidelines for teaching. These are in three areas ... preparing the teacher ... preparing the lesson plan ... and teaching the lesson. Understanding and following these guidelines will help you be a better teacher. Learn them before you teach. Apply them as you teach. Review them after you teach.

PREPARING THE TEACHER

Good teaching begins with the preparation of the teacher. To prepare yourself as a teacher you should pray ... study ... review ... and model.

Pray. Pray for yourself. Pray as Moses prayed, *"Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb."* Deuteronomy 32:2. Pray for your teaching partner if you have one. Pray as you prepare each lesson. Pray that you will understand and master each lesson's content. Pray for your preparation of the lesson plan. Pray for your teaching of the lesson ... for clarity, accuracy, enthusiasm, conviction, and most of all for the Spirit's work. Pray for your students. Pray for them by name. Pray that they will understand the lessons ... apply the lessons to themselves ... and multiply the lessons to others. Paul's prayer for the believers in Colossae is a great example. *"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light."* Colossians 1:9-12.

Study. This obvious ingredient of good teaching covers two aspects of the lesson. First, you must know the material thoroughly. Learn the lesson for yourself. Examine each part of it ... think about it ... remember it. Study each section, chart, and map. Read and study the verses that are referenced. Know the lesson as a whole. Know the details. Master all of it. The second part of studying involves preparing the lesson plan. Knowing the lesson for yourself is different than knowing how to teach it to someone else. Guidelines for preparing the lesson plan are on the next pages of this appendix. Studying is hard work. It takes time. There are no shortcuts. *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth."* 2 Timothy 2:15.

Review. After you have prepared the lesson and the lesson plan, review them many times. Reviewing the lesson and the lesson plan is very important to good teaching. Reviewing several times (or maybe even a few dozen times) makes the lesson your own. Doing this gives you thorough knowledge. Thorough knowledge produces confidence and comfort in teaching. When you thoroughly know the lesson, you can concentrate on the student getting it right ... rather than on you getting it right. Review the lesson every time before teaching it. You may be teaching it for the 5th, 15th, or 50th time ... but your students may be hearing it for the first time. A final review just a few minutes before teaching can be a big help.

PREPARING THE TEACHER (continued)

Model. Be an example of what you teach. Be an illustration of the lesson. Apply the lesson to yourself before you multiply it to others. Live it before you give it. By doing this you will be a better teacher. You will show that the lesson can be learned and lived. Your student(s) will believe your teaching because of your good example. Paul wrote, "*Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.*" 1 Corinthians 11:1, and "*in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*" 1 Timothy 4:12. Be able to say to your students, *Come with me to higher ground ... I've been there.* Don't say, *Go there ... I've heard it's nice.* You cannot teach your students to be more spiritual than you are. Jesus said, "*A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.*" Luke 6:40.

PREPARING THE LESSON PLAN

The lesson plan is the answer to the question, *How am I going to teach this lesson to my students?* The *how* is not the same as the *what* of teaching. The lesson plan involves your instructions to yourself on how to teach the material ... write them on the lesson pages.

Set the goal. Decide what you want to achieve in teaching each lesson. Know what you want the students to learn, to remember, and to apply. Build your lesson plan to achieve the goal.

Overview ... detail ... and review. Good teaching includes all three of these steps. They should be built into your lesson plan. The first step is a brief overview of the whole lesson ... and of the section. This will give the student a framework for the detailed content of the lesson. The next step is the detail of the lesson. This is the printed content *and* your hand-written content notes. The final step is a review of each section ... or of the whole lesson. Tell them what you are going to tell them ... then tell them ... and then tell them what you have told them. Follow this pattern section by section through each lesson.

Add clarity. Good teaching is thoroughly understood by the student. Your teaching needs to be clear and easy to understand. Add definitions of words and concepts. Add illustrations. Illustrations are word pictures ... your own parables. Illustrations don't have to be cute or funny. Good illustrations add clarity to teaching ... explaining the unknown in terms of the known. Decide what questions you want to ask your students. The right questions will get them to think and understand.

