

# **Train a Child in the Way He Should Go**

**Train a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

**Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up  
in the training and instruction of the Lord.**

Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)

**Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your  
mother's teaching,**

Proverbs 1:8 (ESV)

**Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that  
it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will  
be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.**

Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

**Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.  
"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment  
with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long  
on the earth."**

Ephesians 6:1-3 (NKJV)

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**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth,...**

**Genesis 1:27-28a (NASB)**

**But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.**

**James 1:5 (NASB)**

**Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
And do not lean on your own understanding.**

**6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He will make your paths straight.**

**7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;  
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.**

**Proverbs 3:5-7 (NASB)**

## **About Phil Benedict**

I (Phil Benedict) grew up in a godly Christian home and was saved as a young child. I was active in our church youth group in Boise, Idaho, where I met my wife, Linda. We married when we were young and God has blessed our marriage. We have now been married for over fifty-four years (as of January 2021). We have four children, all of whom are actively serving the Lord. We both graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois, and from Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. I have also taken classes in secondary school administration at the College of Idaho in Caldwell, Idaho, as well as classes in Cherokee heritage from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and classes in drug and alcohol counseling at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. We have served as “full time” Christian workers for over thirty-five years. We have been members of UIM International (United Indian Missions) for over twenty-five years.

## **Thanks to My Wife**

God has given me an exceptional wife. She is a very talented person and she chose to be a stay-at-home mom and to be a ministry partner with me. She has been a huge blessing in my life. She has been my co-worker and partner throughout life. Without exaggerating, she has spent many hundreds of hours editing, checking for mistakes, making suggestions, printing, and binding this and other study guides that we have put together. Without her, these study guides would not exist.

## *Our Prayer*

It is our prayer and desire that the Lord Jesus Christ will be honored and glorified through this Bible study. We pray that some parents will learn and be encouraged as they seek to follow Biblical instructions in the raising of their children. We pray that some children will be helped to know and to walk with the Lord as their parents seek to apply what they learn. We pray that there will be some who, empowered by the Spirit of God, will be committed to living a transformed life of obedience and faithful service to our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **The Purpose of This Study**

In all honesty, this is a heavy study. It gets to the very heart of raising godly children. It may seem a little overwhelming. I would encourage parents to not become discouraged and drop out. God will give us the strength to follow His instructions if we will be faithful, stick with it, and make a genuine effort to follow His instructions.

Parenting is not easy. I know that, and I hope I can encourage some to avoid mistakes that I made in raising our own family.

### **Chapters 1-6**

In this study, chapters one through six are written with the following goals:

*1. To help parents understand what the Bible teaches about raising children*

This study deals with fundamental Biblical principles which relate to raising children. It does not attempt to give exact “how to” instructions in dealing with various situations that come up in child raising. To do that would require a book hundreds of pages long and it still could not give instructions for every situation. God will give wisdom and understanding to every parent who chooses to serve Him and asks for wisdom. No human book can match that.

There are hundreds of “how to” books written on parenting. They represent every philosophical viewpoint imaginable. There are some good Christian books written that can be quite helpful, but all of these must take second place to fundamental Biblical principles relating to raising children.

*2. To encourage parents to put these Biblical principles into practice*

Raising children is not easy. It is one of the biggest challenges people will face in life. No parents are alike and no two children are alike. In this study I would like to help parents understand that, with God’s help and direction, they can follow His instructions and expect their children to know and walk with the Lord. How parents raise their children is very important and serious. It may have eternal results.

*3. To give some suggestions and acquaint parents with some good resources that may help in applying these fundamental Biblical principles*

### **Chapters 7-11**

Chapters seven through eleven are written to teach fundamental Biblical truths that children and others need to understand in order to be good disciples or followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## How to Get the Most from This Study

The subject matter in these studies deals with fundamental Biblical truths. It is not light or frivolous. Take your time as you go through these studies. If you go over the material too quickly without much thought, it will have little or no lasting impact on your life.

It is important that one take time to read, to digest, and to absorb the Scriptures in this study. Take time to carefully read and think about them. Meditate on them and the truths they teach. Regularly ask God for a right understanding of Scriptural truths and then make them part of you. Learn to love God and His Word. Commit yourself to making Biblical truths the foundation of your life and to putting them into practice every day of your life.

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

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

## Bible Translations Used in This Study

There are five different translations used throughout this study. The translations used are the King James Version (KJV), the New King James Version (NKJV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the New International Version (NIV), and the English Standard Version (ESV).

The purpose of these studies is to help ordinary people understand fundamental Biblical truth. When quoting Scripture, I have tried to use the translation which most clearly states the Biblical truth being covered in that part of the study. Although these study guides will not be published or sold, I have tried to adhere to copyright laws which limit the number of Scriptures that can be quoted from each translation. Therefore, no particular translation has been favored. After each verse that is quoted, the translation is identified by giving the initials of the translation.

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## **Introduction: Some Fundamental Goals of Christian Parenting**

1. To teach our children to know the Lord and to be committed to walking with Him
2. To teach children to be obedient to their parents
3. To help children find God's plan and purpose for their lives and to put that plan into practice
4. To train children to be good decision makers, seeking God's wisdom as they make choices
5. To prepare our children to live fruitful productive lives
6. To get to know our children in an in-depth way. To be able to talk to and effectively communicate with them
7. To help them to enjoy their life now and in the future

There is no question that some of these goals are in stark contrast to many of the child raising goals of secular society and of modern psychology. Biblical Christianity recognizes God as the authority and it accepts the Bible as God's communication of truth to man. This is not what the world believes.

Some in secular society may recognize the Bible as a "good book" but most do not believe it is inspired by God and true.

Every parent has a choice to make as he/she raises his children. Will he accept the Bible as the infallible true Word of God, or will he base his thinking and actions on society's ways of thinking? Many, in one way or another, try to blend them together; however, they are fundamentally different and cannot be blended without compromising Biblical teaching.

A fundamental choice every Christian parent will have to make is, "Is the Bible true or is it not?" and "How will it affect the raising of my children?"

Dr. Henry Brandt, a well-known Christian psychologist in the past, made an insightful statement when he stated, "a parent is a partner with God in making disciples of his children".

There are places in this study where I may sound a little gruff and stern. However, after raising four children of our own, and after falling way short in many areas and making plenty of mistakes, I have a deep-seated sympathy and concern for parents who seek to raise godly children.

I can rejoice that now that they are all grown and on their own, they are all actively serving the Lord.

## *Chapter One*

# **What Does the Bible Teach About Children?** **God has a purpose for every child.**

To begin our study, we will take a close look at what God has to say about children in His Word, the Bible. Children are referred to over three hundred times in the Bible. They are an important emphasis of Scripture.

We, as Christians, must guard against letting society determine our attitudes about children. Most parents claim to put the well-being of their children high on their priority list. However, raising healthy well-adjusted children very often takes second or third place to other interests and desires such as financial gain, careers, entertainment, social life, and addictions. Many, probably most, do not teach their children any real genuine spiritual values.

## *Biblical Perspective On Children*

In the very first chapter in the Bible, it teaches that God created man in His own image. Everyone, including children, is created in the image of God. This is an indication that we and our children are very highly valued by God.

**Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.... 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth..."**

From Genesis 1:26-28 (NASB)

The very first God-given instructions to the first created couple were to be fruitful and multiply. Having children is a fulfillment of a God-given purpose for couples.

Notice that in the following verses children are a gift and a reward from God.

**Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; ... Psalm 127:3-5a (NASB)**

Throughout His ministry here on earth, Jesus exalted children.

**13 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." 16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:13-16 (NIV)**

In this same situation as recorded in the gospel of Matthew, it states that Jesus put His hands on them and prayed for them.

**Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and**



**the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."**

Matthew 19:13-14 (NASB)

In the following verses, notice how severely Jesus condemns causing a child to sin.

**At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Matthew 18:1-6 (ESV)**

Notice what is says about one who causes a child to sin. *"It would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea".*

This is an amazing statement. This has serious implications relating to child training and parenthood. God takes it very seriously when, by our attitudes and actions, we cause our children to sin. It is a serious issue with the Lord when we do not teach godliness to our children. Parents can cause a child to sin by failing to teach them how to know and walk with the Lord.

I (Phil Benedict) do not grasp all of what these verses (Matthew 18:1-6) are teaching, but one thing is clear. In God's eyes, raising children and teaching them to be godly and to serve the Lord is a serious responsibility.

It should be noted that for genuine Christians, God forgives all our sin, including neglecting the spiritual training of our children. Those whose children have already left home do not need to feel on-going guilt for past sins or failures that have been confessed to the Lord.

A mother chicken will gather her chicks under her wings to protect them. This is a beautiful picture of how God protects His children. When Jesus wept over Jerusalem, He desired to gather them together under His wings like a mother hen and protect and save them.

**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Luke 13:34 (ESV)**

**He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. Psalms 91:4 (NIV)**

*Children are all individually created by God. There are no accidents.*

The Word of God teaches us that it is God who brings children into the world.

The following verses are amazing. God was totally involved in our conception and in our development in our mother's womb.

**For you (God) created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.** Psalm 139:13-16 (NIV)

In the verses above it states that God “*knit me together in my mother's womb*”. In the following verse notice the phrase, “*I have formed him*”.

**Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.** Isaiah 43:7 (KJV)

God creates and has a purpose for every child conceived, even those born out of wedlock. This is a precious truth. God had a plan and purpose for each of us. Our conception was part of His plan.

**Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you, ...** Isaiah 44:2a (NASB)

**This is what the LORD says-- your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:** Isaiah 44:24 (NIV)

In the following verses, it is clear that it is God who enables a woman to conceive and to give birth to a child.

**So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.** Ruth 4:13 (NASB)

**And they rose up in the morning early, and worshiped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.** 1 Samuel 1:19-20 (KJV)

*God has a plan and purpose for every child.*

Have you ever asked questions like---Why was I born? Do I have a purpose for living? Why am I the way I am? Do I have any value to anybody, or to God? What should be my goals in life?

From the Word of God, we learn that even before we were born, God planned who you were to be and what kind of a person you should become. No individual is simply an accident of birth. God created you individually, and He had a special purpose in mind for you.

**Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.** Jeremiah 1:4-5 (NASB)

**Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me;**

**from my birth he has made mention of my name.** Isaiah 49:1 (NIV)

**But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, ...**  
Galatians 1:15-16a (NASB)

Again, God has purpose for every person. Before we were born, He “called” us. Ultimate fulfillment in life is to know God and to do what He has individually planned and gifted each of us to do.

God not only knit me together in my mother’s womb, He knew me before I was born and He had my life planned out. None of us will die until it is God’s time for us to go to be with Him.

**My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.** Psalm 139:15-16 (NIV)

**See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life.**  
Deuteronomy 32:39a (NASB)

As one who twice faced death with serious cases of viral encephalitis, I have personally experienced this truth. It was not God’s time for me to go yet. He still had a purpose for me here on earth.

In America today, as well as in many other parts of the world, when there is a pregnancy and the child would be considered an inconvenience, they simply get rid of it.

When a child is aborted, a life created by God for a purpose is destroyed. Many believe that if a baby will be an inconvenience, then they have the “right” to get rid of it. Society shudders at the idea of teaching sexual abstinence until marriage or that marriage partners should be faithful to one another, but they tenaciously hang on to their “right” to destroy and kill any life that results. All of this is a rejection of the Biblical truth that every child is a creation of God and that He has a purpose for every child conceived, including those conceived by unmarried parents.

*God gives every person who believes in Him a spiritual gift to serve Him by serving fellow believers.*

A spiritual gift is a Spirit-given and Spirit-empowered ability to serve fellow members of the body of Christ (the church). God has a purpose for every person, including children, and He equips them with a special ability to serve Him.

Spiritual gifts vary greatly from person to person. According to God’s own will and purpose, He equips and places us in His body (the church) so that we can help to build up other members of the body. No one else can do what He has equipped you to do in the place He put you, as well as you can. When we slack off, our brothers and sisters in the Lord will be hurt because of it.

Only genuine believers have a spiritual gift. It is a supernaturally given ability or capacity. A spiritual gift is not a skill that can be learned simply by study or practice. Unsaved people can learn skills such as accounting, carpentry, or any of hundreds of other skills, but they are not spirit-empowered abilities

given specifically to enable fellow believers to be strong in the faith and to grow in their walk with God.

God's plan is that we all work together for the common good of our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

**To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.** 1 Corinthians 12:7 (ESV)

**For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.** Romans 12:3-8 (NIV)

**Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.** 1 Peter 4:10-11 (NIV)

When a believer exercises his spiritual gift(s), other believers' benefit. They will be encouraged, strengthened, taught, admonished or helped in some way. When we exercise our spiritual gifts, other Christians will mature in their faith and the church will become more mature and unified. Christians will grow in their walk with God and, through it all, the Lord Jesus Christ is honored and glorified.

This passage in Ephesians 4 is a very good description of a mature church.

**It was he (God) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ...Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, *as each part does its work.*** Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV)

Notice what is said about this church.

...They had leaders equipped by God.

...The church was mature in their faith.

...They were unified.

...They were attaining the full measure of the fullness of God.

...They understood right doctrine and were not deceived by wrong teaching.

...They spoke the truth in love.

...The Lord Jesus Christ was the Head.  
 ...They were growing and being built up in love and in knowledge of the Son of God.  
 ...Each member did his part.

This is a description of an amazing church. Jesus was the Head and they were mature, yet still growing and being built up in their faith and knowledge.

A fundamental reason for their unity, maturity and spiritual growth is found in two key phrases in this passage. First, those who were part of this church were being *“prepared for works of service”* and *“each one was doing his part”*.

When each person does his part, the church is healthy and functions as God intended the church to function. When many fail to do their part, the church falters and stumbles. All of this speaks to the value of every person.

Every child who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is part of God’s plan for His church. God has gifted every child who believes. He has an important role to play. As a child grows and throughout life, his gifts develop. As he grows and matures, the health of the church is dependent on him and his fellow believers.

There are some who feel that they don’t have much value in the church or the body of Christ. That is simply not true. Having or not having a particular gift is not an indication of value or spirituality. Every person, even those who don’t think they have a very significant gift, has an important role to play in the body. The body will suffer if that “unimportant” person does not do his/her part. God blesses and rewards our faithfulness, even when it may seem small and unimportant to us.

All of this ties together with our study of children. God has a plan and purpose for every child. As that child grows, he/she will take his place in the church and do his part in the building up and maturing of fellow members of the body of Christ, the church.

Finally, every believer is called to “declare the praises (NIV) or the excellencies (NASB) of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light”. This is true of all Christians, including children.

**But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.** 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV) In the NASB it says, “to declare the excellencies of Him”.

Children absolutely have a high standing with God. God entrusts parents with a life that has great value in His sight. As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been entrusted with the responsibility of training our children to know and to walk with their creator and Savior, and to faithfully serve Him.

## Chapter Two

# Fundamentals of Training a Child in the Way He Should Go

**Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

**Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)

**Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching,**

Proverbs 1:8 (ESV)

**...and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.** 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NIV)

For Christian parents there is essentially nothing in life more important than their children. How we raise our children has enormous consequences in the lives of our children and in our own lives.

The goal of Christian parenting is not just to teach our children to have acceptable behavior; the goal is to teach and train them to know and to walk with God. We desire for them to be godly, not just good.

Do we strongly desire that our children grow up knowing the Lord and making Him the center of their life, or do we raise our children to have a secular non-biblical way of thinking? Or do we seek a middle ground and attempt to incorporate both into raising our children? This is a critical choice because their eternal destiny may very well be at stake. This may be blunt, but do we want our children to spend eternity with us forever with the Lord in heaven or do we want them to be separated from the Lord forever in hell, which also lasts forever?

Notice that in the following verse it states that our obedience to the Lord will bring blessing into our own life and it will affect the lives of our children *forever*. Forever means for eternity. Nothing in life is more important than this.

**Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.** Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

If you desire to bring your children up to know and walk with the Lord, then each of the following is very important.

*Parents must daily set an example of godly living.*

If parents want their children to walk with the Lord, they must set an example for their children. If living a godly life is not important to parents, they can hardly expect their children to make this a

priority in their life.

God instructed His people to obey His teaching. The reason given is so that it *may go well with you and your children after you*. Our obedience or disobedience clearly has a major impact on our children.

**So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, ...** Deuteronomy 4:40a (NASB)

In the following verses it states the same thing, only this time it says *so that it may be well with you and your sons after you “forever”*. The word “forever” indicates that our example will influence our children’s lives for eternity, not just here on earth.

**Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.** Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

**Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!** Deuteronomy 5:29 (NASB)

Children are deeply influenced by what they see and experience at home. *The examples they see at home will influence them for life and, even more important, for eternity.*

The following verse does not specifically refer to raising children but it clearly applies to our dealing with children as well as adults:

**Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.** Matthew 7:3-5 (NIV)

The Word of God clearly tells us that Jesus set an example for us to follow. In the same way, we set examples for our children to follow.

**To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.** 1 Peter 2:21 (NIV)

**Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. 7 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness 8 and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned,** Titus 2:6-8a (NIV)

It is certainly true that many individuals who grew up in homes that were not committed to the Lord have chosen to accept and to serve the Lord. It is also true that there are individuals raised in godly homes who reject the Lord. However, the principle stated in Proverbs 22:6 still stands. Training a child in the way he should go is not a principle that can be ignored without serious

consequences. We should not leave the spiritual training of our children to chance. There is far too much at stake.

Fathers and mothers cannot just send their kids to church and expect the church to be their children's spiritual guide. A good solid Bible teaching church can certainly help, but if active participation in a solid Bible teaching and practicing church is not important to the parents, then the parents can hardly expect what is taught in church to be important in the lives of their children.

God very clearly lays the responsibility of teaching and training children on the shoulders of the parents, especially the father. An important part of that training is to set the right examples for our children. Failure to do so may have severe consequences in the lives of our children.

The following principles are foundations of being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is for those who have made the choice to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, to follow Him, and to set an example for their children. (These principles will be developed more fully in chapter ten.)

*1. Daily read and think about (meditate on) the Word of God, the Bible.*

It is important that you take time to read the Word and to think about what you read. Don't expect to understand it all. As you read, ask God to give you a correct understanding of what you read.

*2. Immediately confess any sin as soon as you realize that you have sinned.*

Confess the "little" sins (wrong thoughts, wrong attitudes, etc.) as well as the "bigger" sins. In reality, there is no such thing as a "little" sin. They all grieve the Spirit of God.

*3. Be baptized.*

The Bible's instructions and the examples given in the Bible all teach that after one has been saved by choosing to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he/she should be baptized. Baptism itself cannot and will not save us. We are baptized as a first step of obedience and to publically show that we are now a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*4. Begin developing a habit of regularly praying throughout the day.*

Prayer is a core part of our walk with the Lord. In your prayers, regularly confess sin, regularly thank and praise Him for your spiritual and physical blessings, and regularly bring Him any requests you may have. Pray for fellow believers and pray for the salvation of friends and family members.

*5. Regularly attend and get involved in a good solid Bible teaching church.*

God did not design us to be spiritual hermits. We need to be correctly taught the Word of God and we need the example and the encouragement of fellow believers.



*Parents must regularly absorb the Word of God, put it into practice, and then teach it to their children.*

The Word of God, the Bible, is God's revelation of truth to man. This revelation of truth involves essentially every part of our lives. If we expect to serve and to please God and to be rewarded by Him, we must apply its teaching in every part of our lives.

If we expect God's blessing on our lives, we must not just hear the Word of God, we must put it into practice. This is fundamental to child rearing.

**How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.**

Psalms 119:9 (NIV)

**Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.**

Psalms 119:11 (NASB)

**Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.** James 1:22 (NIV)

**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.** 2 Timothy 2:15-16 (NASB)

Again, to be consistent and to grow in our walk with the Lord we need to develop the habit of daily reading and thinking about (meditating on) the Word of God. As we think about what we read and ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand and put the Word into practice, we will grow in our walk with Him and we will live fruitful productive Christian lives. We will also be examples to our children and be equipped to teach them.

We will never understand all of the Word of God, but with the help of the Spirit of God we will understand enough to grow and to be productive in our own walk with the Lord.

Living by the Word of God will affect essentially every area of our life.

Do we want to be secure, to live satisfying, fruitful, and productive lives, or are we going to go through life following our own sinful nature and then stand before God with little in the way of genuine spiritual fruit?

**Blessed is the man  
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
And in His law he meditates day and night.  
He shall be like a tree  
Planted by the rivers of water,  
That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
And whatever he does shall prosper.  
The ungodly are not so,**

**But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.  
Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.  
For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.** Psalms 1:1-6 (NKJV)

**I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.** John 15:5-8 (NIV)

Not only do we make the Word of God the center of our lives, we teach it to our children. *This is not something we leave to the church.* The church can help, but God clearly lays this responsibility on the shoulders of the parents, especially the father.

Failure to do this may lead to a lifetime of regret.

**Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)

**Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates,** Deuteronomy 11:18-20 (NIV)

**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.** Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV)

I personally strongly recommend that you read through the book of Proverbs with your children at least twice before they grow up and leave home. Proverbs deals with essentially all-important issues in life and it opens up the door to discuss some areas that may be a little awkward otherwise.

In our modern society, everybody is continually busy. Parents must determine what should have priority in their lives and in the lives of their children. Parents must daily make time to sit down as a family and read a portion of the Word of God together. Parents must then teach their children what they learn from the Bible. We may not totally understand it all ourselves, but with the direction of the Spirit of God, we can understand enough to teach fundamentals to our children. During this time, we can also pray with our children and teach them to pray.

In reality, few parents have this time of Bible reading and prayer with their children. They don't believe it is important, or they do not believe they have the time. Other "more important" things

have priority. If we do not have time to teach our children the Word of God, then we need to make changes in our life, even major changes if necessary. We may need to be involved in fewer activities, or change jobs, quit a job, move, or get a smaller house. Do whatever is necessary to make teaching your children a top priority. Throughout eternity, all these kinds of earthly things will have little or no value, but the results of teaching and training our children will last for eternity.

When we put God first, He promises to supply our needs.

**"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"**

**"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:25-33 (NIV)**

*Parents must understand and apply Biblical love in their families.*

According to the Word of God, the Bible, the greatest Christian virtue is love.

**So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

1 Corinthians 13:13 (ESV)

Faith and hope are fundamentals of the Christian life, but genuine Biblical love is greater than even these in putting Biblical principles into practice.

In the Bible, genuine love is much more than having warm fuzzy (ooey-gooney) feelings for someone. It is meeting the needs of another person. Biblical "agape" love is more of an action rather than a feeling. We show our love primarily by our actions rather than by our emotions.

If we genuinely love our children, we will do what is best for them. If we feel an emotional attachment to our children but neglect to teach and train them, we are not really showing them genuine Biblical love.

If we genuinely love our children, we will make teaching and training a child *in the way he should go* a very high priority in our life.

We will also teach our children to show genuine Biblical love. Again, a primary way of teaching them is to set an example of Biblical love.

If we love God, we will make obedience to His instructions and commands a high priority.

**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.** 1 John 5:3 (NKJV)

**And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.** 2 John 1:6 (NIV)

**Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.** John 14:23-24 (NIV)

*Parents must daily pray for their children.*

Prayer is a fundamental part of a genuine Christian's walk with the Lord. If we walk with the Lord, we will talk to the Lord.

**The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.** James 5:16b (NIV)

**For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer,** 1 Peter 3:12a (NIV)

**Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.** Jeremiah 33:3 (KJV)

Considering what these verses and many others teach, Christian parents must daily pray for their children. If we love them, we will pray for them. Our children will certainly be a major part of our prayers. We can pray for essentially every part of their lives. Pray that they will know and walk with the Lord. Pray that they will make the right decisions and choices in life. Pray for their spiritual, mental, and physical well-being. Pray for them as they daily face many issues in life.

Every parent needs to regularly pray for wisdom as they raise their children.

It is easy to get discouraged when we do not see quick answers to our prayers. However, we keep on praying, even when we don't feel like it.

**Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.** Luke 18:1 (NIV)

**And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.** Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

*Parents must learn to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit of God.*

Those who are genuinely saved have the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, living in them. When Jesus promised to give us the Holy Spirit, He identified the Spirit as one who comes along beside us to give us direction and help. He lives in us and He is beside us.

**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 see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.**

John 14:16-17 (NASB)

The following verse gives us characteristics of the Spirit of God. All of these characteristics are for our benefit as we seek His direction. All of these characteristics of the Spirit play a role in the raising of our children.

**The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,  
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The spirit of counsel and strength,  
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.** Isaiah 11:2 (NASB)

**But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth;** John 16:13 (NASB)

We, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, need to learn to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit of God.

As we face many different situations in life and as we make decisions and choices, we determine what Biblical teaching applies to this situation, we pray for wisdom and guidance, and then we follow the leading of His Spirit as we sense His guidance and direction.

One very important truth to remember is that the Spirit of God will never lead contrary to the Word of God. The Spirit of Truth will never lead contrary to the Word of Truth. If the Word of God gives clear instructions on a matter, we do not need to seek a different leading of the Spirit on that issue.

*Parents must daily pray for wisdom.*

Raising children is not easy. It certainly has many enjoyable times, but overall it is not an easy job. There are no perfect parents. Every parent has made mistakes and has used poor judgment at times. However, that does not mean that we can excuse ourselves and not seek to become better and better parents.

In the Biblical book of James, and in several other places in the Bible, we are told to pray for wisdom.

**If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.** James 1:5 (NIV)

Not only do we ask, we actively seek for wisdom.

**My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,  
turning your ear to wisdom  
and applying your heart to understanding,  
and if you call out for insight  
and cry aloud for understanding,**

**and if you look for it as for silver  
and search for it as for hidden treasure,  
then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
and find the knowledge of God.  
For the LORD gives wisdom,  
and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.  
He holds victory in store for the upright,  
he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,  
for he guards the course of the just  
and protects the way of his faithful ones.  
Then you will understand what is right and just  
and fair--every good path.  
For wisdom will enter your heart,  
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.  
Discretion will protect you,  
and understanding will guard you. Proverbs 2:1-11 (NIV)**

God promises to give wisdom to those who ask for wisdom. It is a joy to consult the Word of God, ask God for wisdom, and then to make decisions based on what you believe God is leading you to do.

### Chapter Three

## Biblical Instructions on Teaching and Training Children

It is crystal clear from the Word of God that parents are to teach and train their children to know and to walk with the Lord. The goal of Christian parenting is to train their children to be godly, not just to be good. This training needs to begin when a child is very young, even in infancy.

Much of secular child raising focuses on convenience and on the needs of parents. Biblical child raising focuses on God. We seek to train them in such a way as to influence their heart for God.

**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NASB)

**My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and health to all their body.** Proverbs 4:20-22 (NASB)

**Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.** Proverbs 22:6 (KJV)

There are few, if any, things that are more important than setting a good example and to teaching and training our children. *Their eternal destiny may be at stake.* Notice the word “forever” in the following two verses. Forever means just what it says – forever or for eternity. The way parents train their children may very well determine their children’s eternal destiny.

**Be careful to listen to all these words which I (God) command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.** Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

**Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!** Deuteronomy 5:29 (NASB)

There is absolutely nothing in life that is more important than for a father to be a godly spiritual leader of his family. He must be committed to personally growing in his walk with the Lord; he must be committed to Biblically loving his wife; and he must be committed to teaching and training his children.

Training our children to know and to walk with the Lord is far more important than any sports, entertainment, social life, financial gain, or any of a hundred other things that many Christian parents put ahead of teaching and training their children. We cannot, we dare not, be casual in teaching our kids.

God’s basic instructions for raising children are relatively simple and not hard to understand. However, fulfilling those instructions is not simple or easy. They require an on-going commitment for as long as you have children in your home. The following verses are simple but critically important.

**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NASB)

**Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching,**  
Proverbs 1:8 (ESV)

**My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching.**  
Proverbs 6:20 (NIV)

**Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding,**  
Proverbs 4:1 (NASB)

**My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and health to all their body.** Proverbs 4:20-22 (NASB)

The emphasis on a father's instruction does not in any way devalue the role of a mother. It would be hard to overstate the importance and value of a mother and her role in loving and teaching and training her children and managing the home. Fathers and mothers are a team, working together to bring up their children to know and to walk with the Lord.

In many homes it is a godly mother who has to take the lead in training the children. Many, maybe even most, fathers, even Christian fathers, do not take the lead in giving Biblical spiritual training to their children. We can thank God for godly mothers who step up to fill in the gap left by negligent fathers.

**She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.** Proverbs 31:26 (NIV)

Teaching is much more than transferring data from one person to another. It is teaching and training their heart to love and follow God-given truth.

To train a child is to teach him to have a sound way of thinking and to have sound judgment. To train him in spiritual matters is to teach him to understand basic Biblical teaching and to accept and put into practice Biblical teachings, principles, and morality.

We are more than simply an advisor to our children. Training a child involves setting a good example, teaching, admonishing, reproofing, and disciplining. These all go together. To teach is to give instruction. Admonishing involves encouraging, warning, correcting, and instructing without being harsh or abusive. Reproofing is to firmly point out wrong behavior. To discipline is to teach, to chasten, and when needed, to punish. These all go together in training our children.

A big part of training godly kids is to teach them Biblical truth 365 days a year. Daily Bible readings or studies do not need to be long or deep. When the children are young it is best to keep it simple. Daily reading and discussing a verse or two from the Bible with your children will have a major impact on your children.

Teaching children is something that can be done throughout the day. As opportunities arise and as situations develop, we can take advantage of these situations to teach spiritual truths. Most of these



situations will not call for long instructional times but a few words of instruction can be regularly given. These can have a big impact in the lives of our children. A wise parent will take advantage of these opportunities.

When we teach our children, we need to be careful to explain things clearly so that they will understand basic truths. Most truths will need to be taught several times so that they will “sink in”. If children do not understand these basic truths, they will not have much of an impact on their lives. There will be many days that you will not feel like or want to teach your children; however, parents need to exercise self-discipline, which is a fruit of the Spirit. They must faithfully and consistently teach them. This will also help to teach our children discipline, doing what is right, not just what they want to do or feel like doing.

All of the following verses teach about the importance of the Word of God in people’s lives, and that includes children.

**Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.**

Psalms 119:11 (NASB)

**How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.**

Psalms 119:9 (ESV)

**Blessed is the man**

**who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.**

**But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.**

**He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.**

**Whatever he does prospers.**

**Not so the wicked!**

**They are like chaff  
that the wind blows away.**

**Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**

**For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish. Psalms 1:1-6 (NIV)**

Churches can help us in our responsibility to teach and train our children, but God has given this responsibility directly to parents, and it is parents who will be held accountable for the training of their children. In the past, as I have personally taught in various churches, it has become painfully obvious to me that most children are not being taught to live by the Word of God.

Teaching children to live by the Word of God requires time, study, effort, and creativity. However, the results are worth it many times over.

Teaching our children to live by the Word of God should cause us to carefully and prayerfully

examine our own life. Are we putting it into practice ourselves? Are we growing spiritually? We cannot expect our children to live by the Word of God if we ourselves do not put it into practice.

Is the Word of God the authority in our own life?

Teaching our children to live by the Word of God makes us seriously study and absorb the Word ourselves. We cannot train and teach our children if we ourselves do not know what it teaches.

The following Scriptures show how serious teaching children is in the mind of God.

**Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 20 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, 21 so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, Deuteronomy 11:18-21a (NIV)**

**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV)**

Our kids can be a huge source of joy and blessing in life or they can be an on-going source of pain and hurt. When they are young, even before they are born, we have to determine how important it is to teach our God-given kids. Which is most important? Our jobs and careers? Satisfying our own selfish desires? Are we willing to obey and trust in God to provide for us, or are we going to do it our way? These are fundamental issues that every parent will have to decide.

To properly raise a child, we must understand that he was born with a sin nature, and that sin nature will control him until he makes a genuine choice to become a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few years ago in Jonesboro, Arkansas, an 11-year-old and a 13 year old set off a fire alarm in a school and then shot four students and a teacher to death as they left the building. Shortly afterward, President Clinton, in his response to the shooting, made a statement to the effect that we must try to understand why they would do something like this.

Actually, it is not all that hard to understand why they would do it. Consider the following:

1. The nature of man, including children, is depraved and sinful. Even though children may be cute, and often fun loving and adorable, they still have a sin nature.
2. By the time an average child grows up, that sinful nature has been fed by over 17,000 hours of television and/or the internet. In that time, he/she will have watched an average of about 8,000 murders and countless other violent acts and countless sexually stimulating scenes. In many video

games kids practice killing people and doing other acts of violence. Many in society see nothing wrong with all this.

Before television in the United States (before 1950), there were some 215 crimes committed by adults for every one crime committed by a juvenile. In the 1950's television became wide spread. By 1960, just ten years later, there were only 8 crimes committed by an adult for every one committed by a juvenile. By 1980 the ratio was five to one.

In the average home, the time spent watching television or other movies, their time in school, and time in day care outweighs their individual time with parents by a ratio of over 100 to 1. According to one study, the average father spends less than three minutes a day individually interacting with each child.

3. Overall, there is little teaching of Biblical morality or of right and wrong. Television certainly doesn't teach it; public schools don't teach it--in fact, it is explicitly against the law to teach Biblical morality in many schools. Many, probably most, churches do more baby-sitting than they do actual Biblical teaching.

4. Schools and nature programs on television teach kids they are not created by God, but rather they are simply a product of spontaneous generation and accidental mutations. They are simply the highest evolved animal. A logical conclusion of this teaching is that since we are the product of evolution rather than creation, there is therefore no such things as a God-given standard of morality and we are not responsible to any God for our actions. Why not kill people; after all, they are just another animal.

If parents don't teach them the Word of God, who will?

A few years back the Marines conducted a study to determine what were the characteristics of today's youth. The purpose was to determine what would be the most effective recruiting and training procedure. One of their findings was that today's youth had little sense of belonging or of being loved and cared for, and that this was directly responsible for the proliferation of gangs. In the gang they found what was missing at home--a sense of caring and belonging to a family.

If you are going to be the parent that God wants you to be, you will be going against the grain of society. You may be considered an oddball. You will be different, and you may even be subject to some ridicule. But you will please God. And your kids will grow up knowing that there is a God and that He loves them, that He died for them, that He is the source of eternal life, satisfaction and peace, and that He gives them a purpose in life.

*God instructs children to listen to and to be obedient to their parents' teaching. Children are to obey and honor their parents.*

As we have seen, God makes it very clear that parents are to teach and train their children to know the Word of God and to put it into practice. It is also very clear from the Word of God that children are to listen to their parents and obey them.

**Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”** Ephesians 6:1-3 (ESV)

**Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and forsake not your mother’s teaching,**  
Proverbs 1:8 (ESV)

**Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding,**  
Proverbs 4:1 (NASB)

**My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and health to all their body.** Proverbs 4:20-22 (NASB)

**My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments;**  
Proverbs 3:1 (NASB)

**Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.** Colossians 3:20-21 (ESV)

**Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness.** Proverbs 4:10-11 (ESV)

All of us who are parents know that our kids do not automatically obey us. Teaching them to obey is part of the overall teaching process. If we do not teach them to obey us, we are not fulfilling our God-given role as parents.

When we teach our children to obey us, we are teaching them to obey the Lord. When we teach them to obey us, we are acting as God’s agent and under His authority. If they do not learn to obey us, they will likely never learn to obey God.

If we do not teach our children to be obedient at home, they may have trouble being obedient and respecting authority at school, or on the job, or even obeying the law.

My wife and I have four “kids”. They are all grown now and on their own. It is a joy to be able to say that they are now all actively serving the Lord. That has not always been true. I personally know and understand that this process of teaching and training children is not easy and I personally was far from a perfect parent. All of us are weak in some ways and we are all far from perfect. However, God still expects us to train our children, and a big part of that training is to teach them to be obedient.

Children are not only to obey their parents; they are also instructed to honor their parents.

**Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”** Ephesians 6:1-3 (ESV)

**Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.** Exodus 20:12 (NIV)

**Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.**  
Deuteronomy 5:16 (NIV)

**Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother** Deuteronomy 27:16a (ESV)

To honor parents is to treat them with respect and esteem them. Children must also recognize their parents' authority and not rebel against it. Parents need to act honorably and train their children to honor them.

*What about disciplining or “spanking” children?*

As we have seen, the Word of God clearly teaches that children are to obey and to honor their parents.

There are times that we will need to discipline our children. Just as God disciplines us, we are to discipline our children.

In the following verses there is a wealth of insight and teaching relating to discipline. We learn about God's disciplining us, and there is insight relating to disciplining our children. Take some time to think about and digest these verses.

**Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.** Hebrews 12:7-11 (NIV)

Look again at the last verse. Discipline “*produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it*”. Discipline trains a child to do what is right (righteous) in God's eyes and it also leads to peace in the home.

The Word of God is clear. Parents are to teach and to train their children, and children are to obey and to honor their parents. However, children, like their parents, are born with a sin nature. Children can be disobedient and, at times, they are downright rebellious.

All parents know that children do not automatically obey every time they are given instructions. Because of this, they have to be taught to obey and to follow the Biblical teaching given by their parents.

In the Bible, God has given us a method to be used to assist in the training of a child when a child is deliberately disobedient.

**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NASB)

**Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.** Proverbs 19:18 (NIV)

**Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.** Proverbs 29:17 (NIV)

The Word of God clearly teaches that children are to be disciplined by their parents. The goal of disciplining a child is not necessarily to punish the child but rather to develop godly character in that child. However, there are times when punishment becomes a part of the process of training a child.

In several of the following verses the term “rod” is used. The word “rod” was used of a staff or a scepter or of the stiff parts of plants. There are also times when “rod” is used in a symbolic way to refer to strong discipline.

**Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him.** Proverbs 22:15 (NASB)

**Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.** Proverbs 23:13-14 (NIV)

**The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.** Proverbs 29:15 (NASB)

The use of the term “rod”, in some ways, may sound cruel and abusive. However, spanking a child when done right and in a controlled way is not abuse, – it is love.

**He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.** Proverbs 13:24 (NIV)

These are serious instructions. Using the “rod” is equated with loving our child and saving him from death. Withholding the “rod” is equated with hating a child. Use of the “rod” brings wisdom.

Spanking a child is not impulsive hitting, slapping or striking a child in anger. Some parents, in anger and/or frustration, impulsively hit or slap their children. That is not spanking a child. It is seldom, if ever, a good idea to strike a child in anger. Spanking should never be done in anger.

**...for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.** James 1:20-21 (NIV)

Spanking should always be done in private. It should seldom, if ever, be done in public.

When I (Phil Benedict) spanked my own children, I would first send them to their room while I cooled off, if necessary, and I took time to think about what had taken place. Sometimes I would talk to my wife about what had taken place and get her input. If a spanking was deemed

appropriate, I would go into their room and talk to them, making sure the child clearly understood why he/she was getting spanked. I would then have the child lay face down (bottom up) on the bed. I would spank them hard enough that it hurt, but not over spank them. I would then pick them up and hug them and tell them that I loved them. At this point, their infraction was a thing of the past and we would go forward as normal.

When the kids grew older, at times I would give them a choice. They could either be spanked or they could be “grounded” for a certain period of time. They nearly always chose a spanking. With a spanking, the infraction is dealt with and forgotten in a short period of time. With a grounding, the incident is kept on the forefront for several days or for however long the grounding is for. Today, many years later, we have an excellent relationship with each of our four “kids”. They are all married and they are all actively serving the Lord.

In the Bible, a “rod” refers to a slender stick, staff, or branch. Essentially all the writers of Christian parenting books do not recommend using one’s hand to spank or hit a child in any way. We do not want a child to associate our hands with punishment and we do not want them to be afraid of our hands.

As we all know, spanking is not an “in” thing today. In many circles it is even considered child abuse. However, that is not what the Word of God teaches.

Does a good spanking really damage a child’s psyche? In my case, I received a good many spanking as a kid – at home, at school, and on the school bus – yes, on the school bus!!! For two years I spent well over two hours a day on a school bus and it was awful hard for me to be good for that long. Back then I was a pretty good shot with rubber bands and spit wads. I was spanked on the bus probably about once a week. Combine that with those I received at home and at school and I suspect I received a good many more spankings than the average kid received.

Neither my body or my psyche were damaged in any way by the many spankings I received. I deserved most of them, and I have fond memories of the bus driver who spanked me the most.

I am thankful that I was spanked as a kid.

**A fool rejects his father's discipline, but he who regards reproof is sensible.**

Proverbs 15:5 (NASB)

**Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.**

Proverbs 12:1 (NASB)

### *When to Spank*

Children should not be spanked or otherwise disciplined for being children. Parents need to distinguish between childish immaturity and deliberate disobedience, rebellion, or defiance. We spank for things such as disobedience, rebellion, and defiance. We do not spank them because they are immature children. When a child accidentally spills his milk for the third time, he more likely needs understanding, love, and encouragement, not a spanking.

Children need to be spanked for things such as...

1. Acts or attitudes of rebellion
2. Deliberate disobedience
3. Defiance or disrespect of parents
4. Lying
5. When children sass or talk back to parents
6. Hitting or kicking other people
7. Having temper tantrums

Children should not be spanked...

1. When you are angry
2. For being a child
3. For accidents
4. Before you know the whole story
5. For childish inability to do something

Children need to fully understand what is expected from them. Parents need to make their expectations clear. These expectations need to be reasonable, definable, and enforceable.

It is important that parents be consistent in disciplining their children. Inconsistent discipline will lead to confusion and could very well lead to anger and resentment.

A parent who disciplines by hitting, harsh spanking, or other harsh discipline but does not seek to lovingly train a child, is setting the stage for anger and rebellion and inviting his children to rebel.

### *Provoking Children to Anger*

In the following verses, fathers are explicitly instructed not to provoke their children to anger.

**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NASB)

**Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.** Colossians 3:21 (ESV)

“Provoking to anger” suggests an on-going pattern of treatment that causes a child, over time, to build up a deep-seated anger and resentment that eventually results in hostility and rebellion against his parents and others. Normally parents do not intend to cause anger and resentment in their children, but it can happen anyway.

It is important that Christian parents regularly pray for wisdom and seek the direction of the Spirit of God in their relationships with their children.

Following in abbreviated form is a list of things that can cause anger and/or resentment in children.

Several of the items on this list are from a Christian psychologist, Dr. Paul Meier, in his book, Child Rearing and Personality Development (pages 81-82).



1. Showing favoritism can and will cause resentment.
2. Pushing a child to achieve beyond his ability. He/she cannot please or satisfy his parents. One teen who committed suicide, had stated earlier, “No matter what I do, I cannot please my parents”.
3. Parents who do not sacrifice for their children can make a child feel unwanted. Children who feel unwanted will eventually reject their parents and the parents will be unwanted.
4. Pushing a child to grow up fast. Not letting a child be a child.
5. Using love or the withholding of love as a means to reward or punish a child.
6. Physical or verbal abuse of a child. Hitting, over spanking, showing sarcasm, screaming, and regularly putting them down can all cause a child to become angry and resentful.
7. Parents can smother or overprotect their children. Parents may feel they are building close loving relationships but they may be too restrictive. Children clearly need protection and guidance, but they are also individual persons who must learn to make decisions and act on their own. Obviously, their age and maturity influence this, but they eventually will have to make decisions on their own.
8. By overindulgence or giving them everything they want.
9. By neglecting them.
10. Excessive criticism can discourage and dishearten a child.
11. Everyone, including children, needs regular encouragement. A child who is never encouraged or complimented is bound for trouble.
12. Parents who teach one thing but live another can cause resentment and hinder the spiritual growth of their children. Children’s growth is hindered by a lack of integrity, by dishonesty, laziness, and manipulation.
13. When parents are regularly inconsistent, it leads to confusion and resentment in their children.
14. Parents need to be strict, but carefully think about what they expect from their children. Being overly strict can lead to resentment and rebellion. They need to be realistic in their expectations.
15. Parents who continually bad mouth or criticize the church, other Christians, or other family members will hinder the spiritual growth of their children and cause them to resent others.

As we have already stated, there are few, if any, things that are more important than setting a good example and teaching and training our children. *Their eternal destiny may be at stake.* Again, notice the word “forever” in the following two verses. Forever means just what it says – forever or for eternity. The way parents train their children may very well determine their children’s eternal destiny.

**Be careful to listen to all these words which I (God) command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.** Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

**Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!**  
Deuteronomy 5:29 (NASB)

### *The Value of Memorizing Scripture*

Memorizing Scripture can have a big impact on our lives. As we go about our daily lives, memorized Scripture can easily come to mind and have a positive impact on how we think and on what we do. Even though we may forget parts of verses that we memorize, the thoughts are still in us and we can often remember the gist of the verse when we need it.

It is worth it to spend some time memorizing verses from the Word of God.

There are many verses that are worth memorizing.

In the following chapter there are a number of salvation verses given. It would be helpful to have some of the key verses memorized so that we can quote them when we need to.

As we read the Bible and we get a blessing from a particular verse, it may well be worth taking the time to memorize it. There are many verses with promises in them that, if memorized, can be a blessing when we face situations in which that promise would be a blessing.

I have found that sometimes when I lay awake at night, unable to get back to sleep, I quote verses to myself and it can help me get back to sleep.

There are numerous short psalms that are not hard to memorize and they can be a blessing when we face various situations in life. Some suggested psalms are Psalm 1, Psalm 23, Psalm 100, and Psalm 150. Any number of other psalms can also be a real blessing when memorized.

## **The Book of Proverbs and Training Our Children**

I personally, as well as several others, recommend that we read through the book of Proverbs with our children at least twice before they grow up and leave home. Proverbs deals with essentially all of the important issues in life and it opens up the opportunities for discussions in some areas that can be a little awkward otherwise.

The whole book could legitimately be called the instructions of a father to his son. The phrase, “my son”, is used almost 25 times in Proverbs.

While the whole book is God-given counsel, the first ten chapters zero in on issues that face youth (and the rest of us as well).

Proverbs zeros in on acts of wisdom contrasted with acts of foolishness. In the Bible, wisdom is God-given discernment while foolishness is unwise behavior that has negative results.

## Chapter Four

# Crucial Biblical Truths and Principles that Children Need To Be Taught

In this chapter we will zero in on some key Biblical truths that children and youth need to be taught in order to become spiritually healthy now and as an adult.

When we teach our children, we need to be careful to explain things clearly so that they will understand these basic truths. Most of the truths we teach our children and youth need to be taught repeatedly so that they will “sink in”. We begin teaching our children while they are still in the crib and we continue until they leave home and, at times, even after they leave home.

This may all seem a little overwhelming, but remember, we have our kids for seventeen or eighteen years. We teach them a little at a time and before long they will have gained a great deal of learning and insight.

Note: Much of this material is drawn from John MacArthur’s book, Being a Dad Who Leads.

### *A. Teach your children the Biblical plan of salvation.*

This is the most important thing you can teach your child. Their eternal destiny may be at stake. Salvation is much more than “asking Jesus into your heart”. Following are fundamentals of salvation that we need to teach our children:

#### 1. *God is holy.*

This is a very important Biblical teaching. God is identified as holy or righteous over 200 times in Scripture.

The need for salvation is because God is holy and man is sinful.

**"There is no one holy like the LORD,** 1 Samuel 2:2 (NASB)

**Who is like You, majestic in holiness,  
Awesome in praises, working wonders?** Exodus 15:11 (NASB)

**Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He.** Psalms 99:5 (NASB)

#### 2. *Every person has sinned.* We all fall far short of God’s standard of holiness.

**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,** Romans 3:23 (NASB)

**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:** Jeremiah 17:9 (KJV)

**All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.** Isaiah 64:6 (NIV)

**As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one:** Romans 3:10 (KJV)

*3. Our sin results in spiritual and physical death.*

In the Bible, spiritual death or the second death is present and eternal separation from God.

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

**Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...** Romans 5:12 (NIV)

**Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.** Revelation 20:14-15 (NIV)

*4. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, came to earth to die and to take the punishment for our sin.*

**But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** Romans 5:8 (NIV)

**God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

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

*5. Jesus was resurrected from the dead three days after He died.* Luke 24:1-9

**"Why do you seek the living One among the dead? 6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."** Luke 24:5-7 (NASB)

*6. We must confess our sin to God and ask for forgiveness.*

**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 1 John 1:9 (NASB)

**He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.** Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)

**I acknowledged my sin to You,  
And my iniquity I did not hide;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD";  
And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Psalms 32:5 (NASB)**

*7. We must repent or turn away from our lifestyle of sin and choose to serve Him.*

**Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, Acts 3:19 (NIV)**

**"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Luke 13:3 (NASB)**

**No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. 1 John 3:9 (ESV)**

*8. We can do nothing to earn or be worthy of forgiveness. We receive it as a free gift.*

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)**

**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; Romans 3:23-24 (NASB)**

**He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. Titus 3:5 (NIV)**

*9. Forgiveness, becoming a child of God, and having eternal life come only through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)**

**He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 3:36 (NKJV)**

**And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved... Acts 16:30-31a (NKJV)**

A person who does not choose to believe in Jesus will never have eternal life with God nor can he expect God's blessings here on earth.

*10. Not believing results in eternity separated from God in hell.*

The Bible's teaching about hell is not a pleasant topic. However, we need to be clear about the

results of rejecting the Lord. We need to be careful not to soften or downplay this Biblical truth.

**Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.** Revelation 20:14-15 (NIV)

**Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;** Matthew 25:41 (NASB)

*B. Teach your children to fear (have reverence for) God.*

**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.** Proverbs 1:7 (KJV)

**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.** Proverbs 9:10 (NKJV)

Fearing God is a major topic in Scripture. In the Bible, fearing God has two fundamental meanings. The first is to have a reverence, respect, and awe of God. We develop this kind of an attitude about God when we begin to understand what God is like. God is Holy; He is all knowing; He is all powerful; He is present everywhere; He never changes; and He is sovereign. He is merciful, and He is full of love and grace.

**The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;** Proverbs 8:13 (NASB)

**Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.** Proverbs 3:7 (NASB)

A second aspect of fearing God has to do with fearing what God can and will do to punish those who reject God's offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

**Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;** Philippians 2:12 (NKJV)

*C. Teach your children to guard their thinking with God-given wisdom.*

In today's culture the mind is continually being assaulted with ungodly ways of thinking. These assaults come from many different sources –TV (including the news media), the internet, all levels of educational institutions, often from our work places, and from any number of other sources.

Parents need to teach Biblical truths and values to their children and to prepare them for what they will face in society.

**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.** Proverbs 1:7 (KJV)

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!** Psalms 111:10 (ESV)

**Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make your paths straight.  
Do not be wise in your own eyes;  
fear the LORD and shun evil.** Proverbs 3:5-7 (NIV)

*D. Teach your children to obey their parents.*

This topic was covered in the last chapter (chapter three) so we will not cover it again except to say the importance of this would be hard to overstate. If a child or youth does not obey his parents, he is not obeying God and he will likely have trouble obeying other authorities when he/she is older.

*E. Teach your children how to choose their friends.*

**Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."** 1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV)

**My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.** Proverbs 1:10 (NIV)

Children and adolescents can easily get drawn into foolish or wrong thinking and wrong behavior through peer pressure. This pressure can be great and the enticements can be strong. We must teach our youth to exercise self-control and to select their friends carefully and wisely so that they will not be intimidated into wrong kinds of thinking and behavior.

**Discretion will guard you,  
Understanding will watch over you,  
To deliver you from the way of evil,  
From the man who speaks perverse things;  
From those who leave the paths of uprightness  
To walk in the ways of darkness;  
Who delight in doing evil  
And rejoice in the perversity of evil;  
Whose paths are crooked,  
And who are devious in their ways;** Proverbs 2:11-15 (NASB)

*F. Teach your children to control how they speak.*

Watching how one talks is another key in learning to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Parents must teach their children to be careful how they talk.

**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for**



**building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.**

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

**Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.** Ephesians 5:4 (NIV)

**Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you.**

Proverbs 4:24 (NKJV)

**The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, ...** Proverbs 10:11a (NASB)

**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, ...** Exodus 20:7a (NASB)

Taking God's name in vain is more than using "God" or "Jesus" as a swear or cuss word. Vain means empty or meaningless, so we are not to use the word "God" or "Jesus" or refer to God in an empty or meaningless way. The popular phrase, "Oh my God", is an example of using God's name in an empty way, and it is something Christians should not say.

The verses above are quite clear. Our speech should build up or benefit those who hear us talk. We should put away from us things such as obscenity, foolish talk, coarse talk, and deceit.

*G. Teach your children to work hard.*

**Go to the ant, you sluggard;**

**consider its ways and be wise!**

**It has no commander,**

**no overseer or ruler,**

**yet it stores its provisions in summer**

**and gathers its food at harvest.**

**How long will you lie there, you sluggard?**

**When will you get up from your sleep?**

**A little sleep, a little slumber,**

**a little folding of the hands to rest--**

**and poverty will come on you like a bandit**

**and scarcity like an armed man.** Proverbs 6:6-11 (NIV)

**Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.** Proverbs 10:4 (NIV)

Parents need to set a good example and teach their children to be hard workers. However, we must guard against loving money and putting work and money ahead of our service and commitment to the Lord. We must have the right balance for ourselves, and we must teach our children the right balance.

## *H. Teach your children how to manage their money.*

It is obvious that we need to teach our children how to handle money. We also must set a good example for them to follow. A child who does not learn to handle money wisely is going to have problems when he gets out on his own. If one is careless with his money, it can quickly become a major source of anxiety and heartache.

The Bible emphasizes giving to the Lord. This can be done in a number of ways such as...

- ...giving to meet the need of your local church.
- ...giving directly to needy families.
- ...giving to legitimate ministry organizations (Be very careful here!!!).
- ...monthly supporting full-time missionaries.

Anyone who claims to be follower of the Lord but is unwilling to give has not progressed very far in his walk with the Lord.

A fundamental Biblical promise is that if we honor the Lord with our finances, He will supply all our genuine needs.

**So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 3But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.** Matthew 6:31-34 (NIV)

**Honor the LORD from your wealth  
And from the first of all your produce;  
So your barns will be filled with plenty  
And your vats will overflow with new wine.** Proverbs 3:9-10 (NASB)

I believe that a word of caution is in order. There are many “ministries” that appeal for money -- especially on TV. Some are legitimate and do have a genuine valid ministry. However, many ministries appeal for money to meet a ministry need but much of the money goes instead into the pockets of individuals who lead the “ministry”. Some are very wealthy. There are TV evangelists and “ministry” leaders whose net worth is many millions of dollars. And studies have shown that most of it came from poor families who responded to an appeal for money for a “ministry”. Many of the materials they offer to give you as incentives to give are not really very Biblically sound materials.

Many TV evangelists claim that if you give to their organization, God will automatically give you back many times the amount of money you give to their organization. This “prosperity doctrine” misrepresents the promises of God.

It is not a good idea to give to an organization that you hear about on television and you do not know much about.

The Bible emphasizes giving directly to those in need.

**Do not withhold good from those who deserve it,  
when it is in your power to act.  
Do not say to your neighbor,  
"Come back later; I'll give it tomorrow"--  
when you now have it with you. Proverbs 3:27-28 (NIV)**

**If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? James 2:15-16 (NASB)**

*I. Teach your children to be separate from the world.*

**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.  
Romans 12:2 (ESV)**

**Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 (KJV)**

**Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15 (NASB)**

**But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy. 1 Peter 1:15-16 (NIV)**

**You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God James 4:4 (NIV)**

Teaching that followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should not endorse the values of the world, or that we should not participate in activities that appeal to our sinful nature and do not uplift or glorify the Lord, is not a popular teaching today. However, Scriptures such as those above are clear. If we want our children to be genuine followers of our Lord, they need to be taught to "be holy in all you do".

Some say that to teach this is "legalism". However, separation from the world is not legalism; it is being obedient to the Word of God.

The world can exert a powerful pull on our kids. We need to teach them to walk controlled by the Spirit and we need to set a good example for them to follow.

Separation from the world does not mean we isolate ourselves from unsaved people. We are still to be a testimony to unsaved people, but we do not participate in ungodly activities.

*J. Teach your children that they should not drink or do drugs.*

We all know that drinking alcoholic beverages can be a source of untold misery, pain, and heartache.

There is no place in the Bible which says “thou shalt not drink”; however, there are many warnings against drinking intoxicating beverages.

**Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.**

Ephesians 5:18 (NIV)

**Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.**

Proverbs 20:1 (NIV)

In the Bible, all mixtures of grape juice are referred to as “wine”. It can refer to a fresh healthy drink or it can refer to a fermented mixture that was highly intoxicating. Grape juice was their normal drink but intoxicating mixtures are warned against in the Bible.

**Who has woe? Who has sorrow?  
Who has strife? Who has complaining?  
Who has wounds without cause?  
Who has redness of eyes?  
Those who tarry long over wine;  
those who go to try mixed wine.**

**Do not look at wine when it is red,  
when it sparkles in the cup  
and goes down smoothly.  
In the end it bites like a serpent  
and stings like an adder.**

**Your eyes will see strange things,  
and your heart utter perverse things.  
You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea,  
like one who lies on the top of a mast.  
“They struck me,” you will say, “but I was not hurt;  
they beat me, but I did not feel it.  
When shall I awake?  
I must have another drink.” Proverbs 23:29-35 (ESV)**

**Woe to those who rise early in the morning,  
that they may run after strong drink,  
who tarry late into the evening  
as wine inflames them! Isaiah 5:11 (ESV)**

What the Bible says about alcoholic drinks can also be applied to drug abuse.

For about 15 years I personally served in a ministry to alcoholics and drug addicts. This included

about ten years as the chaplain of a state-run drug and alcohol recovery program. I talked and counseled with hundreds of individuals whose lives were wrecked and filled with pain as a result of drugs and/or alcohol, and this was in a fairly small town.

Parents must diligently warn their children against drinking and drugging. The temptations they will likely face can be very strong. As always, parents must set a good example for their children to follow.

*K. Teach your children God's purpose for music and to be careful what kind of music they listen to.*

God loves music. There are about five hundred references in the Bible that, in one way or another, refer to music.

In the Bible, the purpose of music is always to praise, to honor, or to glorify God. In my own study of music in the Bible I could find no place where music was used for entertainment or to draw or attract a crowd to a “worship” service.

In contrast to this, the world's music is designed to entertain and, at times, even to stimulate feelings and desires.

**How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!**

Psalms 147:1 (NIV)

**Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.**

**Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.** Psalm 33:2-3 (NIV)

**Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth;  
Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.**

**Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
With the lyre and the sound of melody.**

**With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
Shout joyfully before the King, the LORD.**

Psalms 98:4-6 (NASB)

**Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.** 1 Chronicles 16:9 (NIV)

**My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul.**

Psalms 108:1 (NIV)

The word of God identifies our music as a “new song”. It is not like the world's song. It is a new kind of song. It is not for entertainment but to praise, honor, and worship our Lord.

**He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;** Psalm 40:3 (NASB)

**He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.**

**Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.** Psalms 40:3 (NIV)

Our song recognizes who God is and worships Him for who he is.

**Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.**

Psalms 96:9 (NIV)

Biblical music builds up our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Our music should not be a source of tearing down or of eating away at their commitment and faith in Him.

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:16-17 (NIV)**

**Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:19-20 (NIV)**

There were times in the Bible when God was sick of music that did not genuinely honor Him.

**Take away from Me the noise of your songs;  
I will not even listen to the sound of your harps.**

**24 "But let justice roll down like waters  
And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5:23-24 (NASB)**

**I will put an end to your noisy songs, and the music of your harps will be heard no more.  
Ezekiel 26:13 (NIV)**

There is a deep gap between Biblical music and the world's music. Much of the world's music promotes unbiblical and sensual ways of thinking and living. Remember, we are to separate ourselves from the world, and this includes most of the world's music.

This section is not trying to say that it is wrong to listen to anything but praise or worship music. Music such as classical music and symphonies can be enjoyable and do not necessarily dishonor the Lord. However, it is still wise to make praise and worship music a big part of our life.

*L. Teach your children to control their attraction to the opposite sex.*

**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, ... Genesis 1:27-28a (NASB)**

God created us sexual beings -- male and female. The attraction to the opposite sex is a God-given attraction. He designed us with that attraction. That attraction is not in and of itself wrong or sinful.

God put one restriction on sexual activity -- that it be within marriage. When our sexual activities follow these God-given instructions, it is fulfilling and enjoyable.

**Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.** Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV)

**For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.** Genesis 2:24-25 (NASB)

**'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."** Mark 10:7-9 (NIV)

God, in His Word, has made it clear that the sexual union between a husband and wife is a God-given union.

**...each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other.** 1 Corinthians 7:2b-5 (NIV)

God also makes it very clear that any sexual activity between unmarried individuals is sinful and wrong. The seventh commandment is very clear,

**You shall not commit adultery.** Exodus 20:14 (NASB)

**But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself.** Proverbs 6:32 (NIV)

The Biblical definition of adultery is any kind of sexual activity between two individuals who are not married. It applies to both married and unmarried people.

In the Bible, adultery, fornication, and sexual immorality all mean essentially the same thing.

Jesus taught that to lust after a woman (or a man) was also sinful.

**You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.** Matthew 5:27-28 (ESV)

**For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."** Mark 7:21-23 (NASB)

**...likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, 10 but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.** 1 Timothy 2:9-10 (ESV)

We are clearly instructed to control our passions.

**It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God;**

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NIV)

**Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB)**

We know that unmarried young people can be driven by desire that will take every ounce of self-discipline that they can muster up to control. This can only be done with the help of the Spirit of God.

Parents must set a good example for their children, and they must prepare their children to face and overcome the temptations that they will face in this whole area.

All of us know that the world as a whole reject these God-given directions. Sexually stimulating scenes and talk permeates society. These messages will inundate our youth. Parents must prepare them for this. Parents must teach their youth...

*...to be committed to obedience in this whole area.*

*...to be committed to serving the Lord in your dating life.*

*...to stay away from situations where they will be faced with strong sexual temptations.*

*...to avoid activities that arouse strong sexual desires. They need to stay out of situations which lead to sexual stimulations and arousal. Extreme caution and planning are absolutely necessary. Parents must carefully monitor the activities of their young people.*

*...to dress so as not to attract sexual attention.*

The book of Proverbs has a lot to say about all this. One way to teach about all this is to read and discuss passages in the book of Proverbs.

*M. When believers marry, they are to marry only fellow believers.*

As I have taught and worked with people, some of the most unhappy people I have known are ones who were Christians but had married unbelievers. Unsaved people have much different priorities and values. What is important to a believer is often foolishness or nonsense to an unbeliever. One has a desire to honor God and to obey and walk with Him while the other wants to fulfill his own natural human desires. The result may be serious conflict. At times that conflict goes very deep, to the very core of who we are; the unhappiness and grief can also go very deep.

When a believer is considering marriage to an unsaved person, it can seem so right and the unsaved person can seem like such a perfect match. However, the bliss of courtship can so easily turn to heartache once they begin to build a life together.

**Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there**



**between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 (NIV)**

God clearly instructs us to not be “yoked together” with unbelievers. One very legitimate application of this command is marriage. To marry an unbeliever is a direct violation of this command. There is no closer human bond than marriage. A married couple are certainly “yoked together”. Being “yoked together” with a godly mate can be a huge blessing and an honor to God. Being “yoked together” with an unsaved person is often a source of heartache and grief.

When a married individual gets saved, the Word of God is clear that the saved partner is to stay in that marriage. Their marriage and union is sanctified by the Lord. If the unsaved partner chooses to leave, then the saved partner is to let him/her go. The saved partner is then free to remarry, as long as he/she marries a saved person.

**If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. 1For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.**

1 Corinthians 7:12b-15 (NKJV)

We need to teach our youth that they should not consider dating or marrying an unsaved individual.

## Chapter Five

# The “One-anothers” of Scripture Apply to Raising Children

In the Bible there are about thirty “one-another” commands and instructions which apply to members of the body of Christ (the church). The one-anothers of Scripture teach us how God expects us to interact and fellowship with each other as members of His body which is the church. The Word of God teaches us to build up, to love, to encourage, and to motivate each other to be faithful and to grow in our walk with the Lord.

The one-anothers of Scripture are also excellent principles to follow as we seek to teach and train our children to grow and mature in their walk with the Lord. Children are members of our family and many of them are also members of the body of Christ. Obviously, our relationships with our children are not the same as with other members of the church; however, the one-anothers of Scripture are still excellent Biblical principles to put into practice in our homes and in our relationships with our children.

When applied to our role as parents, the one-anothers help us to reach the heart of a child and help him/her to grow spiritually, rather than simply conforming to our rules.

The home that puts the one-anothers into practice will be a peaceful home that is growing in their walk with the Lord. Husbands, wives, and children will enjoy life and will experience God’s blessing on their home.

The material in this chapter was originally put together by Phil and Linda Benedict to teach Christians in the church how God expects us to interact with each other. However, since it is so applicable to our study of raising children, we are including this material in our study of teaching and training our children to know and to walk with the Lord.

There are about thirty separate “one-another” commands in the New Testament. Some of these are repeated numerous times. These commands are a key part of God’s design for the church. They are the heart of how we are to interact and fellowship with fellow believers, including our children. As we go over these God-given one-another instructions, in your own mind think about how these instructions can be appropriately applied to raising our children.

Putting these one-anothers into practice is necessary if we, as individuals, are to grow in our walk with the Lord as He intends for us to grow. God did not design us to function alone in our spiritual walk. He planned for us to be loved, built up, encouraged, and to grow as we walk in harmony with other believers who are also seeking to mature in their walk with the Lord.

In spite of their value and importance in God’s design for the church, the one-anothers are basically ignored by many Christians and churches. We and our churches need to give heed to these teachings. If we, as individuals, are going to be productive fruitful members of His body, and if the church is to be a Biblically unified spiritually maturing church, we must put these one-anothers into practice. If a church fails in this, it will always be a weak, immature, lukewarm church.

*Putting these teachings into practice is not optional – it is absolutely necessary if we desire to be Biblical parents and to be productive members of the body of Christ -- the Church.*

These one-anothers set a high standard. After going over the Biblical instructions covered in this lesson, one could easily become discouraged and think there is no reason or use to even try putting them into practice. However, remember we have the Holy Spirit who empowers us. I would suggest that you pick out one or two areas and begin sincerely working on them. As you grow there is blessing, satisfaction, and motivation to seek even higher levels of growth and maturity.

To help understand and digest these one-anothers, we have divided the “one-another” commands into three groups.

- A. In Group A are the one-another commands which closely relate to loving one-another.
- B. In Group B are the one-another commands which closely relate to building up one-another.
- C. In Group C are the one-another commands which closely relate to living in harmony (unity) with one-another.

There is a considerable amount of overlap between these groups. In reality, all the “one-anothers” relate and interact with each other. Each one is distinct; yet they all work together. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to put any one of them into practice without putting many of the others into practice as well.

### *Group A – Love One-Another*

Loving each other and being one are the heart of our relationships with fellow believers. *These commands are the foundation of fellowship and of all interaction between believers. If the command to love one another is not being practiced, it would be useless to try to put the rest of the “one-anothers” into practice.*

It may seem unnecessary to tell parents to love their children. However, we need to remember that Biblical love is choosing to genuinely meet the needs of another person, including our children, not necessarily just feeling an emotional attachment to the child.

In order to understand what it means to love one another; we need to remember the Biblical definitions or concepts of love. “Agape” love is to make the mental choice to meet the needs of others, even those we may not “like”.