PREPARING THE LESSON PLAN (continued)

Prepare your notes. The best place to put the notes of your lesson plan is on the pages of the lesson. Use red ink for these instructions to yourself. Use blue or black ink for comments on the content of the lessons. Underline or circle for emphasis. Draw connecting arrows for progression or cause and effect. Highlighting in yellow can help. Put assignments for your students in red at the end of each lesson. Make your notes brief, simple, clear, thorough, and very legible ... remember you will be referring to them as you teach.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Good teaching is a product of the proper preparation of the teacher and the proper preparation of a good lesson plan. Consistently good teaching doesn't happen without both of these. A few more guidelines will help you during the actual teaching time.

Take time to focus. In the few minutes just before teaching ... take some time to focus your mind and heart on the lesson. Pray for yourself, your students, and your teaching. Think about the goal of the lesson. Briefly review the lesson ... especially the beginning of it.

State the purpose. Briefly tell your students the goal of the lesson. Tell them the purpose of your teaching. Their knowing what to expect makes your teaching and their learning easier.

Encourage learning and application. Paul encouraged his students. *"You know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."* 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12. Encourage your students. Your mastery of the lesson material shows that it can be learned. Personal examples from your own life can be a great encouragement.

Be clear ... be simple ... be brief. Complexity is usually the enemy of understanding. Many words, and especially many big words, add complexity and confusion to the teaching process. One of the most famous speeches given in the United States was President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in 1863. His eloquent and moving speech was an illustration of simplicity adding to the impact of communication. Lincoln spoke for about two minutes. His speech contained only 262 words ... and 202 were one-syllable words. Keep these ten lessons simple. Don't add much to the material provided. Adding a lot of extra detail takes away from the students' understanding of the whole lesson ... and it makes the lesson less transferable to others.

TEACHING THE LESSON (continued)

Overview ... detail ... and review. Remember to follow your lesson plan by doing these three things for each section of the lesson.

Get them thinking. Good teaching gets the students mentally involved in the lesson. Put them in the role of discoverers. The ten lessons have been written so that students do not have to take many notes. However, encourage them to underline, highlight, and take some notes. Get them thinking ... give them time to think ... keep them thinking.

Put your students first. Their spiritual growth should be your highest priority in teaching. Their increased knowledge and increased obedience is the goal. Tell your students when you don't know, or are unsure of, an answer ... then get the answer for the next class.

Teach only with attention. If people stop listening ... stop talking. You cannot teach without attention. Plan ahead to eliminate as many distractions as possible. Put students' backs to distracting light, noise, motion, and entry doors. Minimize the number of pets, children, and phones in the room. Plan on distractions happening ... don't be surprised or irritated. Stop teaching. Wait for the distraction to be over. Start again when you have regained attention. A few distracting students can destroy the whole class. It is your responsibility to prevent that from happening. A gentle correction usually is enough ... but if not, become more firm and direct. Talk to them alone afterwards to explain why you corrected them. Make a list of off-the-subject questions, and answer them outside of class time. Use question and answer times, class discussion, and breaks to keep attention ... or to regain attention.

Evaluate your teaching. Review this appendix and evaluate your teaching after you have taught each lesson. If you have a teaching partner, help each other. Evaluate, correct, and encourage one another. *"Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."* Proverbs 27:17. Don't be defensive when you are corrected. *"Do not reprove a scoffer, lest he hate you, reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man, and he will increase his learning."* Proverbs 9:8-9. Make the necessary adjustments for the next class.

A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Student or Teacher,

I wrote this course to provide comprehensive, basic teaching for those who desire to become disciples and those who wish to make disciples. I have taught this course many times in the USA ... and in Poland and Russia. It was well received in all locations. I rewrote it into its present form ... in what might be called *International English* to be understandable for those who know English as their first, second, or third language.

Many people have studied this course and have benefited greatly. Students who have become teachers have gained an extra blessing from learning it more thoroughly. I encourage you to teach this course for your own benefit ... and for the benefit of your student or students. Many Christians do not have enough knowledge to make the transition from believer to disciple. They lead frustrated Christian lives ... being less than God desires. You can help by teaching this course to them.

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers." James 1:22. Apply what you have learned. Multiply it to faithful men and women who will be able to teach others also. Live it and give it. Pray that God will give you an opportunity to teach it. The easiest place to start may be with one or two friends. Jesus' words can be paraphrased as, *Teach others to be disciples of Me ... baptize them ... teach them to obey My commandments ... and I am with you always*, Matthew 28:18-20. Teaching this course can be part of your obedience to the Great Commission. He will be with you as you teach it.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58

Yours in His service,

John D. Morris