**This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.** John 15:12 (KJV)

**Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.** 1 John 4:11 (KJV)

**Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;**  
Romans 12:10 (NASB)

Many of us have heard these Biblical commands all of our life, but like so many, we never stop to give it much real thought. Many of us need to take a good hard look at ourselves and our relationships with fellow believers and determine how we can begin to seriously put these instructions into practice. When we do start having a Biblical love for each other, there is a deep satisfaction and joy as we interact with our fellow believers.

There are any number of reasons why it might be difficult for some to show Christian love to a fellow believer. Many might hesitate to show Biblical love to others because they fear rejection. Hopefully, in the body of Christ this won't happen, but it might. If our expression of love is rejected, we must keep on loving anyway. God will bless our obedience.

Some who have not come from a caring home or church background just don't know how to show love, and they may feel unable to love. Others who are hanging on to anger and resentment will not be capable of love until they get rid of their anger. Others spend so much time thinking about themselves that they never stop to think about others. Whatever the case, to enjoy fellowshiping with fellow Christians we will have to take the steps necessary to begin showing love to fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. It may be that seeking the counsel of a more mature fellow Christian may be helpful in taking this very important step.

**Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.** 1 Peter 1:22 (NIV)

As we put the commands to love one another into practice, our ability to love begins to deepen. We "*love one another deeply from the heart*". This takes love to a deeper level than simply meeting the needs of fellow believers.

Loving other Christians is a broad command. The following "one-another" commands, all, in one way or another, help us understand how to put the commands to love one-another into practice.

## **2. Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us...** Romans 15:7a (NASB)

In a local church there may be a tremendous variety of individuals who attend. There may be individuals from different races, different "social classes", some who are financially well off, and some who have very little. People have different personalities, different levels of growth in their Christian life, and a multitude of other differences; yet, we are all to "*love each other deeply from the heart*" and we are to be "*devoted to one another in brotherly love*". This is a beautiful thing and, again, this is the heart of Biblical unity and fellowship.

With all of our differences, we are instructed to accept each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord. It is natural to be drawn to some people more than to others. This is as true with Christians as it is with others. However, while we may have our close friends, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we deliberately determine that we will accept into our fellowship all genuine believers, even those we may have trouble "liking".

## **3. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.** Ephesians 4:32 (NASB)

**Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

Being kind is not hard to understand. It simply means to be kind. Kindness and gentleness are an evidence of the Spirit of God at work in us and through us. This may seem so basic that it hardly

needs to be said; yet, most of us do not really stop to think of how we can be kind to each other.

Our fellow believers probably include members of our own human families, such as our husband or wife, our children, and our parents. We are not only to be kind to fellow believers in the church, we are also to be kind to members of our own families – even when they irritate us at times.

We are also told to be tender-hearted. Being kind to one another is an action, while being tender-hearted is an emotion accompanied by action. This may be more difficult for some of us. If so, we need to recognize our responsibility, commit ourselves to obedience, and ask God for the capacity to be tender-hearted loving people.

Being compassionate to one another is closely tied to the instructions to be kind. Compassion takes kindness to a deeper level. We care about each other and when others are hurting, we hurt. When they have needs, we follow Biblical principles and seek to meet those needs.

If we harbor on-going resentment or dislike for a fellow believer, it is sin and must be recognized as such and confessed. We must also forgive each other – which will be dealt with in more depth later in this chapter.

#### **4. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5 (ESV)**

**Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; Philippians 2:3 (NASB)**

**Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; Romans 12:10 (NASB)**

In the Christian life there is no room for feeling superior or better than any other member of the body of Christ. In fact, we are to consider others better than ourselves, (Philippians 2:1-11) and we should care for the needs of others in the same way we care for our own needs. We are to give preference to one another.

Look at these verses again. “*God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*” Pride in ourselves, in who we are or what we have done, has no place in the life of a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone who is committed to being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ must actively seek to be a humble person. Proud believers must confess their pride as a sin, and recognize that they are simply a sinner saved by grace. Any gifts or abilities or possessions we have are given to us by God.

A proud Christian will find it hard, if not impossible, to live in harmony with fellow believers and will certainly be unable to follow instructions such as, “*give preference to one another in honor*”, or “*submit to one another*”, or to “*wash one another’s feet*”. We must not let pride interfere with our being a productive member of the fellowship of believers. All of us need to bury our pride and commit ourselves to serving the Lord Jesus Christ and His followers – our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

In John 13, while the disciples were arguing about who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God, Jesus wrapped a towel around Himself, took a basin of water and began washing the disciples' feet. Washing someone's feet was a humble thing to do. Yet, the sovereign God, the Creator of the universe, washed the disciples' feet and set an example for us to follow.

**5. ...that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.** 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 (ESV)

**Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**  
Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

The body of Christ is one body and all genuine believers are members of that body. In a local church, when one member hurts, the whole body feels his/her pain and they intercede before the Lord on behalf of the one suffering. They readily and cheerfully do all they can to alleviate his suffering.

On the other side, we rejoice when a member is honored or blessed. This must be genuine rejoicing. *There is no room for pride in the person who has been honored, and there is no room for jealousy or envy in our relationships with other members of the body who have been honored.*

All children will go through some difficult times and will experience some emotionally down times. Godly parents will keep in close touch with their children. When the children have these down times, parents, by their love and support, can be a big help by helping to carry the burden and helping to restore the child's peace and joy.

**6. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.** Ephesians 5:21 (NIV)

Within the body of Christ there is a mutual submissiveness. To submit to a fellow believer means that we are willing to serve, to respect, and to honor fellow Christians, putting their interests above our own. We are willing to be taught by them and we are open to their admonition and to their counsel. Even the most educated and "mature" Christian must be willing to serve and to learn from those less advanced in their faith.

If we submit to one another, we do not become angry and defensive when someone disagrees with us. Instead, we seek to find what the Word of God teaches about a certain issue. What a joy this kind of harmony can be, when we all choose to be obedient to God and we serve and learn from each other.

It is interesting to note that submitting to each other is connected to having reverence for Christ. If we desire to glorify and revere the Lord Jesus Christ, we will submit to our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Parents submit to their children when they show Biblical love and put the needs of their children ahead of their own needs or desires.

**7. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.** 1 Peter 4:9 (ESV)

Believers are to be kind and loving to all believers, even to strangers who cross our paths. At times we share our time, our homes, our possessions, and our lives with our fellow believers. What's more, we are to do it without grumbling. In other words, we cheerfully show practical love to our fellow believers and even with those we do not know well.

**8. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.**

Romans 16:16 (NASB)

**Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.** 1 Thessalonians 5:26 (NIV)

The instruction to "*Greet one another with a holy kiss*" is repeated five times in Scripture. Apparently, it must be important. The emphasis is on greeting one another, not on the kissing. Obviously, cultures vary in the way they greet each other. In our culture these instructions might read, "greet one other with a warm hearty handshake". From time to time our greeting may also include a warm hug. This is certainly within the scope of a Biblical greeting.

When we take time to greet our brothers and sisters in the Lord, we are letting them know that we value their presence. A warm greeting communicates acceptance and appreciation. A Biblical greeting carries with it the idea of welcoming those we are greeting. We are glad to be with them. A warm greeting can be very meaningful and, at times, even healing.

Even if the person we are greeting is not an acquaintance, we can still be sincere in our greeting. If we are at odds with someone, then get it straightened out to the point where we can sincerely greet them.

Churches clearly have different personalities and degrees of friendliness. In past years, my wife and I remember visiting in two churches where people seemed to go out of their way to *avoid* any kind of a greeting. They appeared to be cold and indifferent. When Linda and I left, neither of us had any desire to visit or attend either of those churches again.

If we want to attract others to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to our church, we must go out of our way to warmly and sincerely greet them. If we want to communicate Christian love, the least we can do is give a warm greeting.

Warm greetings may very well be one of the key reasons an individual chooses to come and visit our church again.

**9. When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you." John 13:12-15 (ESV)**

Jesus set an example of humble love and service when He washed the feet of the proud disciples.

Jesus instructs us to follow His example and to “wash one another’s feet”. Obviously, we do not go around washing each other’s feet, but we are to serve one another. Washing feet was the job of a servant. We, too, must have the heart of a servant and humbly serve fellow members of the body of Christ.

### *Group B – Building Up Fellow Believers*

Another foundation in God’s plan for the church is that we are to actively seek to build up our fellow believers. Spiritual growth takes determination and discipline. All of us find ourselves slipping from time to time and falling short of the walk with God that we desire. One of God’s remedies for this is that we are to encourage and build each other up. We are to “*spur one another on*”. We need each other. We need to seek to encourage and build each other up.

This, I believe, is one of the most neglected ministries of the church. We expect the pastor to teach and encourage believers, but it seems as if only occasionally do laymen seek to build up fellow believers. That laymen should seek to build up fellow believers is simply not being taught or emphasized in many churches.

The following verses are instructions for ordinary Christians, not just pastors:

**Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.**

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

**So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.**

Romans 14:19 (NASB)

**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs,** Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

**We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.**

Romans 15:1-2 (ESV)

Every one of us has the responsibility to help build up fellow Christians. We are even to build up those fellow believers that we have trouble liking.

We must not take these instructions lightly. Building up fellow believers is fundamental to God’s program for the church; yet, many of us hardly give a second thought as to how we can put it into practice.

There are several “one another” commands that fit together under the general heading of building up one another.

A major responsibility of parents is to build up and encourage their children in their walk with the Lord. All of the God-given instructions for teaching and training our children are part of our building them up and encouraging them to know and to walk with the Lord.



**2. But encourage one another day after day,** Hebrews 3:13 (NASB)

**But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.** Hebrews 3:13 (NIV)

**Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.**

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

**Therefore encourage one another with these words.** 1 Thessalonians 4:18 (ESV)

**And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.** Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

We all need to be encouraged – day after day.

There is no question that our children need to be encouraged and to be built up. And this may need to be done daily. A child who is daily encouraged to serve the Lord will very likely choose to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus knew we needed encouragement, and before He died, He promised His disciples to send another Helper after He (Jesus) returned to heaven.

**And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.** John 14:16-17 (ESV)

God gives us His own Spirit to help us to be what He wants us to be and to do what He wants us to do. In this passage and also in John 16, the Spirit is identified as our Helper, or One who is called along beside us to help us. The Spirit is also in us. He is both beside us and He is in us, enabling us to live as God wants us to live.

In this passage the Spirit of God is identified as a helper. The Greek word used in these passages for the Spirit or helper is “paraklete”, or one called alongside to help. It is interesting to note that in the verses that instruct us to encourage each other, the word “encourage” has the same Greek root as the word “helper” or “paraklete” which describes the Holy Spirit. *When a brother or sister needs help, we, along with the Holy Spirit, come along side that person to give help and encouragement.*

We, as Christians, know that we have the presence of the Spirit in our lives; yet, we also need each other to help and encourage us. *We, as Christians, are to come along beside our fellow Christians and help and encourage them, just as the Holy Spirit comes along beside us and helps us.*

It is good to have the Spirit of God as our Helper and enabler. Yet, God also knew that we needed other *people* to come along beside us and to encourage us. What a blessing when we know that our fellow believers care enough to give encouragement when it is needed.

**3. Serve one another in love.** Galatians 5:13b (NIV)

**As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:** 1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)

Believers are to be willing to serve each other. This can be done in many different ways. We need to learn to look for ways to serve our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

A more specific way of serving is to use our spiritual gift to serve each other. Every genuine believer has been given a spiritual gift for the "common good" of the church.

#### 4. Teach one another.

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, ...** Colossians 3:16a (NIV)

**I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.** Romans 15:14 (ESV)

*All Christians, whether we are "teachers" or not, are to be involved in teaching each other.* God certainly calls and gifts some to be teachers of His Word. That is one of the spiritual gifts. Teachers are extremely important in the church. However, that is *not* what these verses are referring to. All believers, no matter what their spiritual gift is, are to teach fellow believers.

We can teach by the way we live. We can teach by being in tune with each other and knowing the problems each other faces and, when appropriate, we give advice and counsel. We remind each other of Biblical truths that relate to situations we face in life. If we ask for direction from the Spirit and then look for ways to build up and teach each other, He will open the right doors for us to teach fellow believers.

Teaching one another comes as we "*let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*". Those who are not regularly absorbing the Word of God are not really in a position to teach others. This is another motivation to regularly read and study the Word.

#### 5. Admonish one another.

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another...** Colossians 3:16a (KJV)

Admonish is a somewhat stronger word than teach. To admonish is to warn about wrong in the life of a fellow believer. If we love one another and seek to build each other up, we will care enough to warn about the wrong in their life.

**And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.**  
Romans 15:14 (NASB)

**Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.** Galatians 6:1 (NIV)

Again, admonishing comes from the heart of one in whom “*the Word of God dwells richly*”. If one’s own heart is not in tune with the Lord’s heart, then we have no business trying to correct someone else’s wrong.

We need to be certain that what we are admonishing in the life of a brother is wrong by Biblical standards. Admonishing is to be done with wisdom. When the Word dwells in us richly, we will have the Biblical understanding and wisdom to do it right.

**We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,** 1 Thessalonians 5:12 (ESV)

We are not to be angry or resent someone who admonishes us. Even if a part of us gets a little angry or resentful, we still listen in love and genuinely evaluate and apply what is said.

**6. Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.** Luke 17:3 (NASB)

**Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.** 1 Timothy 5:20 (NASB)

The two words admonish and rebuke are related, but not the same. To rebuke or to reprove is more intense than admonish. Admonish is more gentle. When someone is admonished to correct a wrong behavior but does not respond, the next step may be a rebuke.

Without doubt, the hardest “one-another” to carry out is to rebuke a brother or sister in the Lord because of sin in his/her life. This is seldom done. We do not want to be that involved in someone else’s life. We are afraid that the other person will be angry and will reject what we have to say. It is much easier to simply ignore the sin in the life of a fellow believer. We prefer to stay out of it and believe that it is none of our business.

Yet, according to God, it is our business. In spite of our reluctance, God’s instructions have not changed. When a brother sins and refuses to repent, we are to admonish and/or rebuke him.

**Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.** Galatians 6:1 (NASB)

*The whole purpose of a rebuke or admonition is to bring about the restoration of the sinning brother.* With repentance comes forgiveness and restoration. Again, there must be no desire on our part to humiliate or put down the sinning brother. Let God do the judging; we are to focus on restoration.

Carefully read the verse above again. The rebuke is to be done by someone who is “spiritual”. The rebuking must be done by someone who is walking with the Lord and who has the right motives for

the rebuking or admonishing. However, this must not be used as a cop out. We cannot say, “I am not spiritual enough, so let the preacher or someone else do it”.

We are instructed to deal with the offending brother gently. It is to be done in love, not anger. It would be best not to do it at all than to deal with the sinning brother in anger. Actions taken in anger seldom have beneficial results.

In the following verses we are told to get the plank out of our own eye before removing the sawdust from someone else’s eye. Notice that it does not say to forget the whole process if you have a plank in your eye. We are told to get the plank out of our own eye and then go to the brother with the sawdust in his eye. In other words, the plank is not an excuse for inaction. Rather it is cause for us to deal with both our own sin and the sin of a brother.

**Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. Matthew 7:3-5 (ESV)**

## **7. Spur one another on.**

**Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.**

Hebrews 10:24 (NIV)

Here we are instructed to “*spur one another on to love and good deeds*”. Part of the fellowship among believers is to do all we can to help them grow and develop, even to the point of “spurring them on”.

I suspect that this could be done in many different ways; however, any action taken must be done in gentleness, love, and concern for the brothers and sisters involved.

**8. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16 (NIV)**

When there is a sin in one’s life that he/she is having a difficult time getting victory over, then one more step that he can take is to admit that sin, first to God, and then to a fellow Christian or a group of Christians. The believers to whom one confesses need to be spiritually mature individuals who can be trusted not to gossip or to break confidences.

When this step is taken, those to whom the sin is confessed should immediately pray. Then there must be on-going prayer for the individual over the next days, weeks, months, and even years. Again, remember, “*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective*”.

## **9. Pray for one another. James 5:16 (NASB)**

**And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in**

**mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.** Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

**Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,** Romans 15:30 (NASB)

In the Word of God there are many passages that, in one way or another, teach us to pray for one another. Prayer is a powerful tool to use in our battle against sin. We need to regularly pray for ourselves and we need to regularly ask others to pray for us. Let fellow Christians share in your struggle against sin by praying with you. Remember, *“the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective”*.

It would be well for all of us to take a look at the apostle Paul’s prayers for fellow believers, and then begin incorporating those prayers into our own prayers for our fellow believers. This would ensure that we are praying in the will of God, and then we can expect positive answers to our prayers for each other. There are many of Paul’s prayers recorded in the Bible. Some key ones are Ephesians 3:14-19, Philippians 1:9-11, Ephesians 1:16-19, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12, Romans 15:5-6, and Colossians 1:9-12.

A while back I asked a Bible study group for practical suggestions for building up fellow believers.

Here are some of their suggestions:

- ...Spend time in prayer with fellow believers.
- ...Share things you have learned from the Word of God.
- ...Invite fellow believers to your home.
- ...Help each other in times of trouble.
- ...Say something pleasant to a fellow believer.
- ...Send an encouraging card to fellow believers.
- ...Remember important days in the lives of fellow believers.
- ...Smile!!!

Now you think of ways that you can build up, encourage, or teach fellow Christians.

### *Group C – Living in Harmony (Unity) with One Another*

**Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.** 1 Peter 3:8 (NIV)

**... be at peace with one another.** Mark 9:50b (ESV)

As all the members of an orchestra playing a symphony harmonize and produce beautiful music together, so it is with God’s people. When members of a solid Bible believing church are in harmony with each other, they exalt the Lord Jesus Christ; they fellowship with God and with each other; and the world is drawn to the Lord as a result of the testimony of the church. In John 17:20-26 we learn that the unity or the oneness of the church is a foundation of evangelism.

Unity is not just a nice concept, but rather an active commitment for every Christian who wants to

exalt and please our Lord Jesus Christ. When God's people are not one, the heart of God is grieved and we do not draw the world to our Lord.

**2. ...forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** Colossians 3:13b (NIV)

**Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** Ephesians 4:31-32 (NIV)

Every genuine Christian has been forgiven by God of a lifetime of sin. Without God's forgiveness we would be condemned by God to an everlasting separation from God. Yet, God, in His love, His grace, and His mercy has forgiven us. We stand before God justified and righteous. That is a precious truth.

In the same way God forgives us, we are instructed to forgive each other. There are times when wounds inflicted by fellow Christians can hurt deeply. Even though this is true, none of us have come close to suffering like our Lord suffered on the cross. Yet, while on the cross Jesus said, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"*. (Luke 23:34) This is the example we are to follow.

We must forgive each other. To refuse to forgive is disobedience and rebellion.

**Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.... ...For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.** Matthew 6:12,13-15 (NIV)

**Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.** Luke 11:4 (NIV)

When Jesus taught His followers to pray (Matthew 6), He instructed them to ask God for forgiveness based on the fact that we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. This is not talking about salvation, but rather it is speaking of God's on-going forgiveness of His children that maintains our fellowship and walk with Him. If we do not forgive those who sin against us, we cannot expect parental forgiveness from God and we cannot expect to enjoy fellowship with Him.

A practical definition of forgiving is -- *getting rid of our anger and making the choice not to hold on to a grudge or to seek revenge.*

The only real reason for not forgiving and for holding on to anger is wanting to get revenge or wanting to get even.

**Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.** Psalm 37:8-9 (KJV)

The Bible clearly states that revenge belongs to God.

**Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay, says the Lord.'** Romans 12:19 (NIV)

Forgiving is not hard if you will make the decision to let God handle the revenge. Tell God that you are putting the whole thing in His hands and you are going to back off and let Him handle it. God is a just God and He will avenge wrong. His judgment is always right. You need to put your trust in God and leave it there.

Forgiveness begins with a mental choice. We may not feel like forgiving, but we choose to forgive anyway because we choose to obey God. Not forgiving and holding on to anger will only lead to more spiritual defeat. Be obedient to God and choose to forgive, even if you don't really feel like it.

After you choose to forgive a person, reaffirm that decision over the next few days, weeks, months, or even years if necessary. At first you may not feel any different; however, once you make the mental choice to forgive, your feelings will eventually come into line with the mental choice you have made. If you never begin by making the mental choice to forgive, you will never be at peace with God or with yourself and you will continue in your anger and spiritual defeat.

Not forgiving or holding on to anger can also lead to all kinds of problems such as depression, stress, bitterness, strained relationships, physical problems, etc., etc., etc. Forgiving is a big step toward spiritual growth, personal freedom, peace, good mental health and even good physical health.

Forgiving someone does not necessarily mean that you will like or respect the person you are forgiving. And contrary to the popular expression "forgive and forget", you will probably not forget what happened. However, while you will probably not totally forget about it, after you have made the choice to forgive, you do not have to keep on thinking about it all the time.

It is a little amazing how much anger, bitterness and unforgiveness can build up in families. Husbands, wives, children, and youth can let anger and unforgiveness build up over months and even years of time. This is a miserable, unhappy, and spiritually unproductive way to live. Christian families must choose to let God handle the revenge, and then they must choose to forgive.

**3. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.** Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

Christians are far from perfect. Sometimes we get on each other's nerves. At times we simply have to "bear with each other", or put up with each other. There may be times we need to peacefully discuss problems we have with each other. Through it all, we still commit ourselves to living in harmony with each other. In the end, God is honored and the world notices the testimony of God's people. We also live with a clear conscience about how we treat and talk about fellow believers.

It is no secret that children can get on our nerves and, at times, they can irritate us. However, God has given us children and, at times, we need to "bear with them", and to keep on faithfully loving and teaching them.

**4. So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, ...** Romans 14:12-13a (NASB)

**Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.** James 5:9 (NASB)

Christians are not to judge each other with the intent of putting them down. When we do that, we are inviting the judgment of God against ourselves. All Christians will have to give an account of themselves to God. If someone has sinned against you, they will have to give an account to God for it. God will judge and avenge the sin. That is not our job. In obedience to God, we let Him do the judging. If we try to take God's place and judge a person ourselves, we will do nothing but grieve God and hurt people, and we also invite God's judgment on ourselves.

**5. Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.** James 4:11 (ESV)

**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs,** Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

The Word of God is crystal clear. We are to control our tongues. Many Scriptures teach this. We must not speak evil against a fellow believer, but rather say only what will build him up. We must forgive and move on.

Here again, we are instructed to control our tongues. Christians are not to run each other down. If we say something about someone, it must be for the purpose of building him/her up. We must not say things that will discredit or tear him down – even if we believe that it is true.

If we know there is sin in another person's life, then there is a Biblical pattern for dealing with it. Talking negatively about him/her to other members of the body of Christ is not part of that God-given pattern.

**6. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,** Colossians 3:9 (NKJV)

Christians must not lie to each other. This seems obvious. Lying is a direct violation of one of the ten commandments. However, many Christians seem to feel it is not very wrong to tell a "little white lie". For some, lying seems to be a way of life. They say whatever seems beneficial to them at the moment, whether it is fully true or not. Habitual lying or occasionally telling a "little white lie" is sin, and it needs to be repented of. Lying is always wrong and will always have negative consequences. We cannot lie and expect good to come from it. If we claim to fellowship with God, we cannot lie to His people or to anyone else.

This is one lesson that children need to be taught. Some seem to have no reservations about lying. Parents must deal with this, or the child may have numerous issues as a result of their habitual lying.



**7. If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.** Galatians 5:15 (NIV)

*“Biting and devouring each other”* is serious. When members of the body of Christ tear each other down and even “destroy” each other, it will severely damage the testimony of the church and may cause others to stumble in their walk with the Lord. When we engage in this kind of behavior, we invite the discipline and judgment of God. We also lose eternal rewards, which will affect us for eternity.

If *“biting and devouring each other”* is taking place in a church and those responsible refuse to stop, according to the Word of God they should be expelled from the church and fellowship with them withdrawn.

I am personally very familiar with a church that had a “church fight” that split the church. That happened many years ago. Today that church has gone out of existence, and I believe that it can be traced back to that church fight.

My wife and I are acquainted with a mother who continually screamed at her three children. I can remember one time we stayed in their home overnight and by the time we left the next morning I was such a nervous wreck that I decided that we would never again visit in their home.

**8. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.** Galatians 5:25-26 (NIV)

As we have already seen, all Christians have the Spirit of God dwelling in them and He is also beside them. The Spirit of God, through the Word of God, instructs us to be at peace with one another. If we engage in disputes, seek to promote our own interests, irritate and get jealous of each other, we are not being led by the Spirit of God, no matter how pious we may appear. Spirit-filled Christians are at peace with each other.

**9. ...be at peace with one another.”** Mark 9:50b (ESV)

Closely tied to the command to be in harmony with one-another is this command to be at peace with one-another. This verse is not hard to understand. It simply means what it says -- be at peace with one another.

This sounds simple and it is; yet, it is profound. If the will and purposes of God are to be done, we must be at peace with each other. Infighting and divisions hinder the work of the church. Instead, we must love and build one another up, not tear each other down.

A peaceful home is a huge blessing. There are few things in life that are more enjoyable than a home that serves the Lord and where members are at peace with one-another.

## *Chapter Six*

# **Biblical Instructions Relating to Marriage and Healthy Families**

Our families are precious to us. The only thing that should have a greater priority than our families is our commitment to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. A family that is genuinely committed to following Biblical teaching relating to families will be a strong healthy family.

The purpose of this chapter is to go over God-given Biblical instructions for healthy marriages and families. Biblically healthy marriages and families are a tremendous blessing to the children and to the adults in those families.

Putting Biblical fundamentals into practice can save a tremendous amount of unhappiness, pain, and grief. And, as we all know, troubled marriages and homes can result in the children being troubled and having problems that sometimes scar them for life.

There have been hundreds of “Christian” books written on the family – some are good and quite helpful, and there are others that are not really very Biblical. Sometimes these books can be helpful; however, if the fundamentals that will be covered in this chapter are ignored or rejected, all the books in the world will not do us much good.

We must accept and follow what the Word of God teaches rather than what society teaches. God’s instructions on marriage and families and what the world believes and teaches are very different and often directly opposed to each other. Following secular society’s beliefs and practices in a family may lead to the children rejecting the Lord. Following the Lord’s teaching will encourage children to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and then to spend eternity with Him.

**Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

Developing spiritually healthy families is not easy. It takes dedication, commitment, and faithfulness. Satan will oppose us every step of the way. However, with the help of the Spirit of God, we can put these Biblical fundamentals into practice and then enjoy the results for eternity.

## **Biblical Foundations Relating to Families**

God established the family in the very beginning (Genesis 1 and 2) when He created the heavens, the earth, and man.

**Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, ...** Genesis 1:26-28a (NASB)

God created us, male and female, in His own image. Creating us as male and female is not just an afterthought; it is a fundamental part of God’s plan.

God's first instructions to mankind and to the first married couple in Genesis 1 were to be "*fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*". In the second chapter of the Bible, God established marriage as the institution through which these instructions were to be fulfilled.

**Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.** Genesis 2:24 (ESV)

When the Bible states that they "*shall become one flesh*", it is speaking of the sexual union between a husband and wife. The sexual part of men and women is God's design and it is not wrong or dirty. God put only one restriction on sexual activity -- that it be within marriage.

Marriage and family were the first human institution God established. He established the family before He established human government, the nation of Israel, the Mosaic law, and long before He established the church.

It is clear that God Himself joins a man and wife together in marriage, and that marriage is not to be dissolved by man.

**But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.** Mark 10:6-9 (ESV)

When a couple marries, they are to leave their father and mother and start a new home together. Obviously, this does not mean that they are to have nothing more to do with their parents. However, it does mean that the couple is to establish their own independent home, and their parents should not be a hindering or negative influence on their marriage.

This teaching on marriage is confirmed in many other places in the Word of God. In the following passage we see that marriage is a picture of the love of Christ for His church.

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.** Ephesians 5:31-33 (NIV)

## *Five Biblical Reasons for Marriage*

### *1. Companionship*

**Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."** Genesis 2:18 (NASB)

**An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.** Proverbs 31:10 (ESV)

## *2. To Have Children*

**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth,"** Genesis 1:27-28 (NASB)

## *3. To Prevent Immorality*

**But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.** 1 Corinthians 7:2 (ESV)

## *4. For Enjoyment*

In a marriage, a man and his wife become “one flesh”. When the Bible uses the term “one flesh”, it is referring to the sexual union of a husband and wife.

**Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled;** Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV)

**...each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other...**  
1 Corinthians 7:2b-5 (NIV)

**May your fountain be blessed,  
and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.**

**A loving doe, a graceful deer--  
may her breasts satisfy you always,  
may you ever be captivated by her love.**

**Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress?**

**Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?** Proverbs 5:18-20 (NIV)

**How handsome you are, my lover!**

**Oh, how charming!**

**And our bed is verdant (luxurious).** Song of Solomon 1:16 (NIV)

These and other verses show that the intimate sexual love between a husband and wife is a God-given, God-blessed pleasure.

## *5. To Be a Picture of God's Love for the Church*

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.** Ephesians 5:31-33 (NIV)

## *The Place of Singles in God's Program*

The Word of God clearly teaches the value of marriage and the family. However, this does not downplay the role of unmarried individuals. Being a single believer is not a second-rate position in God's program. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 7 which is a chapter on marriage, being single is an elevated preferable position. The apostle Paul himself was a single man.

**I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am.** 1 Corinthians 7:7-8 (ESV)

A single person is in a position to serve the Lord in a more focused way since they do not have to be concerned with pleasing a husband or wife, or with the many responsibilities of being a parent. They can dedicate their time to serving the Lord in a way that would not be possible as a married person with a family.

Of course, being single does not mean that one is not part of a family. Single individuals often have a very positive influence on many of their family members. Singles can help and bless a family in many ways. There have been many single individuals who have led family members to know the Lord and have played a major role in helping them to grow in their walk with God.

Personally, I (Phil Benedict) have a sister who never married. She chooses to be unmarried and devote herself entirely to serving the Lord as a missionary in Africa. God used her in remarkable ways. Much of this would not have taken place had she been married with a family to care for.

*When believers marry, they are to marry only fellow believers.*

God clearly instructs us to not be "yoked together" with unbelievers. One very legitimate application of this command is marriage. For a believer to marry an unbeliever is a direct violation of this command. There is no closer human bond than marriage, and a married couple are certainly "yoked together". Being "yoked together" with a godly mate can be a huge blessing and an honor to God. Being bound together with an unsaved person is often a source of heartache and grief.

**Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."** 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 (NIV)

The following verse teaches that widows are free to remarry, but only to a believer. While this instruction is given to widows, it certainly also applies to other Christians as well.

**A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.** 1 Corinthians 7:39 (NIV)

Not every marriage of a saved and unsaved person is a contentious or unhappy marriage. And from

time to time, we hear about a marriage of a saved and unsaved person in which the unsaved mate becomes a believer. When this happens, it is a demonstration of God's grace and it is a cause for rejoicing. However, the possibility of this happening must not be used as a rationalization or an excuse for disobeying God's command and marrying an unbeliever. We can never choose to disobey God and then expect good to come from it.

When a believer is considering marriage to an unsaved person, it can seem so right and the unsaved person can seem like such a perfect match. However, the bliss of courtship can easily turn to pain and heartache as they begin their life together as one.

### *The Role of the Husband in God's Plan*

The Biblical instructions to husbands are not long or hard to understand. Following are God-given responsibilities for the husband:

#### *1. God instructs husbands to love their wives.*

**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.** Ephesians 5:25-28 (NIV)

Husbands are to love their wife in the same way that Christ loved the church. Jesus loved us, the church, enough that He was willing to suffer and die for us. We husbands are to love our wife in the same way.

Remember, Biblical love is not based on emotion. Biblical love is obedient sacrificial giving of ourselves to meet the needs of another person. Certainly, we husbands can and should feel an emotional love for our wives, but emotion is not the foundation of Biblical love.

The following verses describe Biblical love. This is how we, as husbands, are to love our wife.

**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.** 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (NIV)

**Many waters cannot quench love;  
rivers cannot wash it away.  
If one were to give  
all the wealth of his house for love,  
it would be utterly scorned.** Song of Solomon 8:7 (NIV)

The responsibility of a husband to his wife is further developed in the following verse. Notice that we are to be understanding and show her honor.

**Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.** 1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)

Husbands are to be understanding and to honor their wife. We treat our wife as a fellow believer and heir of eternal life. This is a serious command. If we do not love and honor our wife with a Biblical love, our prayers will be hindered. If we, as husbands, expect God to answer our prayers, we need to love and treat our wife as God instructs us to treat them.

## *2. The husband is to be the head of the home.*

**But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.** 1 Corinthians 11:3 (NASB)

**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church:** Ephesians 5:22-23a (KJV)

God is a God of order. Even within the Trinity there is order. Jesus submits to the will of the Father. The Holy Spirit glorifies and draws people to Jesus. Jesus is the head of every man, and a husband is the head of his home, which includes his wife.

Husbands are not to exercise their leadership in an abusive or harsh way.

**Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.** Colossians 3:19 (NIV)

Jesus died to make His people holy. He died so that we can be clean, holy, radiant, and without stain or wrinkle. This is also how husbands are to lead and to love their wife. We are to seek to present our wife to the Lord a clean, holy, and radiant person, without stain or wrinkle.

**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.** Ephesians 5:25-28 (NIV)

The leadership of the husband does not give him the right to lead her contrary to the principles that God has set forth in His Word. The wife's submission to her husband does not obligate her to violate or disobey any teaching of the Word of God.

## *3. The husband is to be the spiritual leader of his family.*

Going right along with the husband being the head of the home is the husband's responsibility to be the spiritual leader of the home.

As we have already seen, a husband's love for his wife includes giving himself to the spiritual maturity of his wife.

**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.** Ephesians 5:25-28 (NIV)

Fathers have also been given the responsibility of teaching and training their children to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.** Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)

**Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding, for I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction.** Proverbs 4:1-2 (NASB)

**Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, ...** Hebrews 12:9a (NASB)

Here, fathers are clearly instructed to bring their children up to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. This has never been easy and is certainly not easy in our society; however, this is a clear Biblical responsibility of husbands and fathers.

A husband must be an example of godliness to his wife and to their children. What we say doesn't amount to much if we ourselves are not committed to putting it into practice.

The husband's responsibility to love his wife and to be the spiritual leader in his home is the number one and most important responsibility of his life. Every other responsibility pales in comparison to these God-given responsibilities. How a husband and father respond to these responsibilities has eternal results.

To be the leader that God has designed him to be, a husband must spend substantial time interacting with and teaching his family. He must be fully aware of and close to what goes on in the home. It is extremely difficult for an absentee father to be a good spiritual leader at home.

*4. A final responsibility of the husband is to provide for his family.*

**But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.** 1 Timothy 5:8 (NASB)

God expects the husband to be the provider for his family. He is the one who must work and provide for the necessities such as home, food, clothing, transportation, etc. In our modern society, generally both husband and wife work to provide a higher standard of living. While there is no Scripture that says "wives shall not have a job", many homes would be better off if they would choose a lower standard of living, put trust in the Lord, and let the husband be the provider with the wife staying at home, giving love and nurturing attention to her husband, her children, and to the home.



## *The Role of the Wife in God's Plan*

**The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him".** Genesis 2:18 (NIV)

**He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.**

Proverbs 18:22 (NASB)

**An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.** Proverbs 31:10 (ESV)

**An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.** Proverbs 12:4 (NKJV)

**Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.**

Proverbs 25:24 (NIV)

Except for the Lord, my salvation, and perhaps my parents, my wife has been by far the greatest blessing in my life. We began dating while we were in our church youth group together about 57 years ago (as of January 2021). One day when she was sixteen years old, I asked her if she would sit by me in church the next Sunday. She agreed, and we have been sitting together ever since. She has been my constant companion and friend. She has stood by my side in severe sickness, in other hard times, and in good times. She has repeatedly encouraged me to continue in ministries that God has given us, even when there didn't seem to be much fruit and I would become discouraged and feel like a failure. She joined in and became a key part of the ministries that God has given us. She was a full-time mother to our four children, who all still love her and who are all actively serving the Lord. She has been my friend, my companion, my encourager, my example, my partner in ministry, and my lover. She has been loyal and faithful. She is my wife. Without her, I would have failed many times over.

The value of a godly wife can hardly be overstated. God provided for this close loving relationship, and when a couple submits to the God-given instructions relating to marriage, it is the best and the most productive of all possible human relationships.

The Word of God gives a number of instructions to wives.

### *1. Wives are to be godly women.*

**Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.**

Titus 2:3-5 (NIV)

**Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.**

Proverbs 31:30 (NIV)

**Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing**

**of gold jewelry and fine clothes. 4 Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.** 1 Peter 3:3-4 (NIV)

Wives, as well as their husbands, are to be godly individuals. They are to be reverent, self-controlled, pure, and kind. They are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, trustworthy, and without unhealthy addictions.

Wives, like the rest of us, have a sinful nature. They need to be committed to the Lord and encouraged to not let that sinful nature control them. They must be faithful and be committed to serving the Lord.

It glorifies God and it is a good testimony when both husband and wife are committed to being godly people. However, when a husband is not walking with the Lord, as is too often the case, the wife is still to be a godly woman, and God will richly reward her for her faithfulness.

This is a high calling for a wife. On a human level sometimes, it seems impossible. However, a woman who lives a Spirit-filled life can fulfill God-given instructions for being a godly woman.

## *2. Wives are to love their husbands and children.*

**Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, ...** Titus 2:4 (NIV)

It may seem a little odd that wives need to be taught to love their husbands. The truth is that many of us husbands are not very easy to love. Wives sometimes need encouragement and discipline to love us.

Again, we need to remind ourselves that Biblical love is not based on emotion. Biblical love is obedient sacrificial giving of ourselves to meet the needs of another person. Certainly, we can and often do feel emotion, but emotion is not the basis of Biblical love. I am personally glad that my wife feels an emotional love for me, but her love is based on a commitment to the Lord and His Word, and, as a result, her love for me has lasted for over fifty-two years.

Wives are also instructed to respect their husbands.

**However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.** Ephesians 5:33 (ESV)

In this verse, wives are instructed to respect their husbands. Husbands need the respect of their wives. In a marriage relationship the wife must not put her husband down, either to him personally or to others. It deepens the relationship between a husband and wife when respect is shown. Husbands do not always act in a respectable way. However, while a wife may not respect her husband's attitudes or actions, she can still show him respect personally. At times this can be difficult, but with the help of the Spirit of God, it can be done. God will honor and reward this kind of obedience and a husband may be built up and encouraged by his wife.

### 3. *Wives are to submit to their husbands.*

God is a God of order. Even within the Trinity there is order. Jesus submits to the will of the Father and the Holy Spirit draws people to Christ. This order is not an indication of value, worth, ability, or importance. In the Trinity they are all one and they are all equal, but there is an order of submission.

In the same way that there is order in the Trinity, God has established an order in the human family. The following Scriptures make it clear that in God's design of order, wives are to submit to the leadership of their husband who is to be the head of their home.

**Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.**

Ephesians 5:22-24 (ESV)

**But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.** 1 Corinthians 11:3 (NASB)

**Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.** Colossians 3:18 (NASB)

The human family begins with Christ as the head. He is the head of the husband who is the head of the home. The wife submits to her husband, and the children are to submit to both their father and to their mother. Again, this is not an indication of value or importance. Before God, we are all equal in value and in importance.

When a wife is a believer and her husband is not, God still instructs the wife to submit to her husband. Her submission and the purity and reverence of her life may influence the unbelieving husband to become a believer. The inner beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit is of great value in God's eyes and He will bless this kind of obedience.

**Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.** 1 Peter 3:1-4 (NIV)

Having a gentle and quiet spirit does not mean being weak and mousey. Wives with a lot of drive and energy can be gentle and quiet. The Proverbs 31 lady was everything that we have talked about in this study. She was a wife and mother and she was also a strong, ambitious, and successful business person. But her first priority was her family.

Being in submission to one's husband does not override all the God-given instructions in the Word of God relating to living a godly life. If the husband expects his wife to act or do something that is a violation of a Biblical commandment or principle, then the wife should be obedient to the God-given instructions for honoring God. God does not expect the wife to disobey the Lord in order to be submissive to her husband.

#### *4. Wives are to be busy at home.*

**Then they can train the younger women to ... love their husbands and children, to be busy at home ...** From Titus 2:3-5 (NIV)

**So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.** 1 Timothy 5:14 (NIV)

In today's society it is not popular in either Christian or non-Christian circles to teach such things as submission to husbands or that women should be busy at home. However, it is still God's design that husbands be the leader in the home and that wives should be busy at home, taking care of the children and the home.

While wives are to be busy at home, there is no Scripture verse which specifically says that it is wrong for a wife to hold a job.

Christian homes have to make some important key decisions. Many Christian homes, especially those with children, would benefit greatly from a "stay-at-home" mom. There are many Christian homes that would be much better off to lower their standard of living and have the wife and mom stay at home. The benefits of a mom at home teaching and caring for the children and enhancing the home will last for an eternity. The benefits of the extra income will be short lived.

When we put God and His program first in our lives, God promises to supply all our needs.

**Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.** Matthew 6:31-34 (ESV)

When we put the desire for more material things ahead of God's plan and program, we are showing a fundamental lack of faith in God and His Word.

Wives are to be godly women. This applies to all women, including "stay-at-home" moms. Staying at home does not necessarily make a woman a godly person. There are many temptations for "stay-at-home" moms, just as there are for moms with careers outside the home.

#### *5. Wives are to teach their children.*

**Hear, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching;** Proverbs 1:8 (NASB)

**My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother;** Proverbs 6:20 (NASB)

**She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.** Proverbs 31:26 (NIV)

While God has given the overall leadership of the home to the husband, which includes the spiritual training of the children, the wife also clearly has a very important role in teaching the children. Godly mothers impact the world for the Lord. There is no higher calling in all the world than for a mother to teach her children to know and to walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### *6. Older women are to teach younger women.*

One reason there are so few genuinely godly people is because there are so few mature Christians to be teachers and role models. Older godly women can have a tremendous impact by teaching younger women and being a role model for them. This is not the world's idea of greatness but it is God's plan, and He will richly reward those who follow Him.

**Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.**

Titus 2:3-5 (NIV)

#### *The Proverbs 31 Lady*

In Proverbs 31:10-31, there is a description of a godly woman who is an excellent wife and mother. In fact, she is so perfect that some get discouraged because they feel that they could never match her example or this level of perfection. They are probably right, but we can all still learn from this exceptional lady.

She is a huge blessing to her family and she is busy caring for and even helping to provide for them. Even though this lady focuses on her family and submits to the needs of her family, she certainly is no pansy. She is a very capable woman with many talents who uses her abilities to be an exceptional wife and mother. She unselfishly gave herself to her family and she focused on what has eternal value and rewards. This lady did have a business of her own which helped supply the needs of the family.

Today, many in our culture would say she wasted her many abilities and that she should have pursued a career in some business. However, this wife will enjoy blessings here on earth and eternal blessings and rewards for her God-given focus on her family.

**A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.** Proverbs 31:10-11 (NIV)

**She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.** Proverbs 31:15-20 (ESV)

**She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.** Proverbs 31:26 (NIV)

**Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:**  
Proverbs 31:28 (ESV)

**Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.**  
Proverbs 31:30 (NIV)

### *What About Divorce?*

**But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 'and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."** Mark 10:6-9 (NKJV)

**For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, ...** Malachi 2:16a (NASB)

God has clearly taught us that marriage is to last as long as both partners are alive. Remember, if both a husband and a wife will commit themselves to putting Biblical instructions into practice, they will have a good marriage.

**A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.** 1 Corinthians 7:39 (NIV)

**So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. "And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."** Mark 10:11-12 (NKJV)

Here is a clear teaching that is ignored by both the world and many in Christian circles. God intends for marriage to last as long as both partners are alive. They are not to break that union by divorce. To ignore these teachings and to divorce and remarry without Biblical cause, is sin. It is disobedience and rebellion. God identifies their new sexual union as adultery.

Since the sexual union in an unbiblical marriage is identified as adultery, how do Christians who have broken this Biblical instruction by divorce and remarriage regain a close walk with God? Should they divorce and go back to their original marriage? Should they abstain from sexual relations in the new marriage? Are all of their sexual relations now sinful?

There are some questions that are not directly answered in Scripture. However, there is one thing that is clear in the Word of God, and that is that *when we genuinely repent and confess our sin, God forgives*. A couple must genuinely recognize and confess their sin, and commit themselves to honoring and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ in their lives and in their marriage. When that happens, the past is forgiven and they can now look to the future. They can dedicate themselves and their marriage to the Lord Jesus Christ and honor Him in all aspects of their life. God forgives sin, and they do not have to go through life feeling guilty because of past sins.

As always, there are consequences to sin, and the new couple must expect there to be negative consequences as a result of their past sin.

There is also a word of warning that needs to be given. One cannot try to manipulate God and expect good to come from it. Some have divorced, knowing that it was wrong, and then remarried because they knew that God forgives sin. You cannot manipulate God in this manner. You cannot deliberately sin and expect good to come from it. Some have even tried to justify their actions by saying, “We prayed about it”. That is hypocrisy to the very core. We do not have to pray about whether to sin or not. It is never, ever, God’s will that we disobey Him and sin. In these situations, God expects obedience, not prayer.

### *Biblical Reasons for Divorce*

God does allow for divorce in two circumstances; however, in both of these circumstances the marriage is to be preserved if possible.

The first Biblical reason for divorce is when a marriage partner has committed adultery.

**And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.** Matthew 19:9 (ESV)

**It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.**  
Matthew 5:31-32 (NIV)

If one’s marriage partner commits adultery or gets a divorce and remarries, that individual is free to remarry another believer.

The second God-given reason for divorce is when a couple are both unsaved, and then one partner becomes a Christian and the unsaved partner then chooses to leave. The saved partner is to let the unsaved partner go. The saved partner is free to remarry, providing the new partner is a genuine believer.

If the unsaved partner wishes to remain in the marriage, the saved partner is not Biblically free to get a divorce or to remarry.

**And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.**

1 Corinthians 7:13-15 (NASB)

Scripture is clear that in a marriage of two unsaved people, if one of them gets saved and becomes a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, the newly saved individual is not to leave their unsaved marriage partner if the unsaved marriage partner wants or is willing to stay in the marriage. Having an

unsaved mate is not a Biblical ground for divorce if the unsaved person chooses to stay in the marriage. Their marriage is God-blessed and their children are from the Lord.

If the unbelieving husband or wife chooses to leave his/her saved mate, then the believer is to let the unsaved mate go. The believer is not bound to the marriage if the unbelieving mate chooses to leave. The believer is then free to remarry, but only to a saved person.

**But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.** 1 Corinthians 7:15 (NIV)

There are some other very difficult situations that can, and often do, occur in marriage. Things such as on-going physical, mental, or verbal abuse, abandonment, and many kinds of addictions can all essentially destroy a marriage. Since these are not mentioned as Biblical reasons for divorce, is divorce in these situations acceptable in God's eyes?

Probably most of the time in which one of these situations exist, there is also sexual immorality involved. When this is known to be true, there is Biblical grounds for divorce. However, when there is no immorality involved, one possible step is to file for a legal separation for the protection of the abused partner or for children in the home. A reconciliation may occur if there is a clear on-going lasting change in the offending partner. However, the separation needs to last for a significantly long period of time to protect against putting oneself or the children back into an abusive situation.

God never intended for the wife (or the husband) or the children to be physical or mental punching bags for an abusive marriage partner or parent.

### *Same Sex Marriages*

According to the Bible, same sex marriages are an abomination and perversion in God's eyes.

**You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. 'Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.** Leviticus 18:22-23 (NKJV)

**Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.** Romans 1:26-27 (NIV)

### *Conclusion*

In the Word of God, we learn that the family is very important in the plan of God! In keeping with His teaching and program, the success of the family should be a high priority for every Christian husband, wife, and parent.

The satisfaction and joy of being part of a God-honoring family is almost beyond description. It is



a huge blessing here on earth and we will enjoy its fruit for eternity. It is well worth the effort and commitment that it takes. There will be bumps and bruises along the way, but with the help of the Spirit of God we can be faithful to this plan and purpose of God.

We cannot allow the world to press us into its mold and way of thinking and all that goes with it. If Christians don't have families that serve the Lord together, children who are raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, parents who love each other, and homes that are centered on Christ, we will never reach the world with the gospel. On the other hand, if we cultivate those things and pursue them wholeheartedly, the world will sit up and take notice of us and of our Christ, and we will enjoy the blessing of God throughout our life here on earth and for eternity.

## *Chapter Seven*

# **The Bible – It's God's Revelation of Truth to Man**

It is important that children, as well as every other Christian, understand that the Bible is God's revelation of truth to man. It is God's only inspired written record of truth given to us. The Bible identifies itself as the Word of Truth, which is inspired by the God of truth.

The Bible teaches us how we can know God and it teaches us how to walk with Him. It teaches us to be a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we must commit ourselves to learning, understanding, and obeying the Word of Truth -- the Bible. This is the most important commitment that we can make.

Following are verses relating to the Bible and truth:

**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.** John 17:17 (NKJV)

**Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.**  
Proverbs 30:5 (ESV)

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

**And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.** Psalm 12:6 (NIV)

**Every word of God is flawless.** Proverbs 30:5a (NIV)

Each member of the Trinity -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit -- is identified as truth.

God is identified as one who cannot lie. He is the God of truth.

**in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,**  
Titus 1:2 (NKJV)

**Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.** Hebrews 6:16-19a (NIV)

Jesus, who is identified in the Bible as being equal and one with God, is also identified as truth.

**Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."** John 14:6 (NASB)

The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is also identified as truth.

**"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who**

**proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.** John 15:26 (NKJV)

Satan, the arch enemy of God, is identified as a liar and the father of lies.

**You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.** John 8:44 (NIV)

One important way that we resist and stand against Satan is to “put on the full armor of God” which includes putting on the “belt of truth”.

**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, ...** Ephesians 6:10-14a (NIV)

The Bible is the only written record of truth that God has given. Many other religions have their books; however, none can stand up to the Bible which is God's only genuine revelation of truth to man.

There is great blessing for those who regularly read, absorb, and think about the Word of Truth.

**So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."** John 8:31-32 (NASB)

**... “Blessed...are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”** Luke 11:28 (NIV)

**Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble.**  
Psalm 119:165 (NASB)

**Blessed is the man  
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.  
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers.** Psalm 1:1-3 (NIV)

Many in today's society do not believe that truth is real. To some, truth does not exist. They believe truth is relative and therefore cannot be known. It is a little hard to describe what they believe since every writer seems to have his own slant or reason to not believe in the reality of truth. Supposedly,

truth is relative to a hundred different philosophical concepts and it varies in every circumstance. In short, they believe truth does not exist and no one can genuinely know truth.

This is certainly not what the Word of God teaches. The Bible claims to be true and it is identified as the “Word of Truth”. While here on earth, we will never totally understand everything it teaches, but that in no way reflects on its being true.

**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.** John 17:17 (NKJV)

### *1. The Bible is God's revelation of truth made known to man.*

*Revelation refers to truth that God has made known to man.* Carefully read each of the following verses. Each of the human writers are, in one way or another, claiming that what they are teaching and/or writing is from God.

**For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.** Galatians 1:11-12 (ESV)

**Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, ...** Ephesians 3:2-3a (NIV)

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place;** Revelation 1:1 (NASB)

In the following verse, the word “prophecy” refers to all of the Word of God spoken by the prophets, not just the parts of Scripture that teach about the future.

**... for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.** 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV)

**But as it is written:**

**"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,**

**Nor have entered into the heart of man**

**The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**

**But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.** 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 (NKJV)

**Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.** 1 Corinthians 2:12-13 (NASB)

One Biblical scholar states that well over 1000 times in the Bible there are phrases such as “the Word of the Lord came to me saying”, or “thus says the Lord”. Look at the following examples: 1 Samuel 15:10; 1 Kings 12:24; Isaiah 1:2,10, 3:16, 8:1, 43:1, 44:24, 45:14, 49:8, 50:1, 56:4, 66:1; Jeremiah 1:4, 2:1, 4:1, 35:12, 40:1, 48:47; Ezekiel 6:1, 7:1; Daniel 9:2; Hosea 1:1;

Joel 1:1; Amos 1:3; Obadiah 1:1; Jonah 1:1; Micah 1:1; Nahum 1:12; Habakkuk 2:2; Zephaniah 1:1; Haggai 1:1; Zachariah 1:1; Malachi 1:1-2.

There is simply no question that the Bible claims to be from God. The following section is very closely related to this.

## *2. The Bible is inspired by God.*

*Divine inspiration is the activity of the Holy Spirit whereby He enabled the Biblical authors to receive God's special revelation and to speak it and write it in their own language and style, without any error or omission.*

The speakers and writers of God's words were inspired in the sense that they were acted upon by the Holy Spirit to produce God's truth in human language. The words written by Biblical authors are, in fact, the very words of God.

**All Scripture is inspired by God...** 2 Timothy 3:16a (NASB)

**All Scripture is God breathed...** 2 Timothy 3:16a (NIV)

As we have already seen in the previous section, in the following verse the word "prophecy" refers to all of the Word of God spoken by the prophets, not just the parts of Scripture that tell about the future.

**... for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.** 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV)

**For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.** 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (NASB)

To better understand inspiration, the words "plenary" and "verbal" are sometimes used to more clearly define inspiration.

*Plenary inspiration* means that all parts of the sixty-six books of the Bible are equally inspired.

**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, ...** 2 Timothy 3:16a (KJV)

All parts of Scripture are from God and are all equally inspired and equally true. Since it is all given by God, it is all completely truth. God cannot give half-truths or part truths. Therefore, the words of Jesus are not more inspired or more true than the book of Jonah or any other part of the Bible. Paul is not more inspired than Hosea. The New Testament is not more inspired than the Old Testament. All parts of the Bible are equally inspired.

*Verbal inspiration* means that every word given by God, even its grammatical form, is inspired by God. God inspired the actual words used by the writers of the Bible, not just the thoughts behind the words.

**Every word of God proves true;** Proverbs 30:5a (ESV)

**And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.** Psalm 12:6 (NIV)

**Now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are truth, and You have promised this good thing to Your servant.** 2 Samuel 7:28 (NASB)

The following verse shows how a Biblical truth is taught based on whether the word “seed” is singular or plural.

**Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.**  
Galatians 3:16 (NASB)

God did not simply put thoughts in the mind of Biblical authors as they wrote. He inspired each word that was written by the authors in the original manuscripts of Scripture.

Jesus recognized the inspiration and the authority of the Old Testament. He quoted it many times to establish the truthfulness of what He was teaching. Most of the other New Testament writers also used Old Testament quotes to establish the truthfulness of what they taught.

Either God is the source of the Bible and it is God’s revelation of truth to man as it claims to be or it is the biggest forgery ever developed by man himself. What a blessing that it is not a forgery. It is, in fact, God’s revelation of truth to man.

### *3. The Word of God is inerrant and infallible.*

Since the teachings and the historical records that are in the Bible, as they were originally written, are true, right, and accurate, *they do not and cannot contain error.*

Our human opinions and our understanding of the Bible may be inaccurate at times, but the Bible itself is always right, accurate, and without error.

**Every word of God proves true;** Proverbs 30:5a (ESV)

**The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.** Psalm 12:6 (ESV)

From Psalm 119 (NIV):

**The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy.** Verse 138

**Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true.** Verse 142

**All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.** Verse 160

As we have already seen, God inspired the Bible. Note that God “cannot lie”.

**...a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,** Titus 1:2 (NIV)

The Word of God is true. God, the author, does not give untruths, half-truths, or distorted truth. Those who love God’s Word and submit to it have a solid foundation and anchor for life here on earth and for eternity. They are blessed by God. They can have peace, be productive, and look forward to an eternity secure in heaven with God, all because God’s Word is true, inerrant, and infallible!!!

Our attitudes and beliefs do not affect the Bible’s truthfulness. The Bible is true whether you or I believe it or not. We cannot simply ignore it, or take it lightly, and we cannot just “interpret” it to fit our own way of thinking. Many reject or distort or ignore all or parts of the Bible. However, the Bible is all from God and all of it is true. We must accept Biblical truth as it is written, and submit and conform to it. There is no other way to seek Him, to know Him, and to walk close to Him.

#### *A Word About Hand Copying Errors*

It would be well to note that there were minor errors made in the early days when the Bible was being copied or reproduced by hand copying. We need to remember that from the time of Moses until about 1450 A.D., which is about 3,000 years, to reproduce the Bible it had to be hand copied. In that hand copying process, there were some small insignificant copying errors made. These are not errors in the truth of Scripture but errors in the copying process. This is a whole different study, but for now we can simply say that the copying process was amazingly accurate. Today there are some thirty to fifty thousand or more manuscripts, partial manuscripts, or manuscript fragments that demonstrate the overwhelming accuracy of the Biblical hand copying process.

The copying errors that were made are small and insignificant and there is no question that translations such as the NKJV, the NASB, the ESV, and the NIV, are extremely accurate and very trustworthy. When you pick up your Bible and read it, you are, in fact, reading the very Word of God. There is absolutely no Bible teaching that is in question because of any copying error.

#### *4. Other Evidences That Indicate the Bible Is True*

There are other kinds of truths that strongly support the fact that the Scriptures are inspired of God and are true. Consider the Bible itself. It has some 40 different authors. It was written over a period of about 1500 years. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew with some short passages written in Aramaic, and the New Testament was written in Greek. The authors came from many different walks of life. Some of the authors were fishermen, some were prophets, tax collectors, doctors, shepherds, soldiers, church leaders, priests, judges, and some were kings. Some were very well educated; others had no education at all. Some were poor; others were very rich. Some of the Bible was written in a cave; some in a desert; some in a jail; and some in a palace. Some of it was written in Israel; some in Babylon; and some in Syria. Some of the Bible is historical narrative; some is poetry; some is theological; some are proverbs; and some is allegory. The authors wrote on many different subjects and wrote in many different styles of writing. Yet in spite of these vast differences,

there is not one genuine contradiction in the whole Bible. It all comes together as ONE united Bible. Its central theme is the Lord Jesus Christ, the One we still serve today.

This is a miracle. It would be unusual today if two people with similar backgrounds wrote on the same subject without there being some differences in what they wrote. Yet the Biblical authors, in spite of great differences, wrote in complete harmony with each other. The reason is that they were all inspired by the same God. Praise the Lord for His Word, the Bible!!!

Fulfilled Biblical prophecy also demonstrates the divine origin and truth of Scripture. In the Old Testament there are many passages which predict various things which relate to the birth, life, and death of Christ. These were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born; yet they all came true. The following verses are examples of Old Testament prophecies relating to the life of Christ:

Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be born of a virgin.

**Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.** Isaiah 7:14 (NASB)

Micah prophesied that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

**But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."** Micah 5:2 (NKJV)

Isaiah 53 is a remarkable chapter. In this chapter there are numerous prophecies relating to the life and death of Jesus.

**He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

Isaiah 53:3 (NASB)

**He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.**

Isaiah 53:7 (NASB)

In the Old Testament book of Daniel, it foretold many of the battles that would take place following the breaking up of the Greek empire. These prophecies have been fulfilled with remarkable accuracy.

There are many prophecies given that are yet to be fulfilled. This is especially true of prophecies that relate to the second coming of Jesus and of events just before or that will follow His second coming. Just as many have already been fulfilled, so those that have not yet been fulfilled will be fulfilled in the future.

Archaeology has also repeatedly shown the historical accuracy of the Bible.



## 5. *The Word of God is powerful and effective.*

**Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? Jeremiah 23:29 (NIV)**

**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 (NASB)**

**So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11 (NASB)**

**By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Psalm 33:6 (KJV)**

## 6. *The Word of God gives victory over Satan and sin.*

Reading and absorbing the Word of God and putting it into practice is the way to have victory over Satan and sin.

**How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. Psalm 119:9 (NIV)**

**I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11 (ESV)**

**Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7 (NASB)**

In Ephesians 6:10-18 we are given specific instructions in how to fight Satan and all his forces.

It is important to note that every piece of armor, in one way or another, depends on our knowing and using the Word of God. Our offensive weapon in our battle with Satan is “...*the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God*”.

Romans, chapters 6-8, is a key passage of Scripture relating to victory over sin. It is not light reading but is richly rewarding when we take time to study, to understand, and to live by the truths of these chapters.

We are also clearly commanded to resist Satan. We resist Him by submitting ourselves to God and standing firm in the faith. This is God’s plan for us to be victorious over Satan.

**Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7 (NASB)**

**Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, ... 1 Peter 5:8-9a (NIV)**

Some have taught that all we have to do for victory over Satan is to rebuke him or “pray a hedge” around someone or something. However, in the Word of God we are never given instructions to rebuke Satan or to “pray a hedge”. All this will do little or no good if we do not obey the clear-cut teaching of the Word of God relating to victory over Satan.

## *7. The Word of God is eternal and unchanging.*

Man’s ideas, and his teachings change as time passes, as knowledge is gained, and as circumstances change. What is accepted as scientific fact today may be laughed at tomorrow. Philosophical beliefs regularly change. Much of what was accepted as truth one hundred years ago is not believed today.

This is not true about the eternal Word of God. Its teachings are eternal and unchanging. Its teachings do not change as man’s knowledge and understanding grows. Societies, cultures, governments, and even religions continually change, but the Word of God remains unchanged.

**Your word is eternal, it stands firm in the heavens.** Psalm 119:89 (NIV)

**Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.** Mark 13:31 (NIV)

**...since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you.**

1 Peter 1:23-25 (ESV)

The Word of God is eternally true. It will last forever. As man and his concepts change, the Word of God will remain true, relevant, dependable, and unchanging. It will teach some from every generation to know and walk with God. There is no other source of spiritual truth. Anyone or anything that contradicts it is false. It is and always will be the solid foundation on which to build and anchor our lives.

## *8. It is the Spirit of God who enables us to understand the Word of God. The Spirit illuminates spiritual truth.*

Illumination is the activity of the Holy Spirit in giving us understanding of spiritual truth revealed in the Bible.

Christians who are not seeking to walk close to the Lord will not be in a position to be illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and they can and will believe all kinds of untrue, half true, or distorted teachings about the Bible. When one is not submitting to the Lord, he is in no position to correctly understand the Word of God.

**We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual**

**words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.** 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 (NIV)

These verses make reference to “spiritual words”. Within Scripture there are certain words that need to be understood if we are to understand the truths taught in the Word of God. Words like grace, redemption, salvation, repentance, believe, and faith all have meanings somewhat different or sometimes very different than their everyday usage in the English language today. A good Bible dictionary such as *The New Ungers Bible Dictionary* or *The Wycliffe Bible Dictionary* can be a big help in understanding the Biblical usage of words.

For a more precise definition of Biblical words, an expository Greek dictionary of Biblical words can be very helpful. Four good ones are *The Complete Word Study Dictionary* by Zodhiates, *The New Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words* by James Strong, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* by W.E. Vine, and *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* by William D. Mounce.

Regular English language dictionaries like Webster's give definitions of words as they are used in everyday modern English, rather than how they are used in Scripture. A good Bible dictionary is much better.

When you begin your daily Bible reading, you need to quietly pray and ask the Lord to enable you to correctly understand what you are reading. Confess any sin and submit yourself to His leading and to His teaching.

The following verses are excellent prayers to pray as you begin your daily Bible reading:

**Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!** Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV)

**Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.** Psalm 119:34 (NIV)

## *9. The Results of Neglecting or Rejecting the Word of God*

**This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** 1 John 1:5-6 (NKJV)

**The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** 1 John 2:4 (NIV)

**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ...** Romans 1:18 (NASB)

**If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no**

**sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.** Hebrews 10:26-27 (NIV)

**No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.** 1 John 3:6 (NIV)

In the Bible, God reveals the only way to know Him. There is no other way. Men who reject or ignore Biblical truth about salvation face severe consequences. They will face God's wrath, judgment, and eternity in hell, forever separated from God, with no chance of ever escaping.

In spite of its great importance, many Christians have a casual attitude toward the Bible. Some may take it to church with them on Sundays, but it collects dust the rest of the week. For many, probably most, Christians it's not really important enough to regularly read or to pay much attention to at all. Even more "mature" Christians can grow cool in their attitudes. We must diligently guard against this.

The Bible is God's message and instructions to us. When Christians ignore it, it leads to trouble, heartache, and fruitless living.

## *10. A Word About Bible Translations*

The word "translation" is not a word from the Bible itself. It describes a process which makes God's revelation -- the Bible -- available for people to read and to study in their own language. The Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek and also a little Aramaic. Since only a very few people speak and read Hebrew and Greek, it is necessary to translate the Bible into languages that people know and understand today. All Bibles that are in English are translations from Hebrew and Greek.

There is no question that God wants us to preach the gospel and make disciples (followers of the Lord Jesus Christ) in all parts of the earth. Often the Bible will use the phrase "in all the earth" or "to the ends of the earth" when, in one way or another, it speaks of the spread of the Word of God.

**...but you will 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 (NASB)

**...I will also make you a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.** Isaiah 49:6b (NASB)

There are many other similar verses in the Word of God such as Isaiah 42:10; Psalm 33:8; Exodus 9:16; 1 Chronicles 16:23 and 30; Psalm 8:9; Psalm 66:1-4; Psalm 83:18; and Psalm 96:9. We are commanded to make disciples of all nations. A disciple is a learner and a follower. It will be very hard to make disciples if the people do not have the Word of God in their own language.

**Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have**

**commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

These verses, which are often called "the great commission", command us to teach "*everything I (Jesus) have commanded you*". How can we teach a person all that is in the Bible if they do not have a copy of the Bible in their own language?

We, here in the United States, can easily get a Bible. If we want, we can even get it in many different translations. This is not true for many in the world today. Many do not have any of the Bible in their own language. Today many men and women around the world are working to translate the Bible into some of these languages. This is a difficult and thrilling ministry. To give God's Word to people who do not have it is a very noble and fulfilling lifetime ministry.

**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. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.** Psalm 19:7-11 (NASB)

**Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.** Psalm 1:1-6 (NIV)

**Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

John 8:31-32 (KJV)

## Chapter Eight

# Understanding God's Plan of Salvation

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** John 3:16 (KJV)

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** John 3:16 (NIV)

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

**And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, ..."** Acts 16:31a (ESV)

The greatest truth of all time is that you and I, even though we are sinners, can be saved from the penalty of sin that God pronounced on all people. Even if we are "the worst of all sinners", all our sin can be totally forgiven and we can spend eternity with Him.

An equally great truth is that God will credit His own righteousness to our account and our record before God can be absolutely clean. We can know and walk with the holy God. God, who created and sustains the universe, even adopts us into His own family. We are His children! We can know and fellowship with Him while we are on this earth, and spend an eternity with Him in heaven. It can't get any better than that!!!

The purpose of this chapter is to explain in simple steps how we, as sinners, can be forgiven of our sin and escape eternal judgment. We can know and walk with God. This is the most basic fundamental teaching of the Word of God. This is the foundation. If we do not have this straight, all the rest of the Word of God is essentially meaningless to us.

The God-given plan of salvation is not hard to understand. However, many have misunderstood it and many have muddled, perverted, twisted, added to it, or taken away from it. Many simply believe what they want to believe.

Here, in simple steps, are the basic Biblical truths which relate to and explain the genuine God-given plan of salvation.

### *1. God created man and woman in His own image.*

**So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.** Genesis 1:27 (NKJV)

The predominant characteristic of God is that He is completely – one hundred percent – pure and holy. In the Bible, many times He is described as being holy, totally separated from sin. There is not the slightest tint of sin or evil in His character.

**"Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you -- majestic in holiness, awesome in**

**glory, working wonders?** Exodus 15:11 (NIV)

**Holy and awesome is His name.** Psalms 111:9b (NASB)

**Let them praise Your great and awesome name; holy is He.** Psalms 99:3 (NASB)

**..."Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory."** Isaiah 6:3 (NIV)

**No one is holy like the LORD, ...** 1 Samuel 2:2a (NKJV)

When God created man and woman in His own image, they too were sinless and pure.

Adam and Eve brought glory to God and there was perfect harmony and fellowship between God and man. At this point, Adam and Eve did not experience any sorrow, pain, trouble, or unhappiness of any kind. Rather, they experienced all the blessings and joy of walking in fellowship and in harmony with our holy God.

## *2. The first two people, Adam and Eve, rebelled against God and sinned.*

**Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' " Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.** Genesis 3:1-6 (NKJV)

Satan tempted Adam and Eve to sin, and they both gave in to that temptation. When man became a sinner, the harmony and fellowship with God was completely broken.

## *3. All of Adam and Eve's descendants, which includes each one of us, are now born sinners.*

**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...** Romans 5:12 (NASB)

**For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.**

Romans 5:19 (NIV)

**For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.**

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (NIV)

After Adam and Eve sinned, they passed on their sin nature to all of their descendants. As a result, all of us are sinners and each one of us has a sin nature. We now sin because we have a sin nature, and we sin because we individually choose to sin.

*4. Everyone, including each one of us, has sinned.*

**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;** Romans 3:23 (KJV)

**As it is written:**

**"There is no one righteous, not even one;**

**11 there is no one who understands,  
    no one who seeks God.**

**All have turned away,**

**they have together become worthless;  
there is no one who does good,  
    not even one."** Romans 3:10-12 (NIV)

**For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man unclean.** Mark 7:21-23 (NIV)

**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?**

Jeremiah 17:9 (KJV)

**All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.**

Isaiah 64:6 (NIV)

This verse (Isaiah 64:6) states that our "good side" – our righteous acts -- are like filthy rags. It does not say that our bad side is like filthy rags, but rather this is God's description of our good side. God is not impressed with our goodness; it is nothing but a pile of filthy rags in His sight.

There is a huge moral gap between the holy God and sinful man. We will never be able to come to God on the basis of our own goodness. Even our "little" sins separate us from God.

*5. The consequence or the penalty for all sin ("large" or "small") is death.*

**For the wages of sin is death...** Romans 6:23a (NKJV)

**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.** Romans 5:12 (NKJV)

**When you were dead in your sins...** Colossians 2:13a (NIV)

**As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,** Ephesians 2:1 (NIV)



**But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),** Ephesians 2:4-5 (NASB)

**The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.**

Romans 8:6-7 (NIV)

It is important to understand that in Scripture there are three kinds of death. Each one is a consequence of sin. These three kinds of death are as follows:

### *A. Spiritual Death*

Spiritual death is to be separated from God because of our sin. Every person who has not chosen to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is separated from God. He/she is spiritually dead.

**As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.** Ephesians 2:1-5 (NIV)

**When you were dead in your sins...** Colossians 2:13a (NIV)

### *B. The Second Death*

In the Bible, the second death is to be cast into hell with no hope of ever escaping or being reconciled to God. All who are separated from God by sin, or all who are spiritually dead and do not repent, will spend an eternity separated from God, suffering eternal judgment and punishment in hell.

**But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."** Revelation 21:8 (NKJV)

**Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

Revelation 20:11-15 (ESV)

### *C. Physical Death*

This is normal physical death. At the end of our life on earth, our bodies die. This also came as a result of Adam's sin. Before sin, there was no physical death. Eventually the bodies of all people, saved and unsaved, will be resurrected from the dead. Those who have been saved will go to be with the Lord. Those who are not saved will be separated from God forever (the second death).

**Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.** Romans 5:12 (NIV)

**For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.**  
1 Corinthians 15:21 (NASB)

The Bible teaches us that all three of these kinds of death are a result of sin.

*6. Because God still loved us, He sent His own sinless Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross to pay the penalty of death for our sin.*

**But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**  
Romans 5:8 (ESV)

**For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.**  
1 Peter 3:18a (NIV)

**He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.**  
Romans 4:25 (NIV)

**..so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people;** Hebrews 9:28 (NIV)

Jesus was absolutely sinless; therefore, He did not have to die. However, He chose to die so that He could pay the penalty of death for our sin. He was our substitute. What a blessing!!! Because Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin, we can escape the judgment of death that we are under. We do not have to spend eternity separated from God in hell.

*7. God accepted the death of Christ as full payment for the penalty for our sin.*

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

**In Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us...**  
Ephesians 1:7-8a (NASB)

**For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.** Colossians 1:13-14 (NASB)

**But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.**

1 John 3:5 (NIV)

**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,** Romans 3:23-24 (NKJV)

The penalty or the price for our sin has been paid in full. God, who pronounced the judgment of death on every human because of his sin, accepts the death of His son, Jesus, as full payment for our sin.

*8. To be saved from the penalty of death, one must individually accept and choose to put his/her faith or trust (believe) in the death of Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for his/her sin.*

To be saved from the penalty of death, you must make a deliberate personal choice to put your trust in the death of Jesus on the cross as the full payment of the penalty for your sin. You can either pay the penalty yourself by spending an eternity in hell separated from God, or you can accept the death of Jesus as the full payment for your sin and enjoy blessings here on earth and have eternal life with God. The choice is yours!!!

There is no other way to be saved from the penalty of death because of our sin.

In the Bible, the choice to put your faith in the death of Jesus as the full payment for your sin is identified as “believing in the Lord Jesus Christ”.

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** John 3:16 (NIV)

**And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, ...** Acts 16:31a (ESV)

**But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,** John 1:12 (NASB)

**Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**

John 5:24 (NKJV)

**...and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.** John 6:37b (NASB)

*9. There is absolutely nothing you can do to earn or to make yourself worthy of the forgiveness of your sin. The only way to be forgiven is to believe and accept God's forgiveness of sin as a free gift.*

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.** Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)

**For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Romans 6:23 (NASB)

**Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,** Romans 4:4-5 (NASB)

**But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace you have been saved.**

Ephesians 2:4-5 (NIV)

**...knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.** Galatians 2:16 (NKJV)

It does absolutely no good to try to improve yourself or to "clean up your act" before you come to God for forgiveness. We are all sinners and we cannot change that. We can only come to Jesus exactly as we are -- as sinners. All the goodness in the world cannot change that.

Once we have made the choice to believe and we repent of our sin, then we commit ourselves to living a godly life. *We live godly lives because we are saved, not to get saved.*

*10. When God forgives our sin, He also credits us with righteousness.*

**But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,** Romans 4:5 (NASB)

**This is why "it was credited to him (Abraham) as righteousness." The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.** Romans 4:22-24 (NIV)

**God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

When God forgives our sin, He also credits us with His own righteousness. We can be saved not because we are righteous, but because God will credit His righteousness to our account.

*11. When one chooses to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and asks for forgiveness of sin, he commits to turning away from a lifestyle of sin and to being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.** 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

In order for a person to be saved, he/she must deal with the sin in his life. The heart of believing

(having faith) in the Lord Jesus Christ is acknowledging that we are sinners and trusting in His death to pay the penalty for our sin.

One must turn away from that sinful pattern of life. If we continue in a lifestyle of sin, Scripture states that we do not know God. Making that choice to turn from a lifestyle of sin is sometimes identified as “repentance” in the Word of God.

In the Bible, the word “repent” means to change one’s mind or to change the direction in which one is going. Before an individual is saved, he is controlled by his sinful nature. When he gets saved, he changes the direction of his life and turns away from a lifestyle of sin. With the help of the Spirit of God, he determines not to let the sin nature control him/her and he chooses to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Genuine Biblical repentance is turning from a lifestyle of sin to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a total change in the direction of one’s life. Once we genuinely make the decision to believe, the Spirit of God gives us the ability, the strength, and the direction that we need to live a godly life and be a productive follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not something we do on our own. It is a result of the Spirit of God dwelling in us, leading us, and empowering us.

This does not mean we will be perfect, or even close to perfect, but it does mean that we are committed to being a follower of our Lord Jesus Christ. The whole focus of our life changes. The Lord Jesus Christ becomes supreme in our life and we choose to follow and to be obedient to Him. Repentance does not mean we will be perfect, but it does mean that we are yielding control of our life to the Spirit of God.

Repentance is not a “work” that is necessary for salvation. We are not saved by changing ourselves. We are saved by believing in Him; then the Spirit of God comes and lives in us and empowers us. Without the Spirit of God living in us, we cannot live a life free from bondage to sin.

**You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.** Ephesians 4:20-24 (NIV)

The following verses stress the necessity of repentance:

**"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.** Luke 13:3 (NASB)

**No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."** Luke 13:5 (ESV)  
**Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."**  
 Luke 5:31-32 (NKJV)

**Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord.** Acts 8:22a (NIV)

No genuine believer is perfect. *We will all sin, but we will not have an on-going continuing lifestyle of sin.*

**No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.** 1 John 3:6 (NIV)

**No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.**

1 John 3:9-10 (ESV)

**We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.** 1 John 5:18 (NIV)

When one is convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he agrees with God that his sin is wrong. When God convicts a person of sin or convinces him that his sin is wrong, inherent within that conviction is the recognition of the need to change the way he lives. When one is saved, he no longer makes sin a way of life. One cannot genuinely be convicted by the Spirit of God that his sin is wrong and respond in belief without a change in attitude about sin.

As His followers, we acknowledge that He is our Savior and Lord. As our Lord, He is in control of our lives. *Now when we sin, we quickly acknowledge that sin and ask Him for forgiveness.*

Once you choose to put your faith in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as the payment for sin and begin to follow Him, you never know where He will lead you. It can be exciting!!! Hold onto your hat and let's go. You have begun an incredible journey!

## What Salvation Is Not

Following is a list of things that people have claimed when asked if they are saved. They believe that these things will somehow gain them merit with God. Some of these are good things but, by themselves, they will not save us. The truth is that a person could do or experience all of these things and still not be genuinely saved.

Here is a list of things that *salvation is not*.

1. It is not just "going forward" in church.
2. It is not "making a decision for Jesus".
3. It is not having a "relationship with Jesus" or "connecting with Jesus".
4. It is not having a "spiritual experience" or a "spiritual awakening".
5. It is not being baptized.
6. It is not "attending" or joining a church.
7. It is not knowing what is in the Bible.
8. It is not being "religious", being sincere, being a good person, or keeping the golden rule.
9. It is not doing the best you can or turning over a new leaf.
10. It is not when your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds.
11. It is not giving all your problems to Jesus.
12. It is not "speaking in tongues".

13. It is not taking communion or the sacraments.
14. It is not being born in a Christian family or in a Christian country.
15. It is not keeping the ten commandments or following any other set of rules.
16. It is not tithing or giving money to worthwhile causes.
17. It is not having an uncle who is a Baptist preacher or having a grandmother who donated the land on which the church was built.

Absolutely none of these things by themselves will result in our being saved. The only way to be saved is to repent of sin, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept God's forgiveness of our sin as a free gift.

## **What It Means To "Believe in Jesus"**

As we have seen, God offers forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all people. The only condition is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believing is extremely important. Where we will spend eternity is at stake. If we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we will spend eternity with Him. If we do not believe, we will spend eternity separated from Him, suffering God's wrath. Those who believe can also know and walk with Him here on the earth and enjoy all the blessing of being a child of God now.

Because this is so important, this section of this chapter explains in greater detail what it means to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ".

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.** John 3:16-18 (ESV)

**He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."** Acts 16:30-31a (NIV)

**And whoever lives and believes in Me (Jesus) shall never die.** John 11:26a (NKJV)

**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:** John 1:12 (KJV)

**...but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.** John 20:31 (NKJV)

**I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.** John 6:47 (NIV)

**Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.** John 5:24 (NASB)

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is to make a deliberate personal choice to put your trust in His

death on the cross as the full payment of the penalty for your sin. You can either pay the penalty yourself by spending an eternity in hell separated from God, or you can accept His death as the payment for your sin and spend eternity with God. The choice is yours!!!

### *Defining Genuine Biblical “Believing”*

To better understand the word “believe” from a Biblical perspective, here are definitions taken from several different Greek expository Bible dictionaries.

*To believe is:*

- ...to accept as true.
- ...to have faith in God or in Christ.
- ...to place confidence in or to trust in.
- ...to rely on.
- ...to be convinced of something.
- ...to be firmly persuaded.

I believe the best definition was given by William D. Mounce, *“To believe is not simply to give mental assent, but to turn one’s whole being over to God.”* (Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary. page 62)

“Faith” and “believe” come from the same Greek root word. It is used about 475 times in the New Testament.

Rather than accepting actual Biblical teachings, there are a lot of people who “believe” what they want to believe or what they think is right. Genuine Biblical belief accepts God’s teaching rather than making up or choosing some other way of believing.

As we go through this section, each of us should examine our own beliefs. Do I accept God-given teaching about believing, or am I believing something else? Have I come to God on His terms or am I coming on my own terms? This is important. Our eternity is at stake.

To genuinely believe is not complicated. We make the choice to trust in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as full payment for the penalty of our sin and to turn away from our lifestyle of sin.

You do not have to be a theologian to be saved. When we were saved, very few of us understood much of what the Bible teaches. However, *when the Spirit of God genuinely calls us to Himself in salvation, He gives us the faith to believe the fundamental truths relating to salvation.* If a person cannot accept these fundamental truths, it is an indication that he/she is not genuinely saved.

### *Genuine belief believes that Jesus is God.*

One of the fundamental teachings of Jesus is that God is His father. As the Son of God, He was equal to God and, according to the Bible, He was, in fact, God Himself. The only reason Jesus could come and die to pay the penalty for our sin is because He is the sinless Son of God. If Jesus were just a human being, He Himself would be a sinner, unable to pay the price of death for our sin. He would



have to die to pay the penalty for His own sin, not for ours.

Again, one does not have to be a theologian to be saved. One certainly will not understand all about the trinity. None of us do. However, one must believe that Jesus is the sinless Son of God, and that He was, in fact, God Himself. One cannot be saved and deny that Jesus was, and still is, the sinless Son of God.

**Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God,** 1 John 5:1a (ESV)

**Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.** John 20:30-31 (ESV)

**For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.** 1 John 5:4-5 (NIV)

**Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist-- he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.** 1 John 2:22-23 (NIV)

In the Old Testament, God identified Himself to Moses as the "I Am".

**And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.**  
Exodus 3:13-14 (KJV)

In the following verses Jesus identifies Himself as the "I Am". These verses refer back to Exodus 3:14 where God identifies Himself as the "I Am". Jesus clearly states that unless you believe that He is the "I Am", or believe that Jesus is God, you will die in your sins. In other words, if you do not believe that Jesus is God, you are not saved.

**Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."**  
John 8:58 (NKJV)

**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."** John 8:24 (NASB)

*Genuine belief believes in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.*

After Jesus died on a cross paying the penalty for our sin, His body was taken down, prepared for burial, and then buried in a tomb. On the third day after He died, His body was resurrected from death and came to life again. (See Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20.) The resurrection of Jesus from the dead proved beyond any doubt that Jesus is God, and that His death was not a normal human death.

To believe that Jesus is God and that His words are true, one must believe in His resurrection from the dead.

**...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; Romans 10:9 (NASB)**

The resurrection is an essential part of the gospel. To believe in Jesus is to believe in His resurrection.

**Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,**

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NKJV)

**...and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, Romans 1:4 (NIV)**

In the Word of God our salvation is confirmed by the resurrection. Without the resurrection, there would be no salvation. One cannot genuinely believe on the Lord Jesus Christ without believing in the resurrection.

**For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 1 Corinthians 15:16-17 (ESV)**

**...He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."**

Acts 17:31b (NASB)

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 1 Peter 1:3-4 (NASB)**

**...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. Romans 10:9-10 (NASB)**

In the Bible, Jesus is identified as the "Lord Jesus Christ" over 60 times. He is identified as "Lord" over 600 times. The word "confess" means that we agree with God. When we confess that "Jesus is Lord", we agree with God that Jesus is Lord. To confess that Jesus is Lord is to acknowledge that Jesus is sovereign, that He is supreme, that He has authority and power, and that He is your master.

We believe in our hearts that Jesus is Lord. This is not a half-hearted casual agreement but a deep heart-felt belief. In our heart, the very core of our being, we acknowledge Him as our Lord. This kind of belief results in a commitment to living a righteous life.

*To confess that Jesus is Lord means that in our heart and in our way of life we agree with God that He*

*is sovereign over all that exists -- including ourselves. When we confess Him as Lord, we agree with God that He has the right to rule our life, and we submit to that rule.*

To agree in our heart that Jesus is Lord is to commit to following and putting into practice what He teaches and to submit to His instructions for living. We cannot have a double standard. We do not believe one thing and live something else. We believe it in the core of our being and we openly acknowledge it by our speech and by the way we live.

Christians must not expect to be “secret believers”. We cannot hide the fact that we acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and that we have turned from our sinful lifestyle and have been made righteous by Him. Our lives and our speech will show it.

*“Genuine confession is not just repeating words; it is a deep conviction of the heart.”*  
(Campbell, Johnston, Walvoord, Witmer. The Theological Wordbook. page 68)

*“To believe is not simply to give mental assent, but to turn one’s whole being over to God.”*  
(William D. Mounce, Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary. page 62)

**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.** Romans 10:13 (KJV)

*There is a shallow or misplaced “belief” or faith that does not result in salvation.*

There are many who have a shallow belief in Jesus or God that does not result in being genuinely saved. This is serious because there are apparently many who think they are saved, but they are not. They have never genuinely believed as the Word of God defines believing.

**You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!**  
James 2:19 (NKJV)

The following verse takes place when people stand before our Lord to give an account of themselves to Him.

**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)**

Some people were impressed by the miracles Jesus performed, but their belief was not genuine. Jesus knows what is really going on in our hearts and minds.

**Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. 24 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. 25 He did not need man’s testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.**  
John 2:23-25 (NIV)

God knows our hearts and the way we think. A shallow insincere belief system does not result in salvation.

**These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.** Mark 7:6b-7 (NIV)

**Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.** Luke 8:13 (NASB)

**From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.** John 6:66 (NKJV)

In the light of these Biblical truths, we need to carefully follow Paul's instructions to his readers.

**Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.**  
2 Corinthians 13:5a (ESV)

## **Can we lose our salvation? Once a person is genuinely saved, can he ever be unsaved again?**

Once we have been saved, can we ever be lost again? After we have been genuinely saved, is it possible for us to commit such bad sin that God would take back our salvation and, as a result, we would be forever lost and spend eternity separated from Him?

There are some who have been saved but who have given up serving the Lord because they believe that they have lost their salvation. Some have become discouraged and just quit trying because they feel that they simply don't have what it takes to be a Christian.

I very clearly remember talking to a high school student who stated that she once was a Christian but she was not Christian anymore. She said that she had given up and was not going to try to be a Christian anymore because she knew that she could not do it.

Does this way of thinking square with what the Word of God teaches? Is our salvation dependent on our living up to a certain high standard of goodness?

The Word of God answers all these questions. The answer is a loud **"no"**. A genuinely saved person cannot lose his salvation. He is secure. There are very clear Scriptures that speak to this issue.

These truths do not mean that it's okay to sin. There are some very negative consequences of sin in the life of a believer, but, as we shall see, losing his/her salvation is not one of those consequences. In this section we will take a look at some key teachings in the Word of God that relate to the certainty of God's promises of eternal life to those who have genuinely believed in Him. These truths are cause for joy in the life of a Christian. If, from time to time while you go through this study, you feel like shouting "Hallelujah" or "Praise the Lord", then let 'er rip. ☺

**I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.** 1 John 5:13 (NIV)

As we all know, after we are saved, we will still sin. An immature Christian might conclude that since salvation is secure, then sin is not really a very serious issue in the life of a Christian. This is a very

wrong way of thinking. We will not lose our salvation because of sin, but sin in the life of a Christian is serious and can have devastating results. There will be serious consequences because of sin, but again, losing our salvation is not one of those consequences.

*God has forgiven all the sin of a believer.*

The following verses all teach about God's forgiveness of sin. Notice how many times the little word "all" is used. All means all -- past, present, and future. Nowhere in Scripture does it indicate that He forgives all past sin but not all our future sins.

**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.** 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

Notice that when we confess sin, God, who is faithful and just, purifies us from "all" unrighteousness. This verse states that God is faithful. We can count on Him to keep His word. Notice that He is also just. He will not lie to us.

**...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.** 1 John 1:7b (NKJV)

**God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,** Colossians 2:13b (NIV)

Notice that in the three verses above that God purifies us, He cleanses us, and He forgives us from "all" sin and unrighteousness.

**"I, even I, am he who blots out  
your transgressions, for my own sake,  
and remembers your sins no more.** Isaiah 43:25 (NIV)

**For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.** Hebrews 8:12 (NIV)

**As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.**  
Psalm 103:12 (NASB)

**You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.** Micah 7:19 (NKJV)  
**...though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like  
crimson, they shall become like wool.** Isaiah 1:18 (ESV)

I have been asked if a saved person commits suicide, will he/she go to heaven. Is suicide such a big sin that God will not forgive it? There is no question that suicide is wrong and that it is sin. However, there is absolutely no Biblical teaching that this sin is not covered by the death of Jesus on the cross. Yes, a genuine Christian who commits suicide will spend eternity with our Lord.

*Believers are justified by God.*

**But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.** 1 Corinthians 6:10-11 (NIV)

To be justified is to be declared righteous by God. This action by God is not based on our worthiness or our own goodness, but rather it is based on the death of Jesus on the cross who died to pay the penalty for our sin.

When we make the choice to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God credits us with His own righteousness.

**God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

**Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.** Romans 4:4-5 (NIV)

According to the tense of the verb, justification is an on-going action. We are continually being declared righteous by God.

Because we have been justified, our legal standing before God is one of being absolutely righteous. *We have had the righteousness of God credited to our account!!!*

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:** Romans 5:1 (KJV)

**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:** Romans 3:23-24 (KJV)

**Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!** Romans 5:9 (NIV)

**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.** Romans 3:28 (KJV)

There is no teaching in Scripture that God will ever withdraw justification and declare us to be unrighteous in His sight.

Being justified is never said to be conditional on our maintaining a certain standard of righteousness. It is one hundred percent based on Jesus' death, His love, His grace and His mercy. Again, we must ask the question, "Will God send someone to hell that He has declared to be righteous?". Again, the answer is "no".

*What is "eternal life"?*

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** John 3:16 (KJV)

**For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Romans 6:23 (KJV)

God very clearly promises eternal life to those who choose to believe. Many Scriptures teach this. *Eternal life is life with God that never ends.* Everyone who has eternal life will spend eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ and will enjoy His grace, His mercy, and His rich blessings forever.

The very meaning of eternal life is life without end. Eternal life cannot end. If God were to give eternal life and then later take it back or in some way or another, we “lose” it, then God would have lied because He promised eternal life, not six months or two years of life. Six months of life is not eternal life. It is a contradiction of the promise itself to say that a Christian can be given six months of eternal life. Eternal life is life forever -- life without end. Eternal life cannot stop after six months, a year, ten years, or even ten quadrillion years.

**And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.** John 10:28 (KJV)

This is a very clear and simple statement by Jesus. To perish means to spend eternity separated from God. It would be hard to misunderstand what Jesus is saying here. He is clearly saying that He gives his followers eternal life, and they will never spend eternity in hell. We might ask ourselves what “never” means. It means never. When God says “never”, it won’t happen. When it says we will never perish, it means just that. Those who have been given eternal life will never, for any reason, perish or spend an eternity separated from God.

Notice in the following verse that *eternal life is a present possession*. We have eternal life now. It doesn’t say that one will receive eternal life in the future if he/she doesn’t sin really bad. It states that he has eternal life *now* and that he will never perish.

**"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.** John 5:24 (NIV)

Here Jesus clearly states, “I tell you the truth”. Jesus always tells the truth but here He is emphasizing it because He wants us to clearly understand what He is saying. The truth that He wants us to understand is that those who hear and believe have eternal life, and they will not be condemned (sent to hell) because they have already (past tense) crossed over from death to life.

These verses are very clear in their meaning. If, in fact, a person genuinely believed and God gave that person eternal life, but then, for whatever the reason, that person lost it and died, then God would have lied. If God lies, then He is no longer God and His Word is worthless. This cannot and will never be. God is truth and His Word is true and trustworthy.

**My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.** John 10:27-30 (NASB)

Here again, all those who hear and follow Jesus are given eternal life and they will never perish. It could not get much more clear than that. It makes it even more emphatic by saying that no one can

take one who has eternal life out of the hand of Jesus or out of the hand of the Father. After receiving eternal life, no one, not Satan, not even ourselves, or any other force can take us out of the hand of Jesus and out of the hand of God.

**Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness -- a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,**

Titus 1:1-2 (NIV)

God promised eternal life to those who believe, long before they were born – before the beginning of time. Could God send someone to hell to whom He had promised eternal life long before he was even born? If this is possible, then we cannot trust any of the promises of God.

**Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"**

John 11:25-26 (NKJV)

**All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.** John 6:37-40 (NIV)

God draws unsaved people to the Lord Jesus Christ, and they are saved by believing in Jesus. In these verses it clearly states that it is God's will that all who come to Christ have eternal life and be resurrected. Notice the last phrase, "*and I will raise him up at the last day*". Here Jesus clearly states that those who God gives Him will have eternal life and He (Jesus) will resurrect them from the dead.

This is clear. He does not say that some who God gives to the Son will have eternal life or that those who live a good life will be resurrected. The emphasis here is that none of them are lost, *none*. There are none who have been given eternal life that Jesus will not raise up from the dead to be with Him forever.

In this passage (John 6:37-40), it is very clear that it is the will of God and the will of the Son that no one who comes to the Son will be lost. No one whom God entrusts to the Son will be lost. No one will be cast out – no one. Jesus will do the Father's will and resurrect all to whom the Father has given eternal life. If some that the Father gives eternal life lose their eternal life and Jesus does not resurrect them from the dead, then Jesus fails to accomplish His Father's will.

*We are sealed by the Holy Spirit who guarantees our future with God.*

God gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who genuinely believes in Him. Notice that in the following verses the Holy Spirit seals us. He is God's seal of ownership on us, and He is God's deposit given to us guaranteeing our future with Him.

**Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.**

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NIV)



**And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

Ephesians 4:30 (KJV)

**In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.**

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NKJV)

**He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.**

2 Corinthians 5:5 (ESV)

If for any reason we lost our salvation and spent eternity separated from God, then the Holy Spirit would have failed to accomplish or to fulfill His God-given role of guaranteeing our future with the Lord.

*Will God “un-adopt” His children?*

Will God un-adopt those whom He has adopted into His own family and has made them His own children?

**For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--** Ephesians 1:4-5 (NIV)

**For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,** Romans 8:15-16 (NASB)

My wife and I live close to four adopted grandchildren. Those children are precious to my daughter and her husband. They are also precious to my wife and I. I cannot imagine any circumstance in which we would “un-adopt” them and send them back to orphanages in eastern Europe. In God we are far more secure than are children in human families. God loves us, His adopted children, and He will never send us away.

**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

**What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written:**

**“For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”**

**Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Romans 8:28-39 (NKJV)

We could profitably spend several lessons on these verses alone, but I will just point out a couple of major highlights.

Notice verse 30.

**30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Before creation, God knew who would be His. Notice that those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; and those He justified, He also glorified. In God’s sight, all genuine believers have already been called, justified, and glorified. Notice that the word “glorified” is in the past tense. From our standpoint, our glorification is a future event, but in God’s eyes it has already been done. Nobody gets left out in this process. All those He foreknew have already been glorified in His sight. No one who is glorified will spend eternity separated from God.

**33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.**

In verses 33-34, it teaches that Jesus is at the right hand of God making intercession for us. With Jesus making intercession for us, who is going to condemn us???

**38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Read and carefully think about what verses 38 and 39 are saying. There is a list of things that cannot separate us from God’s love. Nothing in life or death can separate us from His love. Satan cannot do it. Nothing in the present or in the future can do it. No other created thing can separate us from God’s love. This list includes all that exists. Nothing that exists or ever will exist can separate us from God’s love.

*Romans 11:29*

This is a short but powerful statement.

**...for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.** Romans 11:29 (NASB)

God called us (Romans 8:28-30) and He has given us the gift of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). This verse (Romans 11:29) clearly states that God's call and His gifts cannot be revoked or rescinded. God cannot and will not change His mind and take back His call and/or His gift of salvation.

*Chapter Nine*

## **Fundamentals of Walking with the Lord and Growing in Our Walk with Him**

Once one makes the choice to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, one does not automatically grow in his/her walk with the Lord. Growth takes time, effort, commitment, and faithfulness.

Many people who make the choice to believe in Jesus begin a walk with the Lord, and, after many years, they are still growing, and they are still strongly committed to serving the Lord. They are still enjoying a satisfying and productive walk with the Lord. Others find that, over time, their commitment to follow and serve the Lord dims and they feel spiritually dry and unproductive. *What makes the difference?*

*Following are five fundamental foundations of spiritual growth:*

*1. Daily read and think about (meditate on) the Word of God.*

A foundation of spiritual growth is to regularly take time to read the Word of God and then to think about or meditate on what you read.

**Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble.**

Psalms 119:165 (NASB)

**This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; ...**

Joshua 1:8 (NASB)

**My eyes are awake through the night watches,**

**That I may meditate on Your word.** Psalms 119:148 (NKJV)

**So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."**

John 8:31-32 (NASB)

**How can a young man keep his way pure?**

**By living according to your word.**

**10 I seek you with all my heart;**

**do not let me stray from your commands.** Psalms 119:9-10 (NIV)

**... "Blessed...are those who hear the word of God and obey it."** Luke 11:28 (NIV)

**Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in**

**season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.** Psalm 1:1-6 (NIV)

New Christians should start out reading in the New Testament. There are four books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) that record the life of Jesus. This is a good place to start your reading.

At the end of this study (appendix three) there is a two-year Bible reading plan that was developed for new believers.

Today there is a tremendous amount of incorrect Bible teaching going on that is a mixture of truth and error. Today, in many churches, right doctrine is downplayed. However, in the New Testament there is a tremendous amount of teaching and warnings related to false teaching or false doctrine. It is important to God that we get it straight and it must be important to us as well. Be very careful about what you hear or read and accept as Bible truth.

Ask God for wisdom and carefully evaluate what you hear or are being taught. If you sense that something is not right, then be very careful about accepting it as Biblical truth.

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

Don't expect to fully understand everything you read and think about. Nobody does. As you read, ask God to give you a right understanding of what you read, but, again, don't expect total understanding of all that you read.

*2. Immediately confess any sin, as soon as you realize that you have sinned.*

**He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.** Proverbs 28:13 (NASB)

Get into the habit of quickly confessing sin. Confess the "little" sins such as wrong thoughts and wrong attitudes as well as the "bigger" sins. In reality, there is no such thing as a "little" sin. They all grieve the Spirit of God.

**If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.** 1 John 1:8-9 (NIV)

When we confess a sin to God, we are agreeing with God that it is sin and that it is wrong.

The following two verses from Psalm 139 is a good prayer to pray every day.

**Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.** Psalm 139:23-24 (NIV)

### 3. *Be baptized.*

The Bible gives instructions and examples that teach that after one has been saved by choosing to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he/she should be baptized.

It is very important to understand that baptism does not save anybody or make one a Christian. We are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, not by being baptized. The Bible makes that clear.

We are baptized as a first step of obedience and to publicly show that we are now a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**

Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

**As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. Acts 8:36-38 (NASB)**

**Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. Acts 2:41 (NKJV)**

**But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Acts 8:12 (NKJV)**

The Word baptize is defined as follows by three different Greek scholars:

1. Zodhiates – To dip, immerse, submerge, saturate
2. Vine – immersion, submergence and emergence
3. Mounce – to put or to go under water

Baptism is a ceremony in which a person is immersed into water. The Greek word “baptizo” does not mean to sprinkle. Sprinkle is a totally different Greek word that is never used in the Bible in connection with baptism.

Sprinkling or infant baptism is not Biblical baptism. They do not fulfil the Biblical teaching to be baptized. Sprinkling or infant baptism is never taught or practiced or even mentioned in the Bible.

As we have already stated, baptism is a first step of obedience to the Lord. It is publicly identifying oneself as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. If, for whatever reason, a person was baptized before he was saved, then he needs to be baptized again after he/she is genuinely saved.

### 4. *Develop the habit of regularly praying throughout the day.*

Prayer is a core part of our walk with the Lord. In your prayers, regularly confess sin, regularly thank

Him for your spiritual and physical blessings, and regularly bring Him any requests you may have. Pray for fellow believers and pray for the salvation of friends and family members.

**Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 (NKJV)

No Christian will ever be stronger than his pattern of absorbing the Word of God and applying sound Biblical teaching to his life, and he will be no stronger than his pattern of prayer. These are measures of our walk with God.

Prayer will be looked at more fully in the next chapter of this study.

*5. Regularly attend and get involved in a good solid Bible teaching church.*

**And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.** Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)

**Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.** Acts 2:41-42 (NKJV)

**But encourage one another day after day,** Hebrews 3:13a (NASB)

God did not design us to be spiritual hermits. He planned for us to function together as a unified body of believers. We need to be correctly taught the Word of God and we need the encouragement and friendship of fellow believers.

Church is referred to some 115 times in the New Testament. Much of the New Testament is made up of letters which are written to local churches. To refuse to actively serve the Lord in a local group of believers is disobedience and rebellion against the Lord.

Each of these things--absorbing the Word, confessing sin, baptism, prayer, and serving in a solid Bible believing church are as important to our spiritual life as air, food, and water are to our physical life.

## **Suggestions for an Effective Daily “Quiet Time” of Bible Reading and Prayer**

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...** Colossians 3:16a (NIV)

As individual Christians, we can be a “good” person, regularly participate in meetings at church, even teach Sunday School, or we can even be a preacher, but if we are not regularly absorbing the Word of God and if we have not developed Biblical patterns of prayer, there will not be much genuine spiritual growth and there will be little of the fruit of the Spirit in our life.

I remember leading a group therapy session at a state-run drug and alcohol recovery center in which there was a pastor who had become an alcoholic, who was part of the group. I stressed this very thing – the importance of daily absorbing the Word of God to have the strength to live a Christian life. It was like a light bulb went off inside this pastor. He, as a busy pastor of a Bible-believing church, had neglected his own walk with the Lord, and he paid a high price for that neglect.

As we have already said, for consistent growth it is important that we regularly absorb the Word of God and that we regularly pray. There are times when our Bible reading routine will be interrupted; however, we must guard against regularly letting other things interfere with our time in the Word and with our time of prayer. These are the lifeblood of our walk with the Lord.

*Following are some suggestions for a meaningful time of daily Bible reading and a time with the Lord.*

1. Start your “quiet time” by finding a time and place where, as much as is possible, you can clear your schedule and be alone and uninterrupted.
2. As much as possible, clear your mind of everything else that would distract you.
3. I personally often start by praying Psalm 139:23-24.

**Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.** Psalm 139:23-24 (NIV)

4. Think back over the last few hours or days. Confess any known sin that you have not already confessed.
5. Now carefully and thoughtfully read through the passage of Scripture in your reading schedule. It is best to read the passage through several times.
6. Spend some time thinking about (meditating) what you have read and learned. Pray through the passage with thanksgiving and commitment. Worship and praise God in relation to the truths taught in the passage. This time of meditation can be a precious time of allowing God to speak to you, giving you understanding and insights that will sustain and strengthen your walk with the Lord.

*Scriptural meditation is to quietly and unhurriedly think about or to ponder Biblical truths, asking God for understanding, and submitting to the understanding and direction He gives.*

7. You may want to ask yourself questions about the passage you read, such as:
  - a. What are the major truths in this Scripture passage?
  - b. What are the instructions or principles for living?
  - c. Are there any direct or implied promises or warnings?
  - d. What can I learn about God from this passage?
8. Now, seeking the Spirit's direction, determine what actions or attitudes in your life need to be changed and brought into line with what you have learned from His Word. Then, determine that with His strengthening, you will work on making those changes.



9. Now spend some time in praise and thanksgiving and praying about current needs and those items on your prayer list.

Note: You may wish to jot down any blessings or insights you received. It is amazing how quickly we forget things. By writing them down it helps us to remember them and also have them available to share with others who can be encouraged and benefit from what we have learned.

## **Three Approaches to Reading and Absorbing the Word of God**

As you move along in your Bible reading/study program, you may wish to broaden your reading patterns. Following are some suggestions:

### *Approach One – repetitive reading*

Pick out a part of Scripture (a paragraph, a chapter, several chapters, or an entire book) that you can concentrate on and get to know and understand. Read all or part of this section every day for an extended period of time (a week, two weeks, a month, or perhaps even longer). This passage can be the core of your daily quiet time for several days. Instead of reading a lot of Scripture, read the same section of the Bible for several days. The reason for this is simple. We do not remember or understand everything we read the first time through. This is especially true of the Bible. It is rich in depth. The more we read a section of the Bible, the more we understand it and can put it into practice.

If the passage you choose to read repetitively can be read in one day, then read it all for several days in a row. If the passage is too long to read in one day, divide it up into sections that can be read in one day, and then read through it one section per day. Then re-read the entire passage (a section a day) several more times. It may take some time, but it pays rich rewards.

At the end of these studies (appendix 24) there is a two-year reading program for new Christians that is a good place to start if you do not already have a reading schedule in place.

### *Approach Two -- reading through the Bible, an overview*

At some point you should consider reading through the entire Bible. If you average two chapters a day, it will take you a little over a year and a half to read through the entire Bible. You don't have to be in a hurry -- take as long as is needed. Some chapters are longer and others quite short so you can be flexible in your reading.

This reading approach will give you a broad overview of Scripture. You will not understand or grasp all you read and in places you may feel overwhelmed or get bogged down. Keep on reading anyway. You may wish to alternate between reading Old Testament and New Testament books.

It may not be the best to use only this approach in your reading and study of the Word. "Approach One" should be the foundation of your Bible reading program. Once you have Approach One

going and you want to absorb some more, then a through-the-Bible reading program can be very beneficial.

### *Approach Three -- going deeper, studying God's Word*

As in "Approach One", read a verse or a few verses several times and spend some time thinking about what you have read.

Once you have read a passage several times, you may wish to look up information in Bible reference books. You need to be careful because many who teach false doctrine have written things that distort the Word of God or flat out teach false doctrine. It would be good to check with a knowledgeable conservative Bible teacher who believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that the Bible is literally true, before buying or using a particular study book.

Following are some Bible study reference books that can be helpful in our study and understanding of the Word of God:

A Bible that has notes that accompany the text, or a "study Bible", is sometimes quite helpful. The MacArthur Study Bible is a very good one. You can find one at [gtty.org](http://gtty.org).

To find more information about an individual, a place, or just about anything else mentioned in the verses you are studying, a good Bible dictionary will help. Two good ones are The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, published by Moody Press and the Wycliffe Bible Dictionary, published by Hendrickson Publishers.

To help understand the meaning of Bible verses, a good Bible commentary can be very helpful. The MacArthur Bible Commentary and the Wycliffe Bible Commentary are both good one volume commentaries.

The Bible Exposition Commentary by Warren Wiersbe is a five-volume set that is good.

The MacArthur New Testament Commentary is a very good thirty-three volume comprehensive study of the New Testament that is much more complete but is still fairly easy to understand. This is very helpful to anyone who wants to understand the Word of God, but it is especially helpful to those who teach the Word in one way or another.

Strong's Concordance and Naves Topical Bible are both reference books that can help you find the location of verses in the Bible.

If you would like to get a better understanding of the meanings of words in the Bible, a good expository Bible dictionary may be helpful. Some good ones are Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words by W.E. Vine, The Complete Word Study Dictionary by Spiros Zodhiates, Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words by William D. Mounce, and The Theological Wordbook by Campbell, Johnston, Walvoord, and Witmer.

*Note:* Looking up a word in a regular English dictionary (such as Webster's) is often not real helpful since words in the Bible often have quite a different meaning or shades of meaning than they do in our modern every day English language.

*Chapter Ten***Developing Biblical Patterns of Prayer**

In Colossians 4, there is a short but profound command given to the Colossian people and to all of us who are committed to following the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Devote yourselves to prayer...** Colossians 4:2a (NASB)

Being devoted to prayer is not just a sideline in our walk with the Lord. Rather, it is a fundamental part of being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not being devoted to prayer is evidence of a more shallow walk with the Lord.

Essentially all of us need to develop a deeper commitment to prayer and to praying as the Word of God teaches us to pray.

In many passages of Scripture, we are given instructions to pray, and we are also given instructions in how to pray.

There are instructions and examples for praying alone with the Lord and there are examples given for the church or groups of believers coming together to pray.

*Private Prayer*

**But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.** Matthew 6:6 (ESV)

**But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.** Luke 5:16 (NIV)

God instructs us to pray alone with Him. Often this can be a precious time of Bible reading, meditation, prayer, and communion with God. This is time when we can be alone with God and devote all our attention to Him.

*Prayer With Our Fellow Believers*

The book of Acts records the beginnings of the church. It records that the early Christians regularly met together for prayer. This was an ongoing commitment of the church.

**They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.** Acts 1:14 (NIV)

**They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.** Acts 2:42 (NASB)

**When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests**

**and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God...** Acts 4:23-24a (ESV)

**So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.** Acts 12:5 (NIV)

**"It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.' "** Luke 19:46 (NIV)

I believe that it would be legitimate to say that a church that does not meet often for prayer will not be a strong productive church.

To pray out loud in front of other people may be a scary step for some, but just remember that you are talking to God, not to people. Your heart's desire and prayer is more important than what you say or how you say it. Most other Christians will be encouraged by your prayer, even if you do feel awkward and nervous.

### *Family Prayer*

It has been said that families that pray together stay together. Husbands and wives need to pray together. It deepens their trust in the Lord and their love for each other. Parents must also teach their children to pray. Having family Bible reading and prayer times together is an absolute must for Christian parents in bringing up their children to know and serve the Lord.

The value and importance of daily praying for and with our children could hardly be overstated. For parents who are committed to raising godly children, praying for their children is a vitally important part of raising their family.

Following is a list of things that a parent who is committed to raising godly children can pray for. This is certainly not an exclusive list. The kinds of things a parent can and should pray for is essentially endless.

1. That your children will genuinely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. That your children will have a high view of God. (fear God)
3. That your children will regularly grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Word of God.
4. That your children will develop Biblical ways of thinking.
5. That your children will have faith in God.
6. That your children will be obedient.
7. That your children will choose good friends.
8. That your children will watch how they talk.
9. That your children will not drink or do drugs.
10. That your children will learn to control their sexual drive.
11. That your children will find a godly marriage partner.

### *Physical Posture and Prayer*

In the Word of God there are many examples of kneeling, bowing, or raising one's hands while praying. These postures can be evidences of things such as humbleness, submission, reverence, praise, and worship.

The Word of God does not teach us that we have to be in a particular physical posture to pray. We can pray from any position. Our attitudes and the condition of our heart are more important than physical posture. However, there are times when assuming one of these postures while praying can add meaning and depth to our prayer.

**Come, let us worship and bow down,  
Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.** Psalms 95:6 (NASB)

**And He (Jesus) withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray,** Luke 22:41 (NASB)

**When he (Paul) had said this, he knelt down with all of them and prayed.** Acts 20:36 (NIV)

**All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray.** Acts 21:5b (NIV)

**When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven.** 1 Kings 8:54 (NIV)

**For this reason I kneel before the Father,** Ephesians 3:14 (NIV)

**Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.** Daniel 6:10 (NIV)

**Then the man bowed down and worshiped the LORD, saying, "Praise be to the LORD, ..."** Genesis 24:26-27a (NIV)

**Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship.** Exodus 34:8 (NASB)

**I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer,** 1 Timothy 2:8a (NIV)

**Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven,...** Lamentations 3:41a (NIV)

**I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.** Psalms 63:4 (NIV)

**Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD.** Psalms 134:2 (NIV)

## The “Lord’s Prayer” -- A Biblical Pattern for Prayer

In Matthew 6 and in Luke 11, Jesus gives a pattern to follow when we pray.

**This, then, is how you should pray:** Matthew 6:9 (NIV)

**And He (Jesus) said to them, “When you pray, say: ...** Luke 11:2 (NIV)

Notice that this is a pattern for us to follow. It is not given as a prayer to be repeated word for word. It is not wrong to pray it word for word, but that is not the intent for giving this prayer.

This pattern for prayer in Matthew is as follows:

**Our Father who is in heaven,**

**Hallowed be Your name.**

**Your kingdom come.**

**Your will be done,**

**On earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**

**And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.** Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB)

Now let’s take a look at each part of this Biblical pattern for prayer.

### ***Our Father who is in heaven,***

A good earthly father loves, cares for, and diligently teaches his children. Our physical father loved us and cared for us, but he was human and had his weaknesses and failures. God, our spiritual Father, has no weakness and He is always faithful and just and He always keeps His promises. He deeply loves us. What a blessing to be a child of God our Father.

**As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.** Psalm 103:13-14 (ESV)

Notice that in this pattern for prayer it says “our Father”, not “my Father”. Since God is “our” Father, this pattern for prayer relates to the whole family of God. We not only pray for our own needs, we also pray for our brothers and sisters in the Lord, throughout the world.

Again, God is not an earthly human father. He is our Father “*in heaven*”. As our Father “*in heaven*”, He is the eternal sovereign God who created the universe and who has all power and who has all knowledge.

Carefully read the following Scriptures. They are just a few out of many that teach the sovereignty of God. Let them deepen your awe and reverence for our Father “*in heaven*”.

**The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not**

**live in temples built by hands.** Acts 17:24 (NIV)

**Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments ...**  
Deuteronomy 4:39-40a (NASB)

**He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.** 1 Timothy 6:15b-16 (NASB)

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.** Genesis 1:1 (NASB)

Because He is the sovereign God, the creator of the universe, we must have a deep reverential fear, awe, and respect for God. He is to be worshiped in every part of our life. These truths need to be reflected in our prayers to “*our Father in heaven*”. We must never let our thinking or our attitudes about God become shallow or casual.

### ***Hallowed be Your name.***

The root meaning of “hallowed” is holy. The eternal sovereign God and creator of the universe is holy. He is completely separated from all that is sinful or evil. The word “hallowed” also carries with it the idea of reverence and deep respect. God must be revered because of His holiness. *When we pray “hallowed be Your name”, we recognize and worship Him because He is holy.*

**Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?** Exodus 15:11 (NASB)

**The LORD Almighty is the One you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread,** Isaiah 8:13 (NIV)

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”** Isaiah 6:3b (ESV)

**Day and night they never stop saying:**

**"Holy, holy, holy**

**is the Lord God Almighty,**

**who was, and is, and is to come."** Revelation 4:8b (NIV)

This part of the prayer lifts God up to majestic heights that we, as sinful man, cannot begin to fathom. As a holy God, there is no tint of evil in His character. He is absolutely pure. He is totally and completely separated from all that is sinful or evil. Our human nature is so prone to sin and we are so surrounded by a world of sin that we cannot begin to fully grasp what it means to be holy.

Even though we cannot fully grasp what it means to be holy, we must recognize and acknowledge God as pure and holy. If we do not have a deep appreciation of God’s holiness, we will never even begin to correctly perceive or understand God. We will never be able to walk with Him in the way He desires us to walk, or to pray as He would have us to pray, or to worship as He would have us to worship.

If we do not understand God's holiness, we will never understand how far He went to bring us salvation. When we recognize God as an absolutely pure holy God, it helps us to realize how sinful we are. Recognizing God's holiness should cause us to repent and confess our sin, enabling us to come into His presence with a clean heart, ready to receive direction and blessing from Him.

When we worship God by living a godly life, we hallow God's name. When we recognize God as a holy God and we glorify Him by living clean pure lives, we hallow His name.

An Old Testament Biblical word that is the opposite of hallow or holy is "profane". To profane God's name is to treat Him as if He were a common ordinary being. To profane His name is to treat Him as if He were not holy and to not reverence His name.

**Do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the LORD, who makes you holy.** Leviticus 22:32 (NIV)

**They must be holy to their God and must not profane the name of their God.** Leviticus 21:6a (NIV)

If we are to seek God with all our hearts, and draw near to Him, we must grow in our understanding and awe of the holiness of God. We must acknowledge His holiness by the way we live and not profane His name. We must not let ourselves treat God in a casual or empty manner.

**Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him! Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth;** 1 Chronicles 16:29-30 (ESV)

We cannot genuinely pray "*hallowed be Your name*" without committing ourselves to living holy godly lives.

***Your kingdom come:***

The "kingdom of God" is speaking of the reign and of the authority of God. God has always been in control and He always will be in control. In this sense, the kingdom of God has always existed and it always will exist. There are numerous Scriptures which teach this.

**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.** Psalm 145:13 (ESV)

**The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.** Psalm 103:19 (ESV)

In the future, God will establish a visible physical kingdom that will never end or be destroyed.

**In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.** Daniel 2:44 (NIV)



As Christians, we pray that our Lord will return soon and establish His kingdom here on earth.

When we pray “Your kingdom come”, it is a prayer of submission to the authority of God in our own life. We cannot genuinely pray “*Your kingdom come*”, and then resist His rule and reign in our life.

Praying “Your kingdom come” is a commitment to action. We cannot pray, “Your kingdom come”, and then do nothing to promote the reign of God on earth. When we pray this prayer, it is a prayer of total commitment to working to advance the kingdom of God on earth. We do not seek to promote our own agenda; instead, our whole vision and our goal is to advance the kingdom of God on earth.

### ***Your will be done,***

Praying “Your will be done” is also clearly a prayer of personal commitment to doing the will of God. It is a complete giving up of our own will and totally surrendering to the will of God. It would be hypocritical to the very core to pray “Your will be done”, and be unwilling to do the will of God. Jesus Christ Himself is the ultimate example of submission to the will of God. The following verses show the depth of Jesus’ commitment to doing the will of God:

**He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.**

Mark 14:35-36 (NKJV)

There was in Jesus a dread of going to the cross. He was the holy, the righteous, and the pure Son of God. There was not the slightest hint of evil in His character; yet, He was about to hang on the cross and become sin. He was about to die and pay the penalty for our sin.

Jesus understood all this; yet, He chose to do the Father’s will and become sin for us. All our sin was put on Him. It is beyond our ability to comprehend how He could do this; yet, He did because He loved us and desires that we spend eternity with Him, and He was committed to doing His Father’s will.

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

We must choose to follow the example of Jesus and do the will of God.

**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

The purpose of prayer is not to get God to do our will. God never promises that He will give us everything our flesh desires. The whole purpose of the Christian life is to conform to the will of God. Our prayers must reflect this commitment.

**This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the**

**requests which we have asked from Him.** 1 John 5:14-15 (NASB)

**I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."** Psalm 40:8 (NIV)

### ***On earth as it is in heaven.***

This pattern for prayer given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ is apparently written in typical Jewish poetic style. This parallel poetic writing style indicates that the phrase, "on earth as it is in heaven", applies to all three of the petitions that come before it. In other words, we can very legitimately pray each of the following prayers:

*"hallowed be Your name on earth as it is in heaven".*

*"Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven".*

*"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven".*

Therefore, we pray that His name will be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven, that He will rule on earth as He does in heaven, and that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

In heaven, the name of God is revered, praised and worshiped. In heaven, no one rebels against the reign and authority of our holy God. In heaven, the angels quickly and eagerly serve God and do His will without questioning or doubting.

**Bless the LORD, you His angels, Mighty in strength, who perform His word, obeying the voice of His word! Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You who serve Him, doing His will.**

Psalm 103:20-21 (NASB)

We, too, are to eagerly and quickly follow His teaching – as it is done in heaven.

### ***Give us today our daily bread,***

Here the focus of the prayer changes. So far, the prayer has very clearly and directly focused on God. Now this part of the prayer deals with man's needs.

When we pray "*give us this day our daily bread*", we are praying for things such as food, shelter, clothing, health, and transportation.

Here in America, it may seem a little silly to pray for food. Most of us have food in abundance. In fact, many of us are more likely to pray, "Lord, help me not to eat so much" rather than asking God to supply more food.

However, in spite of our abundant provision, we are still to ask for our daily needs. When we pray for our daily needs, we are recognizing that we are completely dependent on Him for our daily needs and it is God who gives us the ability to work and earn money so that we can provide for ourselves and our families. If it were not for the Lord, we would have no food, shelter, clothing, transportation, health, or anything else. We need to be thankful for all that God has supplied for us. Praying "*give us today our daily bread*" reminds us that God is our provider and it should cause us to thank and praise Him

because He has so abundantly provided for us.

We need to remember that we are praying for “our” daily bread. That means that we are praying for the physical needs of our fellow Christians as well as for our own needs. In many parts of the world, they do not have the abundance that we have here in America. Many pray for daily provision because they do not have much food or sufficient shelter. We need to pray with these brothers and sisters in the Lord that God will provide their basic necessities of life.

***Forgive us our debts,*** (Matthew 6:12) ***Forgive us our sins,*** (Luke 11:4)

To pray “forgive us our debts” is the same as praying for forgiveness of sin. When we sin, we incur a debt to God. When we genuinely confess sin and ask for forgiveness, all of the sin and the debt is forgiven.

In order to correctly understand this part of the prayer, we need to understand two kinds of Biblical forgiveness.

### 1. Judicial Forgiveness

The first kind of Biblical forgiveness is what is sometimes called “judicial forgiveness”. When an unsaved person genuinely repents of his sin and puts his faith in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for his sin, then that person’s sin is forgiven. All his sin – past, present, and future -- is forgiven. When his sin is forgiven, he is justified, and righteousness is credited to his account. He becomes a child of God, and he will spend eternity with God forever.

**In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,** Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV)

### 2. Parental Forgiveness

The second kind of forgiveness is what is sometimes identified as “parental forgiveness”. When a person who is already genuinely saved commits sin, his fellowship with God and his joy are interrupted. He is still a child of God, but the Spirit of God is being hindered. When a Christian confesses his sin, the Spirit again has control of that person’s life and fellowship with God is restored, and that person can resume growing in his walk with God.

One example of parental forgiveness is in the life of King David. David was a child of God; yet, he sinned grievously. When David was confronted with his sin, he admitted his sin and repented.

**Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD" – and you forgave the guilt of my sin.** Psalm 32:5 (NIV)

The book of 1 John was written to Christians. One of the reasons this book was written was to teach Christians how they could have fellowship with the Father, with fellow Christians, and how their joy

could be full. In the first chapter, John writes,

**If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.** 1 John 1:6-10 (NASB)

In 1 John we are taught that Christians sin and need to confess that sin for ongoing fellowship with God and fellowship with other Christians, and so that their joy will be complete.

*In this pattern for prayer given in Matthew by our Lord Jesus Christ, the phrase “forgive us our debts” or “forgive us our sins” is referring to parental forgiveness, not judicial forgiveness. When Christians refuse to repent and to confess their sin, it robs them of their fellowship with God, their fellowship with other Christians, and of their joy.*

***... as we also have forgiven our debtors.***

Christians are clearly instructed to forgive one another. These instructions are given in numerous passages of Scripture.

**Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.** Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

When we pray, “as we also have forgiven our debtors”, we are recognizing our responsibility to forgive, and it is a commitment to obey these instructions. If we are unwilling to forgive, we are being disobedient and cannot honestly and sincerely pray any of this God-given pattern for prayer.

A simple practical definition of forgiveness is: *Choosing not to hold on to anger or to desire revenge.*

Many people have trouble forgiving someone who has wronged them. For Christians, one very practical way to forgive is to simply to choose to let God handle the revenge. God promises that He will repay and that He will do it justly. When we make the mental choice to let God handle it and that we will no longer desire revenge, then it is not so hard to fully forgive.

**Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.** Romans 12:17-20 (NIV)

To refuse to let go of the desire for revenge or to get even with someone is to rebel against God and to believe your way of handling the situation is better than God's way. You think that you are more capable of handling the situation than God is. This kind of an attitude will lead to trouble.

To forgive is a mental choice. We choose to let God handle the revenge and we make the mental choice to forgive. However, we may still have negative feelings, but, with time, the feelings will come

into line with our mental choice to forgive. However, if we never make that mental choice, our feelings of anger and unforgiveness may never completely leave us.

Our forgiving a person is not conditional on that individual's repentance, or on his asking for forgiveness, or on his making restitution. We are to forgive, even if they do not repent, ask for forgiveness or make restitution. This kind of forgiveness allows a person to be at peace with himself and to have fellowship with God.

Matthew 6:14-15 adds a footnote at the end of this prayer that has been misunderstood by some.

**For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.**

Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV)

Some have taken this to mean that before God can save us, we must forgive those who have sinned against us. This would make our salvation dependent, at least partially, on our own works rather than one hundred percent on God.

A key thing to remember is that in this prayer it is talking about parental forgiveness, not judicial forgiveness. This is a prayer for Christians to pray, not for the unsaved. The prayer of an unsaved person is a prayer of repentance and accepting the free gift of salvation. This is a prayer of Christians asking for forgiveness (parental forgiveness) and restoration of fellowship and joy in our walk with God.

***Lead us not into temptation,***

Christians not only desire to be forgiven of sin, we also desire to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ by daily living a godly life. When we pray "lead us not into temptation", we are committing ourselves to living a holy life – separated from sin and evil. We don't want to sin and we want to avoid temptations to sin.

Christians continually need to be on guard, ready to resist temptation.

**Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.** Matthew 26:41 (NIV)

Since Jesus Himself was tempted, He is able to help and strengthen those who are being tempted.

**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.** Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV)

God promises us that we will not be tempted more than we can resist.

**No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make**

**the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.** 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

After Jesus was baptized, He was tempted by Satan. In these temptations He drew strength from the Word of God. In all three of the temptations, Jesus quoted Scripture. Our source of strength in times of temptation is the Word of God. We need to daily absorb the Word so that we can be strong when we face temptations.

In order to live a clean life and grow in our walk with God, we should avoid situations where we know we will be tempted. If we are overweight, we should try to avoid extra trips to the kitchen and fast-food restaurants. If we are tempted to drink, we should avoid driving by what was our favorite bar. If we are tempted to look at pornography, we should avoid places where it is sold, and avoid being alone while on a computer. If we know that certain friends or acquaintances tend to drag us down spiritually, we should find new friends. This list could go on and on. Each one of us needs to look at our own life and commit ourselves to doing whatever is necessary to gain victory over temptation and live a life that glorifies our Lord Jesus Christ.

***Deliver us from the evil one.*** (NIV)

It is fitting that the final request in this prayer is that we be delivered from Satan and from all his evil influences and deception. Satan is the archenemy of God. He is “full of fury”. He hates God and he hates God’s people. If he could, he would destroy every Christian; he would destroy the Word of God; and he would destroy every non-Christian to keep them from coming to God.

However, I do not believe that we need to focus on Satan, nor is it wise to do so. If we keep our focus on the Lord Jesus Christ, Satan will not have power over us.

**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.** James 4:7-8a (ESV)

**You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.** 1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

When we pray “deliver us from the evil one”, it is far from a light frivolous prayer. It is a prayer of complete submission.

It is a prayer that we will walk close to the Lord.

It is a prayer of commitment to putting on the whole armor of God.

It is a commitment to be alert and self-controlled.

It is a commitment to stand firm in the faith.

It is a commitment to not give the devil even the smallest foothold in our life.

***Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.***

This prayer ends with a victorious statement of praise for our Father who is the supreme sovereign Lord over all.

**Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.** 1 Chronicles 29:11 (NIV)

Remember, the “Lord’s Prayer” is a pattern for prayer. It was not given as a prayer to be repeated word for word. When we pray, we need to remember this pattern and customize it to fit our individual situation, but always keeping in mind the fundamentals as given in this prayer.

## **Key Biblical Teaching Relating to Prayer**

*It is God’s will for us to regularly (continually) pray.*

Psalms 139 and many other passages teach us that God is always with us at all times. We must develop a consciousness of the ongoing continual presence of God in us and surrounding us, and we must get in the habit of regularly talking to Him throughout the day.

**Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (KJV)

**And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.** Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

**...rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;**  
Romans 12:12 (NKJV)

**Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;**  
Colossians 4:2 (NASB)

**Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,** Luke 18:1 (NASB)

**...but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.**  
Acts 6:4 (NKJV)

**Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**  
Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

**‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’** Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV)

**You do not have, because you do not ask God.** James 4:2b (NIV)

As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can and should pray regularly throughout the day. We do not have to be in a particular position to pray nor do we have to close our eyes to pray. We can pray when we are still in bed, as we get ready for the day, while doing dishes, while working at our desk,

while playing a game of golf, and even while we are driving a car, or essentially any other time of the day or night.

Notice how many times in these verses that we are instructed to give Him thanks. Thanksgiving must be an ongoing part of our prayer life. Thank Him for who He is and what He has done for you. Thank Him for the difficult times which help you to grow in your walk with Him. If we are not thankful, our prayer life is not going to be very effective.

Learn to regularly pray. Pray for a deeper walk with the Lord. Pray for your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Pray for your family and friends. Pray for the unsaved. Talk to God about your problems and your worries and let Him take care of them. Tell Him about the things you need. When you have decisions to make, ask Him for direction and wisdom. Talk to Him about anything and everything!!!

*God promises positive answers to prayer when basic conditions are met.*

God does not promise to immediately give us everything that we pray for. There are some conditions to promises relating to prayer. Following are some of these Biblical conditions:

### *1. When We Live Obedient Lives*

God promises to answer the prayer of a righteous person. Christians cannot hold on to sin and rebellion and still expect God to answer their prayers.

**And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.** 1 John 3:22 (NKJV)

**Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.**  
Psalm 37:4 (ESV)

**He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them.**  
Psalm 145:19 (NKJV)

**For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”** 1 Peter 3:12 (ESV)

**If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;** Psalm 66:18 (NIV)

**Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.** Isaiah 59:1-2 (NIV)

**if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.** 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)

**The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.** James 5:16b (NIV)



## *2. When We Ask in Accordance with His Will*

**This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him.** 1 John 5:14-15 (NIV)

In the pattern for prayer given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 6, we are instructed to pray as follows:

**Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.** Matthew 6:10 (NASB)

The Word of God reveals the will of God. When we regularly live-in submission to the Word of God and follow the leading of the Spirit of God, we can be assured that we are doing the will of God. When we allow the Word and the Spirit to control us, our prayers will be in tune with the will of God and we can expect positive answers to our prayers.

## *3. When We Remain in the Word of God*

**If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** John 15:7 (NASB)

**If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.** Proverbs 28:9 (ESV)

One who regularly neglects the Word of God cannot expect God to answer his prayers.

## *4. When We Pray in Jesus' Name*

**Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.** John 14:13-14 (NASB)

**You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.** John 15:16 (NASB)

It is Jesus who died for us and made it possible for us to become the children of God. We come to the Father in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus always acts in accordance with the will and purpose of God. Prayers that are genuinely offered in Jesus' name are the prayers that are in tune with the will and purpose of God.

When we pray in accordance with His will, we are praying in the name and authority of Jesus. We know that God will answer the prayers of those who come to Him in the name and authority of His own Son.

## 5. *When We Pray Without Doubt*

**Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.** Mark 11:24 (NKJV)

**But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.** James 1:6 (NIV)

**He answered their prayers, because they trusted in Him.** 1 Chronicles 5:20b (NASB)

When we live righteous lives and pray in the will of God, we can pray with confidence. We know that God will accomplish His own will and purpose. God promises positive answers, and He wants us to pray with confidence.

Answered prayer does not depend on the amount of faith that we can drum up by ourselves, but instead it depends on faith given to us by God in order to accomplish His own will and purpose. When we are committed to glorifying God and walking with Him, then He gives us the faith to act and pray in accordance with His will and purpose.

The way to greater faith is not to superficially try to drum up more faith from within ourselves, but to develop a sound Biblical understanding of God and to deepen our walk with Him and our confidence in Him.

*We are to keep on praying and not give up.*

One thing we soon learn in our Christian life is that God often does not answer our prayer as quickly as we would like. This does not mean God is not answering; it means that God, in His wisdom, knows what is best and He is working to accomplish His own will and purpose. Sometimes that means that we may not see immediate answers to our prayers.

God's timetable is not the same as ours. Sometimes we must wait.

**But for you, O Lord, do I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.**  
Psalm 38:15 (ESV)

**I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry.** Psalm 40:1 (NIV)

**In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.** Psalm 5:3 (NIV)

**Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.** Psalm 27:14 (NIV)

**But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.**  
Micah 7:7 (NIV)

In Luke 11:5-10, Jesus teaches that we are to be persistent and not give up praying.

Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Luke 11:5-10 (NASB)

## Learning More About Prayer from Biblical Examples of Prayer

In order to further deepen our understanding of prayer, we are going to look at some of the prayers of the Apostle Paul that are recorded in the Word of God.

We can learn much about prayer by examining these and other Biblical prayers.

In the following prayer, Paul prays that the Colossians would *"be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,"*.

**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 will 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 (NASB)**

Paul prayed this prayer so that the Colossians would...

- ...walk in a manner worthy of the Lord,
- ...please Him in all respects,
- ...bear fruit in every good work
- ...increase in the knowledge of God;
- ...be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might,
- ...be steadfast and patient;
- ...joyously give thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

These expectations show us Paul's reasons for praying as he did. This is an amazing prayer that makes many of our prayers seem shallow. We need to learn from these prayers and seek to add more depth to our own prayers.

In the following prayer, Paul prays that the Ephesians would be *"strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,"*.

**For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

Ephesians 3:14-19 (ESV)

Paul prayed this prayer...

...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith –  
 ...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,  
 ...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In the following prayer, Paul prays that *“the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation”*.

**I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.**

Ephesians 1:16-19a (NIV)

Paul prayed this prayer...

...so that you may know Him better.  
 ...in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.

In the following verses, Paul prays for the Thessalonians. There is a lot we can learn from these two verses.

**We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.** 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NIV)

Paul prays for the Thessalonians in relation to their work, their labor, and their endurance.

The faith of the Thessalonians resulted in their working for the Lord. They did not work to be saved but rather they worked because they were saved. The Thessalonians labored because they had a godly love. Labor in a more intense word than work. Their faith inspired them to work and their love motivated them to work even harder. Hope looks forward to all that God has for us in the future. Their looking forward to what was ahead for them caused them to be faithful. They did not quit their hard work and labor. They were faithful.

Paul thanks God for the Thessalonians and He prays for their work, their labor, and their faithfulness.

In the following verses, Paul gives the Colossians instructions in how he would like them to pray for him. This gives us a very good lesson in what should be the desire of our own hearts and how we would like others to pray for us.

**Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.** Colossians 4:2-4 (NASB)

Most of us need to take a good hard look at our prayer life and commit ourselves to praying as Jesus taught us to pray, and to adding content to our prayers like the prayers of the Apostle Paul and other Biblical men of faith.

## Praying for Individual Needs

The prayers we have looked at so far are Biblical examples of lofty noble prayers. After looking at these prayers, we may wonder if it is okay to pray for our ordinary daily needs. The following are examples of prayer for more ordinary kinds of needs.

**Give us this day our daily bread.** Matthew 6:11 (KJV)

In the Lord's prayer we are instructed to pray for our daily physical needs. When we pray "*give us today our daily bread*", we pray that God will regularly supply our physical needs such as food, a home, clothing, health, and transportation. Even though we may have plenty, we still pray and thank and recognize God as our provider.

Throughout the Bible there are examples of prayer relating to different kinds of situations one faces in life. Here are some Biblical examples of praying for specific needs.

Those who are in trouble should pray.

**Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray.** James 5:13a (NIV)

The early church prayed that Peter would be released from prison.

**So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.**  
Acts 12:5 (ESV)

Paul prayed that he would be able to come and minister in Rome.

**...in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.** Romans 1:10 (NIV)

Hannah, who was barren, prayed for a son.

**She made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, ...**

1 Samuel 1:11a (NASB)

Elisha prayed for safety when threatened by the Syrian army.

**And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha prayed to the Lord...**

2 Kings 6:18a (ESV)

You can be sure that Jonah prayed when he was inside the stomach of a large fish.

**Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the stomach of the fish,** Jonah 2:1 (NASB)

Jacob prayed for protection from his brother Esau.

**Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children.** Genesis 32:11 (NIV)

Moses prayed that his sister, Miriam, would be healed.

**So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"**

Numbers 12:13 (NKJV)

This list could go on for several pages. The important thing to know and remember is that we can and should specifically pray about the various specific needs and situations that arise in our lives.

Many Christians and churches have not been taught or challenged to consistently pray, and, as a result, many seem to totally miss it when it comes to prayer.

If we are to grow in our walk with the Lord and if we want to teach our children to have a meaningful prayer life, then we need to work on developing better habits of prayer.

**Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.** Colossians 4:2 (NIV)

## Biblical Prayer Requests and Commitments

These are Biblical prayer requests that you can pray for yourself, for your family, your church family, and for others.

### ***A. Relating to Our Walk with God -- Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.*** Psalm 86:11 (NIV)

1. You will hallow (or reverence) God's name. The Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6
2. God will reign in your life. The Lord's Prayer (Thy kingdom come), Matthew 6
3. The Word of God will dwell in you richly. Colossians 3:16
4. The Spirit of God will enable you to correctly understand Biblical truth. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13
5. You will be continually filled with the Spirit of God. Ephesians 5:18
6. You will be filled with the fruit of the Spirit. (love, joy, self-control, etc.) Galatians 5:22-23
7. You will know and do the will of God. The Lord's Prayer, Colossians 1:9
8. You will be strengthened with power through the Spirit of God in your inner being. Ephesians 3:16
9. You will be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29
10. You will earnestly seek God with all your heart. Psalm 63:1, Jeremiah 29:13
11. You will draw near to God. James 4:8
12. You will live and walk by faith. Hebrews 11:5, Jude 1:20
13. You will know God's love that surpasses knowledge. Ephesians 3:19, 1 John 3:1
14. You will love God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:28-31
15. You will put Biblical love into practice. 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13
16. You will be devoted to praying as the Word teaches us to pray. Matt. 6:9-15, Luke 11:1-13, Colossians. 4:2
17. You will be faithful in prayer and will not give up. Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18
18. Your motives for praying will be right. James 4:3
19. You will have wisdom. Ephesians 1:17, James 1:5
20. You will not believe or accept ungodly counsel or distorted Biblical teaching. Acts 20:30, Psalm 1:1
21. You will be delivered from Satan and all his deceitfulness. Matthew 6:13, John 17:15, Ephesians 6:10-18
22. You will continually grow in your walk with God. 2 Peter 3:18
23. You will look forward to all that God has ahead for us. Hebrews 6:17-20, Revelation 21:1-4
24. Your whole being -- spirit, soul and body -- will be blameless at His coming. 1 Thessalonians 5:23
25. You will remain faithful until death. 2 Timothy 4:6-8

### ***B. Praise and Thanksgiving -- In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*** 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NASB)

1. Thank and praise God for His death on the cross and for your salvation. 2 Corinthians 9:15
2. Thank and praise Him for your many spiritual blessings. Ephesians 1:1-14
3. Thank and praise Him for your family.
4. Thank and praise Him for daily physical blessings and for your health.
5. Thank and praise Him for the difficult times in life that strengthen your faith. James 1:2
6. Thank Him for \_\_\_\_ (You fill in the blank.).

### ***C. Relating to Our Way of Life -- But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*** 1 Peter 1:15-16 (NIV)

1. You will actively seek to live a holy life. 1 Peter 1:15-16

2. You will consider yourself dead to sin and selfish desires. Romans 6
3. You will avoid every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:22
4. God will search your heart and reveal any sinful way in you. Psalm 139:23-24
5. You will present yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness. Romans 6
6. You will be filled with the fruit of righteousness. Philippians 1:11
7. You will not become weary in doing good or lose heart. Galatians 6:9, Hebrews 12:3
8. You will not be angry but forgiving as God has forgiven you. The Lord's Prayer, Colossians 3:13
9. You will be a good steward of all that God has given you. Matthew 25:14-30, 1 Corinthians 4:2
10. You will not love money and will be content with what you have. Philippians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 6:6-10
11. All your attitudes and your actions will please and glorify God. 1 Corinthians 10:31, Psalm 19:14

***D. Relating to Evangelism -- Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."***  
Matthew 9:37-38 (ESV)

1. You will be an active witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:20
2. God will open the door for you to present the gospel. Colossians 4:3
3. You will declare the gospel clearly and fearlessly. Ephesians 6:20, Colossians 4:4
4. Pray for individual family members, friends, and others who are lost. Romans 10:1
5. God will send workers with the gospel to the lost all around the world. Luke 10:2, Acts 1:8
6. The gospel message will spread rapidly and be honored. 2 Thessalonians 3:1
7. God will protect His messengers by the power of His name. 2 Thessalonians 3:2, John 17:11
8. Pray for individual missionaries that you know (or know about). Ephesians 6:19-20

***E. Relating to Fellow Believers and Our Families -- Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*** 1 John 4:11 (NIV)

1. Your love will increase and overflow for fellow believers. 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 1 Corinthians 13
2. You will faithfully pray for fellow believers. Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16
3. You will encourage, build up, and serve fellow believers. Hebrews 10:23-25
4. You will control how you talk about others. Ephesians 4:29
5. God will protect believers worldwide who suffer persecution because of their faith. 1 Corinthians 12:26
6. Your marriage will be strong and that you will love and respect your wife/husband. Ephesians 5:22-23
7. You will actively teach your children (grandchildren) to walk with God. Deuteronomy 11:19-20
8. Your children (grandchildren) will be obedient and respectful. Ephesians 6:1-3

***F. Relating to Our Daily Needs -- Give us today our daily bread.*** Matthew 6:11 (NIV)

1. God will supply your daily needs. The Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6
2. You will have good health. 3 John 2a

***G. Relating to Those Who Are in Positions of Authority -- Pray... ...for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.***  
1 Timothy 2:2 (NIV)



## Chapter Eleven

# Has Science or Evolution Disproved the Bible?

## Why include this topic in our study?

Science, especially biology, as taught in essentially all public educational systems teaches that all that exists came into being by completely natural forces. It is either directly taught or strongly implied that there is no creator. This kind of teaching in public schools (and on television, the internet, and in other places) has caused many students to question or abandon their faith in God and in the reliability of the Bible.

John Dunphy, a well-known secular humanist and evolutionist, wrote the following:

*"...the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public-school classroom...in whatever subject they teach...pre-school, day care, or large state universities...an arena of conflict...the rotting corpse of Christianity...and the new faith of humanism."*

When individuals who grew up in church but left the church after leaving home were asked why they abandoned their faith, one of the main answers was that they now believed that science had discredited or even disproved the Bible.

Parents need to prepare their children to face the teaching they will receive in school, on television, the internet, and in other places.

## What do we believe about the Bible?

As Christians, we believe that the Bible is exactly what it claims to be – God's revelation of truth to man.

**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.** John 17:17 (NKJV)

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

**All Scripture is inspired by God...** 2 Timothy 3:16a (NASB)

Divine inspiration is the activity of the Holy Spirit whereby He enabled the Biblical authors to receive God's special revelation and to speak it and write it in their own language and style, without any error or omission.

**... for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.** 2 Peter 1:21 (NIV)

**Every word of God is flawless.** Proverbs 30:5a (NIV)

**And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.** Psalm 12:6 (NIV)

The speakers and writers of God's words were inspired in the sense that they were acted upon by the Holy Spirit to produce God's truth in human language. The words written by Biblical authors are, in fact, the very words of God.

**For this reason, we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.** 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (NASB)

There are numerous Scriptures which teach that the Bible is the revealed Word of God. In the Old Testament there are well over 500 statements such as, "The word of the Lord came to me saying", or a similar statement.

Considering these Biblical claims, if the Bible were not God's revelation of truth to man, it would be the biggest forgery ever in the history of mankind.

## **What does the Bible teach about creation?**

The Bible clearly teaches that God created all that exists, which includes the entire universe, the earth, and all life, including all mankind.

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.** Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

**All things were made by Him (Jesus); and without Him was not anything made that was made.** John 1:3 (KJV)

**For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.** Colossians 1:16-17 (NIV)

Not only was the universe, including the earth, created by God, but mankind and all other life was a direct creation of God.

**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.** Genesis 1:27 (NASB)

**In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.** Genesis 5:1-2 (NKJV)

**But at the beginning of creation 'God made them male and female'.** Mark 10:6 (NIV)

According to the Bible, creation was clearly a supernatural act of God. Genesis 1 and 2 are historical narrative that record actual historical events. These Biblical accounts are not fables, allegories, or myths.

## What is evolution?

Evolution is the belief that all the universe, including the earth, and all life, including man, came into existence by purely natural means with no action or input by God or any other intelligent being.

Most secular evolutionists believe that all matter in the universe came into existence when a tiny speck of “nothing”, which was less than a million times smaller than the period at the end of this sentence, exploded and formed all the material or matter that makes up the entire universe today. Over some fourteen billion years, the universe, without any design or designer or any other outside input, developed into the incredibly complex massive universe that exists today. They attempt to explain how a tiny speck of “nothing” produced everything.

Evolution believes that all life began by a chance coming together of just the right lifeless chemicals and other ingredients, and that they spontaneously came to life without God or any other intelligence involved in any way. Life then evolved one small step at a time, until over many hundreds of millions of years the first accidental single living cell accidentally reproduced and has since produced all forms of life that exist today, including all of us.

Evolution teaches that all life forms, including all plants and animals, descended from a common ancestor, that first accidental living cell.

The theory of evolution is constantly changing. Much of what was accepted as fact yesterday is rejected today, and much of what is accepted as fact today will be rejected in the future. Within the ranks of evolutionary science there are many disagreements. Essentially every idea or concept in evolutionary theories is rejected by other leading evolutionists.

When evolutionary science says something is true, what is really being said is that this is what some evolutionists currently believe.

Evolution is a faith that for unknown reasons “nothing” exploded and in an unknown way the universe was formed. Unknown chemicals with unknown origins came together in an unknown way at an unknown place at an unknown time using an unknown process to produce a living cell which for an unknown reason began to multiply following an unknown complex pattern that followed extremely complex information in its DNA which came from an unknown source.

Michael Ruse, a leading evolutionist, wrote the following: *“Evolution is promoted by its practitioners as more than mere science. Evolution is promoted as an ideology, a secular religion--a full-fledged alternative to Christianity with meaning and morality. ...evolution is a religion. This was true of evolution in the beginning, and it is true of evolution still today. ... evolution came into being as a secular ideology, an explicit substitute to Christianity. I am an ardent evolutionist and an ex-Christian, but I must admit that in this one complaint...the literalists are absolutely right. Evolution is a religion.”* Michael Ruse, ‘Saving Darwin from the Darwinians,’ “Nation Post”, May 13, 2000.

## Assumptions of Evolution

Today and over the last century or so those who have led in the development and promotion of the various models of evolution base their theories and beliefs on four fundamental assumptions.

*Assumption One:* There is no creator God.

*Assumption Two:* The earth is billions of years old.

*Assumption Three:* Life itself began with an unplanned random chance gathering of non-living chemicals. Non-living chemicals gave rise to life and the ability to reproduce life.

*Assumption Four:* All the past history of our globe must be explained by what is happening now. (uniformitarianism) This automatically rules out creation and a worldwide flood.

It needs to be understood that not all evolutionists are atheists. However, most of the leading promoters and developers of evolution are. Many clearly state this in their writing and their speeches.

Listen to what some leading evolutionists have written:

Isaac Asimov -- *"I am an atheist, out and out. I've been an atheist for years and years..."*

Richard Dawkins -- *"...understanding evolution led me to atheism."*

Julian Huxley -- *"...man is just as much a natural phenomenon as an animal or plant ... his body, mind, and soul were not supernaturally created but are the products of evolution ... he is not under the control or guidance of any supernatural being or beings, but has to rely on himself and his own powers."*

Charles Darwin -- *"...the Old Testament from its manifestly false history of the world...was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindus, or the beliefs of any barbarian."*

William B. Provine, Professor of Biology, Cornell University -- *"Let me summarize my views on what modern evolutionary biology tells us loud and clear: There are no gods, no purpose, no goal directed forces of any kind. There is no life after death. When I die, I am absolutely certain that I'm going to be dead--that's the end for me. There's no ultimate foundation for ethics, no ultimate meaning to life ..."*

Richard Lewontin -- *"It is not the methods and institutions of science that compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes us to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated, moreover that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a divine foot in the door."*

George Wald, Harvard University Nobel Laureate -- *"I do not want to believe in God; therefore I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible: spontaneous generation arising to evolution."*

Belief in a creator is often strongly opposed and sometimes ridiculed by secular scientists and in many media sources. They believe the Biblical record of creation is an outdated ancient document with little or no truth in it and the Bible's account of creation is nothing more than a myth that is on par with other ancient mythological accounts of creation.

Creationists and evolutionists have the same data and evidence to work with, but their conclusions are very different. Two very well educated and very well qualified scientists will look at the same evidence and come to very different conclusions because one has a faith in an intelligent powerful

supernatural creator God and the other has faith in spontaneous generation and random chance (luck) with no supernatural involvement.

**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.** 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV)

## What is science?

*Fundamentally, science is a systematic study of the structure and behavior of the present observable natural physical world. The purpose is to gain knowledge and understanding about the physical universe, including the earth. A hypothesis is developed and then tested by repeatable, observable experimentation.*

Notice that science is based on *present observable phenomena*. Science is a systematic study of information gained from direct observation, study, and experimentation.

By using this method of scientific study, men have been able to make remarkable discoveries and achieve remarkable results. They have been able to design and make complex powerful computers, put men on the moon, make giant powerful telescopes, study the human genome, learn how to cure diseases, and many, many other remarkable achievements.

Genuine science does not deal with things such as philosophy, religion, or history. One cannot go back and experiment with or repeat what took place in ancient history.

Unrecorded history is not observable or repeatable and conclusions are not based on science. Conclusions are often determined by world view, not by observable science.

Charles Darwin stated, “...*I am quite conscious that my speculations run beyond the bounds of true science...It is a mere rag of a hypothesis with as many flaws and holes as sound parts.*”

Richard Dawkins, who was a professor at Oxford University, is recognized by many as being the leading evolutionist of our time. In his book, The Greatest Show on Earth, he states that his goal is to bring together all of the strongest scientific evidence for evolution.

However, in his book, Dawkins discounts observable science and emphasizes inference and logic. In his view, the study of science “strongly infers” that evolution has occurred and is still occurring.

As I (Phil Benedict) was reading this book by Richard Dawkins which is supposed to bring together all the best evidence for evolution, I began writing down some words and phrases that he regularly used. All of the following words or phrases are used numerous times in his book: “*probably*”, “*I suspect*”, “*I am confident*”, “*I think*”, “*are likely*”, “*it is a good bet*”, “*surely*”, “*it might*”, “*we can expect*”, “*we can get the idea*”, “*we are pretty confident*”, “*it seems quite likely*”, “*it seems highly plausible*”, “*it could it be that*”, “*it seems*”, and “*it is easy for us to imagine that*”. These kinds of non-scientific words or phrases are frequently used and some of them are used many times. Again, Dawkins de-emphasizes empirical testable science and stresses logic, and his logic is the logic of one who denies the existence of God and denies any kind of supernatural involvement on earth.

Dawkins is not the only evolutionist who repeatedly uses this kind of language. Randy Gulluzza who is both an engineer and a medical doctor and a dedicated creationist, in his book, Clearly Seen, lists all the following phrases that are used by evolutionists when describing the so-called appearance of a new life feature. They talk about “*apparent design*”, or “*a complex system*”, “*appeared*”, “*emerged*”, “*arose*”, “*gave rise to*”, “*burst onto the scene*”, “*evolved itself*”, “*derived from*”, “*was on the way to becoming*”, “*radiated from*”, “*modified itself*”, “*became a miracle of evolution*”, “*was making transition to*”, “*manufactured itself*” and the best of all, a system was “*lucky*”.

This kind of language reflects the logic of the writer far more than it reflects understanding gained from empirical testable science.

## **What is the relationship of science and the Bible?**

The Bible clearly teaches that God created the universe, the earth and all life, including man.

God also created the laws which govern the forces of nature, such as gravity, laws of motion, conservation of mass and energy, laws of thermodynamics, and electrostatic laws. These are the kinds of laws which science seeks to understand.

*God is supernatural and is not bound or restricted by the natural laws which are the foundations of genuine science.*

The Bible cannot be scientifically proven to be true. The Bible is a book filled with supernatural events. Creation, the flood, the ten plagues on Egypt, God using Elisha to bring a dead child back to life, appearances by angels, the virgin birth of Christ, the healing miracles of Jesus, raising Lazarus from the dead, the resurrection of Jesus, the second coming of Jesus, the future destruction and re-creation of the earth and universe, the New Jerusalem, the future judgments, heaven, hell, and many, many other events are all supernatural in nature. Supernatural events cannot be scientifically explained. To attempt to give scientific explanations for all the supernatural events in the Bible is an exercise in futility and it discredits the supernatural God who gave us the Bible.

The Bible is not a scientific textbook, but when it makes a statement that relates to a field of science, it can be trusted.

**It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,** Isaiah 40:22a (NASB)

**(God) hangs the earth on nothing.** Job 26:7 (NASB)

**The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course.** Ecclesiastes 1:6 (NIV)

**All the rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea is not full; To the place from which the rivers come, there they return again.** Ecclesiastes 1:7 (NKJV)

Again, the Bible cannot be scientifically proven to be true; however, we believe that logic and testable observable science strongly support creation as taught in the Bible. Many very well trained and very well qualified scientists believe that the evidence clearly supports creation.

The Bible itself gives the fundamental reason why its teachings are rejected by many people, including scientists.

**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.** 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV)

**...always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.** 2 Timothy 3:7 (NIV)

## Claimed Scientific Evidence for Evolution

Evolutionists like to point to at least three things as evidence or “proof” of evolution.

### *1. Natural Selection*

Natural selection is the ability of living things to make physical changes that enable them to live and thrive in their environment. Creatures with physical traits best suited for survival in a given environment are better able to survive and reproduce than those who do not have those features.

*Both creationists and evolutionists agree that natural selection takes place.*

Life forms can and do change to adapt to their environment. The beak of a finch can change and adapt to effectively feed in the environment where it lives. Dogs that have developed long hair will survive in northern Alaska better than short haired dogs. Evolutionists vehemently claim that this proves that evolution can and does occur.

However, while the beak of a finch may adapt, the finch remains a finch. It will not evolve into a robin or a blackbird. The long-haired dog remains a dog.

Let’s look at what the Bible teaches in Genesis 1.

**Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.**

Genesis 1:24 (NASB)

The phrase “*after their kind*” is used ten times in Genesis 1. That phrase means that when an animal, or any other kind of life, reproduces, its offspring will be like its parents. While an animal may adapt to its environment, it does not change into an entirely different kind of an animal. A frog will not eventually turn into a lizard or anything else. It and its offspring will always be frogs. Cats and dogs may adapt but dogs remain dogs and cats remain cats. There are no dats, cogs, or togs.

We need to understand that the Biblical “kind”, as used in Genesis 1, does not necessarily correspond to the modern biological classification of “species”. God did not give us an exact definition of “kind”, but the important thing to understand is that according to the Bible, living things will always reproduce after their own kind.

*Natural selection cannot produce new features such as legs, hands, ears, eyes, lungs, etc. It can only deal with the existing features.* If fish evolved into a frog, and the frog evolved into a lizard, and the lizard evolved into an alligator, many new features would have to form. This, however, is beyond the scope of natural selection.

Every living thing has a built-in blueprint (DNA) that determines what kind of living thing it will be. A dog has a dog's blueprint; a cat has a cat's blueprint; and a worm has a worm's blueprint. Our DNA contains genes that determine things such as hair color, skin color, sex, etc. Every one of our trillions of cells, except for red blood cells, contain this blueprint or this information.

When God created life and programed our DNA, He designed the DNA with the versatility to make small scale changes and adapt to various environments. Modern studies of the genome have shown that DNA does have the versatility to make these kinds of changes. Genuine natural selection does not require major changes in the genetic code or DNA. It simply takes advantage of the versatility God has already programed into the DNA.

Natural selection deals with fine tuning existing DNA, not with the addition of vast amounts of new DNA information that would be necessary for a frog to turn into a lizard, or a lizard to change into an alligator.

Modern studies of the genome have clearly shown that natural selection leads to a loss of genetic information, not an increase. *Natural selection does not produce major changes in the genetic code, and it does not add information to the code.*

Many well trained biologists have stated that, by far, the vast majority of mutations are harmful, not beneficial. In fact, many of the diseases such as sickle-cell anemia, hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, and many others, are the direct results of DNA mutations.

Dogs and many other kinds of living creatures can be selectively bred to produce a variety of characteristics in that kind of animal. Many evolutionists, past and present, including Charles Darwin, believed that because animals can change through selective breeding programs, it proves that major evolutionary changes can occur.

However, selective breeding cannot produce a totally different kind of animal or a different "species" or "kind" of life. While it can produce many different kinds of dogs, the dogs will remain dogs; pigeons will remain pigeons; and cattle will still be cattle. Selective breeding programs cannot turn cats into dogs or pigeons into crows.

Stephen J. Gould, a leading evolutionist, wrote in "Natural History", *"We fancy ourselves as the only true students of life's history, yet to preserve our favored account of evolution by natural selection, we view our data as so bad that we never see the process we profess to study."*

## 2. The Fossil Record

Fossils are the preserved remains or traces of land or sea life, plants, and other organisms that lived in the past.



For vertebrate fossils to form, the carcass of the animal has to be buried by sediments or volcanic ash soon after death. Special PH conditions and the right chemicals have to be present in the soil to make sure the hard parts are not dissolved.

Evolutionists love to point to fossils as proof of evolution. They repeatedly claim that the fossil record gives evidence or even proof that life evolved from simple to very complex life forms. Essentially every high school and college textbook repeatedly makes these claims. We are told that fossils show wholesale changes to living things over vast amounts of time.

However, like other so-called evidence for evolution, fossils, do not show evidence of genuine evolution. The development or evolution of a totally new kind or species has never been observed in nature and there is no fossil record of it ever happening.

### *The Cambrian Explosion*

Fossils of clams, snails, sponges, jellyfish, and many other life forms all appear suddenly in the fossil record in what is known as the Cambrian fossil explosion. Cambrian rock layers contain many animal fossils but there are very few in the Precambrian rock layers below them. Trilobites appear suddenly with no record of a transition from a single celled life form. They all appeared at the same time, not in different evolutionary ages. Precambrian rock layers show almost nothing besides blue-green algae and bacteria.

Evolutionists are unable to satisfactorily explain why such richly diverse aquatic life forms appear so suddenly with no trace of evolutionary ancestry in lower (Precambrian) rock layers.

While the Cambrian explosion does not support evolution, it is very consistent with the worldwide flood of Noah's time. The Cambrian explosion gives evidence of massive mud flows, very quick burial, and death on a global scale. This massive flooding and the laying down of many sedimentary layers very quickly are exactly what would happen in a worldwide flood as described in the Bible.

### *Lack of Transitional Fossils*

If evolution were true and life did evolve from simple life forms to very complex advanced life forms, then there should be many thousands, even millions, of transitional fossils. If a lizard evolved into an alligator there would have been fossils of many in-between life forms.

In the past and in recent history, billions of fossils have been found. However, in the entire fossil record there is no clear-cut evidence of any transitional fossils, when there should be many thousands of them.

Dr. Colon Patterson, who was the senior paleontologist at the prestigious British Museum of Natural History, wrote the following about transitional fossils (missing links): *"I will lay it on the line—there is not one such fossil for which one could make a watertight argument"*.

Stephen Gould, a leading evolutionist, stated, *"The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology"*.

In most high school and college biology text books there are drawings or a chart that show a transition from an ape to modern man. It is also seen in many museums, and in various other media. The first picture or figure is an ape and the last is a man. In between are several drawings or figures that show transitional forms from apes to men. This chart is supposedly based on known transitional life forms; however, every one of these so-called intermediate life forms have been shown to be invalid by evolutionists themselves.

The lack of transitional fossils or the many missing links has led to a frantic search by many paleontologists to find missing links. This search has led to many false claims and even to some outright frauds. Evolutionists, like all the rest of us, have a sin nature. When that sin nature is not restrained by a commitment to honor the Lord, there is a strong tendency to stretch, twist, or to interpret their findings to fit their preconceived ways of thinking.

One example is a "feathered dinosaur" fossil from China, named "Archaeoraptor", which supposedly proved birds evolved from dinosaurs. Later, this was called a "total hoax" by "National Geographic" magazine. (November 1999). This is only one example. There are numerous others.

### *Living Fossils*

The fossil record is not a record of increasing complexity. There are many fossils that evolutionists claim are hundreds of millions of years old that are essentially identical to living life forms today. There have been no significant changes over the so-called millions of years of evolution. These are sometimes identified as "living fossils". Known examples of living fossils include the coelacanth fish (fossil coelacanths are believed by evolutionists to be 340 million years old), Gingko trees (125 million years), crocodiles (140 million years), horseshoe crabs (200 million years), the Lingula Lamp Shell (450 million years), Neopilina molluscs (500 million years), and the tuatara lizard (200 million years).

In the Cambrian explosion, there are many fossils of life forms that are essentially identical to life forms today. If evolution is real, then after the supposed 500 million years of evolution they should be very different, but they are not. They are still essentially the same. Examples of this are starfish, snails, sponges, jellyfish, clams, sea urchins, segmented worms, trilobites, and octopus. Why don't they show millions of years of gradual evolution???

These "living fossils" make no evolutionary sense whatsoever. In reality, there is no genuine evidence of large-scale changes in the fossil record.

### *Soft Tissues in Fossils*

In the 1990's dinosaur bones with intact blood vessels and even blood cells and other soft tissue were found. Evolutionists have tried, but have failed, to explain how a supposedly 50-million-year-old fossil still has un-fossilized soft material in bones.

Other fossils with hair, feathers, and even skin have been found. Scientists found a squid fossil with an ink sack, and they were able to write with the ink after water was added. Fossils with molecules of protein, pigments, collagen, intact DNA, and soft parts of the eye have been found. A pliable marine

tube worm was found in Precambrian material, which secular scientists date at 551 million years old.

Red blood cells, collagen, protein, and soft tissue in dinosaur bones and other fossils have been found. This is very strong evidence that dinosaurs are not millions of years old.

Soft tissue has been found in human Neanderthal bones that secular scientists believe to be millions of years old.

Since these discoveries, creation scientists have also found numerous fossils with soft tissues and have verified these findings. In Alaska they have found un-fossilized dinosaur bones.

The problems these findings pose for evolutionists are obvious. If a fossil is millions or hundreds of millions of years old, why are there still these kinds of un-fossilized soft tissues in the bones?

Soft tissues in fossil bones strongly support the Biblical teaching of a young earth.

### *Polystrate Fossils*

Polystrate fossils are tree fossils that stand straight up through many layers of sedimentary rocks that evolutionists believe were laid down over many millions of years. Did that tree really live for millions of years while the layers of rock were slowly and gradually laid down around it? In reality, layers of sediment around trees standing straight up had to form very quickly. Again, this is exactly what would be expected from a worldwide flood.

### *Carbon-14 in Fossils*

Carbon-14 is produced in the atmosphere and absorbed into plants which, in turn, are eaten by animals. The carbon-14 then becomes imbedded into the tissue of the animals. When the animal or plant dies, the radioactive carbon-14 begins the process of decaying into the daughter element which is nitrogen-14.

Carbon-14 is a radioactive isotope with a maximum life of 100,000 years. It has a very short half-life of less than 6,000 years. If the whole world were made of carbon-14, it would all be totally gone in 100,000 years. Therefore, it would be impossible for anything over 100,000 years old to have carbon-14 in it.

Scientists have found carbon-14 in many fossils. This is strong evidence that they could not possibly be over 100,000 years old. They could not be millions of years old and still have carbon-14 in them.

According to the Bible, the earth is about 6,000 years old, not millions or billions of years old. This date is supported by carbon-14 which is found in many fossils and even coal beds which are remains of living things.

The kinds of findings covered in this section pose no problems for creation scientists who believe in the literal accuracy of the Word of God. According to the Bible, the flood occurred a little over four

thousand years ago and creation scientists believe that the vast majority of the fossils were buried during the flood.

### 3. Radiometric Dating

To begin this section, we need to have a general idea of what radiometric dating is. In igneous rocks there are unstable atoms called radioisotopes. Over time, these unstable “parent” elements will decay into entirely different stable “daughter” elements. Over time, the amount of the unstable parent element decreases and the amount of the stable daughter element or isotope increases.

Some examples of this kind of decay are: uranium decays into lead; carbon-14 decays into nitrogen-14; thorium decays into lead; potassium decays into argon; rubidium decays into strontium; and samarium decays into neodymium.

By measuring the amount of the parent element in a rock and comparing it to the amount of the daughter element in that rock, it is felt that the age of the rock can be quite accurately determined. This decay is measured in half-lives which is the estimated amount of time it takes for half of the level of the parent element left in the rock to change into the daughter element. After ten half-lives of decay, the rock has essentially none of the parent element left. It has all decayed into the daughter element.

Radiometric dating is cited by many to be strong evidence for billions of years old earth, which would be necessary for evolution to occur.

Currently, secular science believes the age of the earth is about 4.5 billion years. By using the Biblical dates and times given in genealogies, we find that the Biblical age of the earth is about six thousand years.

*Scientists who believe in and depend on radiometric dating make three fundamental assumptions about this dating system. These assumptions must all be true or the whole system becomes unreliable.*

These three assumptions are as follows:

**Assumption One:** The rock or rocks being tested have remained a closed system during their entire existence. The amount of the parent and daughter isotopes have not been altered by anything except the radioactive decay within that rock. Neither the parent element nor the daughter element has exchanged atoms with any of its surroundings at any point in its existence.

If anything has added to or taken away from either the parent or the daughter element, the determined age will be inaccurate. This assumption cannot be known for sure unless the rock was tested when it was first formed.

**Assumption Two:** The second assumption is that there was none of the daughter element in the rock when that rock was formed. They assume that when the rock was formed it contained a known amount of the daughter isotopes which, in most cases, was believed or assumed to be zero. If there was any of the daughter element in the rock when it was formed, the determined age will be inaccurate.

**Assumption Three:** The third assumption is that the rate at which the radioactive decay takes place is constant over the entire life of the rock or element being measured. If the rate of decay varied at any point in the history of the rock, again the determined age will be inaccurate. There are things such as moisture which can affect the decay rate in some instances.

### *The RATE (Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth) Project*

In 1998 the Institute for Creation Research launched an eight-year study to determine the accuracy of radiometric dating methods. This was called the RATE (radioisotopes and the age of the earth) project. This was a very technical study done by very well qualified Ph.D. scientists who have been actively involved in scientific research. They used only the finest labs and committed themselves to using the most safe and accurate methods of testing and study. They cut no corners and spared no expenses (over seven million dollars) in order to come up with correct and accurate results.

The findings of the RATE team, as well as numerous other studies that have been done, have cast serious doubts and raised some very critical questions about the reliability of radiometric dating.

The RATE project research centered around four major areas.

#### *1. Different Radioisotope Ages from the Same Rocks*

Remember that there are at least four kinds of mother-daughter elements that are used in radiometric dating. Uranium decays into lead; carbon-14 decays into nitrogen-14; thorium decays into lead; potassium decays into argon; rubidium decays into strontium; and samarium decays into neodymium.

If radiometric dating is a reliable way of dating rocks, then testing the same rock sample by each of these pairs of parent-daughter elements should give very close to the same age for each of the rocks being tested.

In order to test this, the RATE team collected a number of different rock samples from several different key locations and they had each rock tested by using several different parent-daughter radioisotope pairs. They used the same leading laboratories that are used by secular scientists to do their experiments.

What they found was that rock samples tested by different parent-daughter combinations gave vastly different ages for the rock samples being tested.

The first rock sample gave dates of 841 million years using one parent-daughter combination, 1 billion 60 million years using another combination, 1 billion 250 million years using another set, and 1 billion 375 million years using another.

Another sample was dated at 1 billion 240 million years, 1 billion 655 million years, and 1 billion 883 million years.

A third rock sample was dated 516 million years, 1 billion 111 million years, and 1 billion 588 million years.

Notice that in this test there is over a billion years difference in the ages given for that one rock sample.

Can a system that is this far off be reliable and trusted?

## *2. The Helium Content in Present Day Zircons*

Flecks of black mica in granite contain microscopic pieces of zircons which contain uranium atoms. Uranium atoms decay into lead and then into helium. Zircons are believed to be some of the oldest minerals on earth. Helium is a fast moving and slippery element. By measuring the amount of helium in the zircon, the age of the zircon can be estimated.

Helium diffuses or leaks out from the zircons very rapidly, and if the earth is millions of years old, there should not be any helium left in these crystals; yet there is. This points to a young earth, not a millions of years old earth.

If the rate of decay were constant at today's rate, all the helium in the atmosphere today would accumulate in less than two million years. That is not nearly enough time for evolution to occur. The RATE project showed there is strong evidence of very accelerated decay during the flood, so even the two million years old estimate is too old.

## *3. The Carbon-14 Content in Coal and Diamonds*

Carbon-14 is found in all living plants and in animals which eat plants. It is also found in the remains of living things such as fossils, petrified wood, shells, coal, oil, and natural gas. It is also found in some inorganic materials such as marble, graphite, and diamonds.

Carbon-14 has a very short half-life of 5730 years, which means that it decays very quickly into the daughter element which is nitrogen-14. It totally disappears in a few thousand years. Even if the whole earth was made out of carbon-14, it would be totally gone in less than a million years.

Yet, carbon-14 is repeatedly found in many materials that are claimed to be many millions, or even billions, of years old. Carbon-14 that is in coal today is from the plants that were buried in thick layers, were compressed, and turned into coal.

Carbon-14 exists in all fossils and the amount is essentially the same. This should lead to the conclusion that all the fossils are young and that they all lived essentially at the same time and were buried at the same time just a few thousand years ago. This is extremely significant and strongly supports a young earth and a global flood.

They discovered that diamonds are one of the inorganic materials which contain carbon-14. Diamonds are one of the hardest and believed to be one of the oldest materials on earth. Secular science has assumed their age to be from one to three billion years old.

The RATE team decided to test to see if any carbon-14 could be detected in diamonds. This was an experiment that was not known to have been done by any other scientists, either secular or creationist.

To the surprise of the RATE team, they found very significant amounts of carbon-14 in diamonds. They found nearly 100 times the minimum detectable level of carbon-14. This strongly points to a very young earth, and the RATE team concluded that the diamonds dated back to creation itself which was just a few thousand years ago. If the earth was millions or billions of years old, then the carbon-14 in diamonds would have decayed long ago.

The existence of carbon-14 in coal and diamonds very strongly supports the Biblical indications that the earth is a few thousand, not billions, of years old.

#### *4. Radiohalos and Fission Tracks*

Most all granite contains a black flaky mineral called biotite which contains tiny zircon crystals. These zircon crystals contain uranium atoms embedded in the structure of the zircon.

In uranium, occasionally the atom's nuclei will split apart. This is called nuclear fission. The two parts of the atom fly apart and they leave trails of damage in the zircon crystals. These trails are called fission tracks, and they can be seen under a microscope. These abundant fission tracks cause damage and discoloration in the material around it. This damaged discolored area is known as a radiohalo.

The number of fission tracks is observable, measurable evidence of how much nuclear decay has occurred in that crystal.

The amount of decay needed to form any given radiohalo can be calculated, so it can be determined how much decay occurred in the formation of that radiohalo.

Again, the RATE team's research pointed to a young earth.

Also, according to the RATE team, their findings strongly imply that nuclear decay has been very accelerated at some time in the past. They believe that some five hundred million years of decay occurred in one year, the year of the flood.

#### *Conclusions of the RATE Team*

1. A large amount of radioactive decay has occurred.
2. The decay rate has been greatly accelerated at certain times in the earth's history.
3. The conventional radiometric dating methods are unreliable.
4. Creation and the flood are historical events. They really happened as the Bible states.

The conclusion of this study strongly pointed to a six-thousand-year-old earth, not to a millions or billions of years old earth.

#### *Other Observations Relating to Radiometric Dating and the Age of the Earth*

1. The dating of a fossil must be consistent with the age of the rocks around it. If it isn't, then at least

one of them is not correct. Yet, most of the time, the radiometric dating of the rocks around fossils give very different ages than the dates assigned to the fossil itself.

2. When lava flows that are known to be very young are tested using radiometric dating, the radiometric dating often gives very wrong dates.

Lava from Mt. St. Helen's, which erupted in 1980 and is now only about forty years old, was dated at 2.8 million years old. Another test showed it to be 350,000 years old.

Two-hundred-year-old lava from the volcano Kilauea, which is in Hawaii, was dated at 22 million years old.

Hualalai (in Hawaii), which erupted in 1800-1801, was dated at 160 million years old and at 3 billion 300 million years old.

Lava flows that flow from the rim of the Grand Canyon to the bottom of the canyon have to be younger than the canyon itself, but radiometric dating dated these flows to be millions of years older than rocks from the bottom of the canyon.

One rock that was tested had a piece of wood embedded in it. The wood had to be older than the rock which had formed around it; yet, the rock was dated at 230 million years and the wood was dated at 34 thousand years.

If rocks of known age are millions, even billions, of years wrong, then how can we trust the dates given to rocks of unknown age?

*Radioisotope dating is not the only way to test and estimate the age of the earth. There are other ways to estimate the age of the earth that are not related to radioactive decay.*

1. The oceans are constantly getting more salty. There are about 450 million tons of salt being added to the oceans every year. If the earth is hundreds of millions or billions of years old, the oceans would be far more salty than they are now.

2. Oceans cover about two thirds of the earth's surface. Every year millions of tons of sediments are being carried by the earth's rivers into the oceans. If the earth is billions of years old, there would not be much land left and the sediments on the bottom of the ocean would be much thicker than they are now.

3. Comets can only be about 10,000 years old. Every orbit that a comet makes around the sun causes some of the ice to melt, which causes the comet to lose mass. Comets cannot begin to last for millions or billions of years. To solve this problem, some secular scientists have proposed the existence of "Ort" clouds and/or hyper-belts which supposedly replenish the mass of the comet. The only problem is that there is absolutely no scientific evidence that such a cloud or belt even exists or ever has existed, and they have never been observed through telescopes or space satellites. It's a made-up idea by secular scientists to answer the comet melting problem.

4. Every year the moon moves away from the earth about four centimeters. If the universe is billions



of years old, the moon would be much farther away from us.

5. Supernovas are the remains of stars that exploded. The number of supernovas in the Milky Way galaxy is far less than would be expected if the galaxy were billions of years old.

6. Dr. Tas Walker, when giving a talk on creation, showed a rock that was given to him that had been picked up on a beach. One side of the rock was a normal looking rock. However, when it was turned over one could easily see a small toy truck embedded in the rock. The rock was a very normal looking rock, but it had to be very young. It had to have been formed after small metal toy trucks were being manufactured.

*"I suspect that the sun is 4.5 billion years old. However, given some new and unexpected results to the contrary, and some time for some frantic recalculation and theoretical readjustment, I suspect that we could live with Bishop Ussher's value for the age of the earth and sun. I don't think we have much in the way of observational evidence in astronomy to conflict with that."* John Eddy, quoted by Kazmann, RG., 1978, "It's About Time: 4.5 Billion Years". "Geotimes" 23:9 pp .18-20

## Problems for Evolutionists

Evolution cannot legitimately explain:

The origin of matter.

The origin of life.

The extreme complexity of the simplest of cells.

The origin of extremely complex information systems in simple cells.

The absence of transitional fossils.

Static fossils.

Polystrate fossils.

Red blood cells and soft tissue in fossilized bones.

Un-fossilized dinosaur bones.

Evolutionists believe that the entire universe, including the earth, is becoming more and more complex. Yet, natural laws dictate that closed systems when left to themselves deteriorate rather than increase in complexity.

Genuine information has to have an information giver and an information receiver. Complex information does not "evolve" by itself. Yet, before a cell could form or reproduce, extremely complex information and an information holder had to exist. According to evolution, the unimaginably complex information and information storage system all came together by accident.

## Attempts at Compromise

The opposition from secular science has led many in Christian circles to try to blend and synchronize the Biblical account of creation with evolutionary teaching. Many Christians, including many Christian colleges and universities, accept evolution and attempt to reconcile the Biblical teaching with contemporary teachings of evolution.

Some teach that Genesis 1 is not historical narrative, but, instead, it is a form of poetry and not to be taken as literal history. They believe that it conveys a general idea or sense of truth about origins and creation, but that it should not be taken as actual literal history.

A simple definition of a historical narrative is that what is written is a true and accurate account of what happened, who did it, and when, where, and why they did it. Hebrew poetry such as is in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastics, Song of Solomon, and sections of numerous other books, is a distinctly different style and way of writing than historical narrative. One does not have to be a Hebrew scholar to tell the difference between the straight forward narrative of Genesis 1 and poetic passages such as are in the books mentioned above.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. Essentially every leading Biblical Hebrew scholar has agreed that it was the intent of the author of Genesis 1:2–2:3 to teach that creation took place in six literal twenty-four-hour days.

Many others, including very well educated and qualified research scientists also strongly agree. They strongly believe that Genesis is accurate historical narrative and that it is true as written.

The reason some Christians take Genesis 1 as a poetic or symbolic passage is to attempt to reconcile the Bible's teaching on creation with modern evolutionary theories.

*This brings up a very serious question. When the Bible and man, including modern science, disagree, who do we believe, God or man??? Who is the highest authority, God or man??? When God and man disagree, should we attempt to reconcile God's Word with man's way of thinking or do we evaluate man's teaching by the truth of Scripture???*

Following are three ways that are used in trying to blend the Bible's teaching with evolutionary teaching. Each is distinct, but those who accept these ideas may draw from more than one of them to defend their belief.

### *Compromise Attempt One – The Gap Theory*

Carefully read the following two verses which are the first two verses in the Bible.

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.** Genesis 1:1 (NIV)

**Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.** Genesis 1:2 (NIV)

Those who believe in the gap theory believe that there were millions or even billions of years between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. There are different versions of the gap theory, but in general they believe that God created the world perfect, but when Satan fell and was cast out of heaven, the earth “became formless and void”. Some believe that the creation account in Genesis 1 is a re-creation after Satan's fall. They believe evolution occurred during this supposed time gap between verses one and two.

Many of those who have promoted the gap theory believed that the word “was” in Genesis 1:2 should

be translated “became” which is a secondary meaning of the Hebrew word. Instead of, “*the earth was formless and void*”, they think it should be, “*the earth became formless and void*”. The Hebrew does not support this and the context of the verses does not support it.

There is no Scripture or genuine Biblical teaching that teaches or implies that there is a gap between the first and second verses of Genesis 1, or that there was a first creation and then a second creation. The gap theory is simply not supported by Scripture. It is nothing more than an attempt to make the Bible compatible with man’s evolutionary beliefs.

The gap theory is not widespread today, but there are a few who still believe it.

### *Compromise Attempt Two -- Theistic Evolution, Progressive Creationism, or The Framework Hypothesis*

Each of the above beliefs have their own distinctives, but they all believe in essentially the same concept. They believe that evolution occurred as taught today by secular evolutionists, but that God directed evolution or that He intervened from time to time as He was needed. They are basically evolutionists who believe that God played a role in the history of life by guiding evolution.

They believe God was involved in creation, and that the Biblical teaching relating to creation must be understood and interpreted in a such a way as to accommodate modern evolutionary teaching. This view does not take the Biblical account of creation and other passages of Scripture that relate to creation as historical narrative or literal truth. According to many of them, Moses, the human author of Genesis, thought that he was writing a correct account of creation, but, in reality, his account is basically untrue.

They also do not believe that Noah’s flood was a worldwide event, but rather it was simply a large local flood.

This view of creation and evolution is taught by many “liberal” Christians and many “Christian” colleges and universities.

The fundamental question here is, “Is the Bible true and reliable?” Is the Bible an inspired, inerrant revelation from God, or is it a book written by “good” men, but not necessarily inerrant and inspired by God?

We, who accept the Bible as God’s revelation of truth, believe that Genesis 1-2 is God’s true and accurate revelation to us about the origin of the universe and mankind. It clearly identifies God as the creator. On the other hand, evolution is man’s attempt to explain man’s origins without God.

### *Compromise Attempt Three – The Day/Age Theory*

The day/age theory teaches that the six days of creation were not literal twenty-four-hour days but instead were long periods of time. They believe the six days of creation were millions, or even billions, of years long. They believe and teach that this allows for all the time necessary for evolution to occur. They mix this belief with some form of theistic evolution as dealt with in the previous

paragraphs. Many professing Christians strongly advocate this day/age theory and they strongly defend theories of evolution.

### *The Biblical Usage of the Word "Day"*

In everyday speech there are at least three ways the word "day" can be used. The following sentence uses all three of them:

In my father's *day* it took four *days* to drive to Texas while driving only during the *day*.

In the Bible, the primary meaning of the word "day" is a literal 24-hour day. The secondary meaning is a long period of time, such as when we say "in that day and age". It can also refer to the daylight part of a day.

In the Bible, if a secondary meaning of a word is meant, it is indicated by the context surrounding the word. The question is, "Does the context of Genesis 1 indicate anything other than a 24-hour day, which is the primary meaning of the word "day"?". The answer is no. There is absolutely nothing in Genesis 1 that indicates that we should understand the word "day" to mean many thousands or millions or even billions of years. Just the opposite is true. The text very strongly indicates a literal 24-hour day is what is being referred to.

In the Bible, "evening" and "morning" are used with the word "day" at least eleven times, six times in Genesis 1. *Without exception*, every time "evening and morning" is used with the word day, it is referring to a normal 24-hour day.

**And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day.** Genesis 1:13 (NIV)

**And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.** Genesis 1:19 (ESV)

Notice that these verses do not say "there was evening and morning the first one hundred million years".

**"For seven days no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh which you sacrifice on the evening of the first day shall remain overnight until morning.**  
Deuteronomy 16:4 (NASB)

In the Bible, when the word "day" is used with a number (first day, second day, fourth day, sixth day, etc.), again, it always, *without exception*, refers to a normal literal 24-hour day.

**God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.** Genesis 1:5 (NIV)

**In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.**  
Genesis 8:14 (NASB)

When the words "day" and "night" are used together, again, it always refers to a 24-hour day.

Carefully read the following verses. God uses the creation days to teach about the sabbath day.

**Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. Exodus 20:8-11 (NASB)**

If the days of creation are millions of years long, then apparently you and I are supposed to work hard for many millions or even billions of years and then we are to rest for millions of years. That means that I, as a 74-year-old man, have to work hard for many more millions of years before I can go rest. And I'm getting sooo tired, and sooo sleepy ...

Some have said that each of the six days of creation are actually a thousand years long. Those who suggest this use the following verses to support their belief:

**But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 2 Peter 3:8 (NASB)**

**For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. Psalm 90:4 (NIV)**

Notice that it does not say "a thousand years in your sight *are* a day"; rather it states that "a thousand years in your sight are *like* a day".

Verses like these are simply teaching that our view of time and God's perspective of time are totally different. God is eternal. He has no beginning and no ending. Our life span is not even a drop in a big bucket in God's perspective on time. Many Scriptures refer to our fleeting life span.

Psalm 90:4 also states that a day is like a "watch in the night". A watch in the night was four hours long. If you are trying to make each day of creation a thousand years long, then according to Psalm 90:4 you must also make each day only four hours long. It can't be both.

These verses simply do not teach that each day of creation is one thousand years long. Even if the six days of creation were each a thousand years long, it would not begin to be enough time for evolution to occur.

Essentially every noted Hebrew scholar who has dealt with this question of the length of the days of creation has stated that the intent of the Genesis 1 record of creation is to teach that creation occurred in six literal 24-hour days.

Jesus Himself taught that men and women were created "from the beginning" of creation, not billions or millions or even thousands of years after He began the creation process.

**But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, ... Mark 10:6-7 (ESV)**

If man appeared millions of years after the first life on earth, then Jesus Himself was confused and did not understand what took place at creation.

*Can evolution and the Biblical record of creation be harmonized?*

If God did use evolution as the means of creation, and evolution really happened as it is taught today, then the Bible is wrong in several key areas.

First, let's look at the Biblical order of creation and compare it to the order of development as taught by essentially all evolutionists.

In the following chart, the order of the Biblical account of creation is given in the first column. The order of development as taught by evolutionists is given in the second column. The number in the parenthesis in the evolution column tells what day that particular item was created according to the Bible.

**The Biblical order of creation and the order of development as taught by most evolutionists**

1. The water covered earth	1. All matter in the entire universe began with a "big bang". was created first by God.
2. Light..... Day 1	2. The universe, sun, stars, and light came first. (Creation day 4, 1)
3. Atmosphere..... Day 2	3. Earth – (In the Bible, the earth was created first.)
4. Land.....Day 3	4. Oceans – (In the Bible, this is before the six days of creation.)
5. Plants..... Day 3	5. Life began when a cell formed in a primordial soupy pond.
6. Sun, Moon, Stars.....Day 4	6. Life in ocean – (In the Bible, this is creation day 5.)
7. Fish.....Day 5	7. Fish – (In the Bible, this is creation day 5.)
8. Birds.....Day 5	8. Plants -- (In the Bible, this is creation day 3.)
9. Land Animals.....Day 6	9. Land animals – (In the Bible, this is creation day 6.)
10. Man.....Day 6	10. Birds -- (In the Bible, this is creation day 5.)
	11. Man -- (In the Bible, this is creation day 6.)

Notice the order is very different.

Notice that, according to the Bible, the earth was the first part of the universe that was created. This occurred before the following six days of creation. This is laughable according to many secular scientists who strongly believe that the earth was formed billions of years after the big bang and after the formation of the whole universe, including stars and galaxies.

Evolution says that the sun, moon, and stars came into being before the earth after the "big bang" in which "nothing" exploded and formed the universe. The Bible teaches that the sun, moon, and stars were not created until day four after the earth was fully formed and functioning.

The Bible teaches that God created the earth covered with water. Evolution teaches that water did not appear on earth until billions of years after the earth was formed, most likely after being struck by a huge icy meteorite or many meteorites. According to evolution, the oceans were formed billions of years after the formation of the earth.

Evolution says fish existed before plants. The Bible teaches that plants were created before fish. Evolution strongly teaches that land animals appeared before the birds. The Bible states that the birds were created before land animals.

*If evolution is true, then God was either careless, confused, or dishonest when He revealed the order of creation to Moses, the human author of Genesis.*

The Bible clearly teaches there was a worldwide flood. However, the Biblical flood account does not square with evolutionary theories. Therefore, those who try to reconcile the Bible and evolution also have to reject the teaching of a worldwide flood and say that the flood was only a local flood.

If Genesis 1-11 is not reliable history, and the Bible's record of creation and of the flood are unreliable, then *at what point in the Bible does it become accurate history???*

If we believe in evolution, then we have to deny the accuracy of the Biblical account of the creation of Adam and Eve. According to evolution, men and women evolved over millions of years. According to many evolutionists, the Biblical account of the creation of Eve is hilarious.

If evolution is true, then we are not all descents of Adam and Eve as the Bible clearly teaches.

Genuine evolutionists have rejected all supernatural events. If evolution is God's way of creation, and the Biblical account of creation and the flood are not historically accurate, then we have to ask, "Did the other supernatural events recorded in Scripture really happen as recorded?". Is the virgin birth of Christ real? Did Jesus really raise Lazarus and others from the dead? Did Jesus Himself really raise from the dead? Will the earth be destroyed by fire as the Bible teaches? On what grounds can we deny the reality of some supernatural events as recorded in the Bible, such as creation, but turn around and say other supernatural events really happened as recorded in the Word of God?

If we don't believe what God said about the beginning of the earth is true, then can we believe what He says about the ending of the earth?

The Bible states that Adam lived for 930 years. If God created Adam on a millions of years long creation day six, then Adam would have been created, lived and died all on creation day six. This clearly does not square with Scripture.

### *The Role of Death in the Bible and in Evolution*

Now for a moment let's consider the role of death in both evolution and in the Bible.

The Bible clearly teaches that death came about as a result of sin.

**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so**

**death spread to all men, because all sinned.** Romans 5:12 (NASB)

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

**For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.** 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (NASB)

The Bible clearly teaches that God created a perfect world. Before sin, there was no suffering or death.

This is in stark contrast with the teaching of evolution. Survival of the fittest is a core teaching in evolution. The strongest and the most fit survive while the weak die off so that the strong can survive. Obviously, in evolution, death has no relationship to sin.

We need to ask ourselves, “Is death and suffering a result of sin as the Bible teaches, or have death, pain, disease, suffering, and extinction been tools in the hand of God for millions of years to eliminate the weak and to insure the survival of the strongest?

*Is it really God’s plan that only the strongest people live while weak people die off? Did He use death and survival of the fittest to kill off all the weak people??? Was this God’s “very good” plan??? That is not the kind of God that I serve!!!*

*If evolution is true and death is not a result of sin, then the Bible’s whole teaching on salvation is incorrect.*

The New Testament identifies Jesus as both our Creator and our Savior.

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.**  
John 1:1-4 (NASB)

**He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him (Jesus) all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.** Colossians 1:15-16 (NIV)

**...in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.** Hebrews 1:2 (NASB)

Are these Scripture true or are they not? What right do we have to say that the Biblical teachings about Jesus and salvation are true, but deny the Biblical teaching about Jesus and creation?

We cannot believe Biblical teaching about Jesus as our Savior, but deny Biblical teaching about Jesus and creation. We have to accept all of His claims or reject them all as being untrue or questionable.

As we have already seen, down through the years almost all of those who have led in developing the various theories of evolution have repeatedly denied the existence of God. Evolution begins with the



assumption that there is no God or creator. This presupposition, not verifiable science, is the foundation of evolution.

Did Christians really misunderstand Genesis 1 and 2 for some 4,000 years until Darwin and other evolutionists and atheists came along and taught us the real truth about God's Word and creation???

Why is all this important? The integrity and the dependability of God and His Word are at stake. If we cannot believe Genesis as it is written, then how much of the Word of God can we believe?

*Who is the higher authority---God or Man? If God's Word does not agree with some scientific thinking, should we modify our understanding of Scripture to accommodate the latest "scientific" theories??? Or do we believe the Bible is what it claims to be, the true Word of God.*

To attempt to make Scripture compatible with man's theories vastly cheapens God and makes Him less trustworthy than man. This whole concept takes glory from God and uplifts man. It takes God's name in vain; it takes away from the glory of God. To believe that God used death and suffering to destroy the weak and to increase the survival chances of the strong is an assault on the love and the character of God.

## *Conclusion*

Consider each of the following. If evolution is true, then:

The days of creation as given in Genesis 1 are out of order.

The phrase "after their own kind", which is used ten times in Genesis 1, is meaningless.

The Genesis accounts of the creation of Adam and Eve are false.

All people are not descendants of Adam as the Bible clearly teaches.

The flood has to be a local flood rather than a worldwide flood.

We must use secondary meanings of Biblical words that are not called for by the text itself.

The Bible's teaching on salvation is incorrect since death would not be the result of sin.

*The whole New Testament, including the words of Jesus, would be questionable because in the New Testament there are about 100 quotes or references that build on Genesis 1-11.*

The Biblical teaching on each of the following has its foundation in Genesis 1-3. If Genesis 1-3 is not reliable or true as written, then each of the following Biblical teachings is based on a very shaky foundation.

Who is man?

What is Satan like?

Sin

Death (physical and spiritual)

Salvation

Marriage and family

The integrity of the Word of God

The character of God

To believe evolution is true, Christians have to defend theories that were developed and promoted by many men who denied the existence of God. It is still true that the primary promoters of evolution are atheists. Should we interpret the Bible to accommodate the teaching of atheists? Do we want to put our faith in theories that cannot be scientifically, logically, or Biblically defended?

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.**

Genesis 1:27 (NASB)

**But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.**

Mark 10:6 (KJV)

**"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day;**

Exodus 20:11 (NASB)

**By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.**

Hebrews 11:3 (NIV)

## DVD's Relating to Creation and Evolution – by topic

Note: The organizations listed on page 173 have many more DVD's defending creation on many different creation topics. These organizations also have many books defending creation.

### Comprehensive Overviews of Creation

Evolution's Achilles' Heels (very good - concise)  
Unlocking the Mysteries of Genesis

Creation Ministries International  
Institute for Creation Research

### Astronomy and Origin of the Universe

Astronomy Reveals Creation  
Created Cosmos  
Design in Astronomy  
Distant Starlight – Not a Problem for a Young Universe  
Hubble, Bubble – Big Bang in Trouble  
In the Middle of the Action  
    Our galaxy is at the center of the universe.  
Starlight and Time  
Starlight, Time and the New Physics.  
The Heavens Declare  
The Privileged Planet –  
    The Search for Purpose in the Universe  
What You Aren't Being Told About Astronomy  
    V. 1 – Our Created Solar System  
What You Aren't Being Told About Astronomy  
    V. 2 – Stars and Galaxies  
What You Aren't Being Told About Astronomy  
    V. 3 – Our Created Universe

Institute for Creation Research  
Answers in Genesis  
Answers in Genesis  
Answers in Genesis  
Answers in Genesis  
Creation Ministries International  
  
Answers in Genesis  
Creation Ministries International  
Awesome Science Media  
Illustra Media

Creation Astronomy Media

### Evidence of Design

Creeping Things – Episode 1 “Underappreciated Creepers”  
Creeping Things -- Episode 2 “Desert Creepers”  
Creeping Things – Episode 3 “California Creepers”  
Fearfully & Wonderfully Made  
God The Master Designer –  
    Evidence of incredible design in nature  
Human Design: The Making of a Baby  
Incredible Creatures that Defy Evolution – 1  
Incredible Creatures that Defy Evolution – 2  
Incredible Creatures that Defy Evolution – 3  
Intelligent Design vs. the Intelligent Design Movement

Kyle Justice  
Kyle Justice  
Kyle Justice  
Answers in Genesis  
Creation Ministries International  
  
Institute for Creation Research  
Reel Productions  
Reel Productions  
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Answers in Genesis

Made in His Image  
 Exploring the Complexities of the Human Body  
 The Hearing Ear and the Seeing Eye  
 The Human Body: Divine Engineering  
 Unlocking the Mystery of Life  
 The Scientific Case for Intelligent Design

Institute for Creation Research

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 Institute for Creation Research  
 Illustra Media

## **Genome – Cells, DNA, and the Origin of Life**

All Creatures Great & small – Microbes and Creation  
 Chemicals to Living Cell – Fantasy or Science?  
 Cloning, Stem Cells, and the Value of Life  
 Codes & Creation  
 Genetics, Evolution, and Creation  
 – The Most-Asked Questions  
 In the Beginning Was Information  
 Programming of Life  
 The Code of Life DNA – Information and Mutations  
 The High-Tech Cell  
 The Complexity of the Genome Defies Evolution  
 Wonder of the Cell

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 LaBarge Media  
 Answers in Genesis  
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## **Natural Selection**

Creatures Do Change But It's Not Evolution  
 Dynamic Life – Changes in Living Things  
 Dynamic Life: Changes in Living Things  
 The Code of Life DNA – Information and Mutations

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 Answers in Genesis  
 Answers in Genesis

## **Entropy**

The Mystery of Our Declining Genes  
 Understanding the Law of Decay

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 Creation Ministries International

## **Age of the Earth – Dating**

A Brief, But True, History of Time  
 Radioactive Dating and a Young Earth  
 Radioisotopes & The Age of the Earth  
 Six Days & the Eisegeisis Problem  
 Thousands...Not Billions  
 What the Bible & Science Say About the Age of the Earth  
 Six Days...Really?

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 Answers in Genesis  
 Answers in Genesis  
 Institute for Creation Research  
 Creation Ministries International  
 Creation Ministries International

## Geology and the Flood

Behemoths Buried Alive  
 Geology and the Great Flood  
 Geology by the Book – A Deluge of Evidence  
 How the Earth Was Shaped  
 Mount St. Helens  
     Modern Day Evidence for the World-Wide Flood  
 Noah's Flood – Washing Away Millions of Years  
 Planetary Cataclysm  
 Rapid Rocks – The “big picture” – and why it matters  
 The Horror of the Flood  
     – The Most Catastrophic Event in History

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 Institute for Creation Research  
 Creation Ministries International  
 Creation Ministries International  
 Awesome Science Media

Answers in Genesis  
 Creation Ministries International  
 Creation Ministries International  
 Mission Imperative!

## Fossils

Artistic Ape Anecdotes: “The Art of Deception?”  
 Living Fossils Evolution:  
     The Grand Experiment – Episode Two

Creation Ministries International  
 New Leaf Press

## Dinosaurs

Dinosaurs! God's fearsome and freaky creations  
 Dragons or Dinosaurs? Creation or Evolution?  
 The Bible Explains Dinosaurs – The Real Story of Dinosaurs  
 Uncovering the Truth About Dinosaurs  
 What You Haven't Been Told About Dinosaurs

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 Answers in Genesis  
 Institute for Creation Research  
 Institute for Creation Research

## Ice Age

The Ice Age – Only the Bible Explains It  
 The Ice Age: Real and Recent

Answers in Genesis  
 Institute for Creation Research

## Fruit of Evolution

Darwinian Evolution – Religion of Death  
 Evolution and the Holocaust  
 Evolution's Fatal Fruit – The results of a godless philosophy

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 Creation Ministries International  
 Creation Ministries International

## **UFOs and Aliens**

Alien Abductions and UFOs -- Exposed!  
 Aliens, UFOs and the Bible  
 Close Encounters of the 'Fourth Kind'

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 Creation Ministries International  
 Creation Ministries International

## **Miscellaneous**

Already Gone  
 Creation: The Key to Dynamic Witnessing  
 How Can We Evangelize A Secular World? – Part 1  
 The Christian Roots of Science  
 The Great Global Warming Debate  
     The facts, the fiction and the furor  
 The Tower of Babel – Can the “Story” be Trusted Today?

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## **Organizations Which Promote Creation**

### **Institute for Creation Research**

Dallas, TX  
 (800) 337-0375  
 Icr.org  
 “Acts and Facts” - magazine - excellent  
 Books and DVD's defending creation

### **Creation Ministries International**

Powder Springs, GA  
 (800) 616-1264  
 creation.com Many online articles on many different subjects defending creation  
 “Creation” - magazine – very good  
 “Journal of Creation” -- very good – technical journal  
 Many books and DVD's defending creation

### **Answers in Genesis**

Hebron, KY  
 (859) 727-2222  
 answersingenesis.org  
 “Answers in Genesis” - good magazine  
 Some books and DVD's defending creation

*Appendix One***How to Raise Angry, Dysfunctional, Rebellious, or Lazy Children**

Here, drawn from a number of different sources, are ways to raise angry, dysfunctional, rebellious, or lazy children. I suspect some of you could add more to this list.

1. Do not consistently show them love.
2. Get caught up in the expectations of society rather than your God-given role as a parent.
3. Give your kids a lot of freedom. Do not establish boundaries or establish too many boundaries.
4. Give your kids everything they want, starting at a very young age.
5. Be a hypocrite. Say one thing and live another.
6. When he learns to use bad language, laugh at him.
7. Never give him any spiritual training. Let him grow up and decide for himself.
8. Avoid telling him he is wrong. You don't want to give him a guilt complex.
9. Don't give him any responsibility or chores. Just let him enjoy being a kid.
10. Do not discipline them. You can nag them, but never spank them.
11. Always take his side when he gets in trouble. Sue his school if you can.
12. Defend him when your husband or wife wishes to correct or discipline him.
13. Frequently criticize your husband or wife in front of him.
14. Make all his decisions for him.
15. Always bail him out of trouble. He can learn responsibility later.
16. Never let him suffer the consequences of his actions. He will learn later.
17. Regularly argue and fight with your husband or wife in front of him.
18. Regularly let him know what a bum or a rat his father or mother is.
19. Regularly drink and take plenty of pills. Let him experiment with alcohol and other drugs.
20. Let the child express himself in any way he chooses. Just let him be himself.
21. Do everything he wants you to do. Let him run your life.
22. Give in when he throws a temper tantrum. Don't ever cross him when he is angry.
23. Give in when he pouts or cries. Apologize for making him unhappy.
24. Believe his lies. In fact, you can tell a few yourself.
25. Give him a large allowance, but don't expect anything in return.
26. Criticize everything the child does. Let him know what a pain he is.
27. Praise him for his looks. Teach him to be sexy.
28. Do not censor anything he watches on TV or how he uses the internet. He needs to know what the world is all about.
29. Do not restrict what he reads. After all, the more he reads the smarter he will be.
30. Give him all the video games he wants. They are great babysitters.
31. Don't ever take him to church. It is full of hypocrites and all they want is your money.
32. Never try to teach him any Biblical or moral values. Just let him be himself.
33. Get divorced and remarried two or three times. It is a great way to handle problems.

## A Two-Year Bible Reading Program

The following Bible reading program is based on the concept of repetitive reading. Instead of reading a lot of Scripture, you read the same section of the Bible for several days. The reason for this is simple. Most of us do not understand everything we read the first time through. This is especially true of the Bible. It is rich in depth. The more we read a section of the Bible, the more we understand it and can put it into practice.

As you read, take time to think about (meditate on) what you read. Regularly pray, asking God for a right understanding of what you read. Don't expect to totally understand everything. Nobody does.

- 1. (Week 1)** John 3:16-21 (chapter 3, verses 16-21). Read these verses every day for one week. As you read, think about what you read. Ask God for a right understanding of these verses. If you have questions, ask someone that will give solid Biblical answers. Do not accept everybody's answer as absolute truth. It is a good idea to be skeptical if an answer just doesn't seem right.
- 2. (Week 2)** Read 1 John 1:5-10 and 1 John 2:1-6 every day for one week. As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to regularly confess our sin. We do this to keep our walk with God fruitful and productive. When we sin, we do not lose our salvation, but there is a loss of our joy and productivity. As soon as you sin, confess it and get back on track with God.
- 3. (Week 3)** Psalm 1. Read this chapter at least two times every day for a week. There are many blessings that come from our reading the Word of God and putting it into practice.
- 4. (Week 4)** Read Psalm 32 every day for a week. Each day after you have read it, quietly sit back and think about what you have read. Thank God for the truths that you learn. After you have read this psalm for two or three days, begin asking and answering questions like these:

From verses 1 and 2, who is blessed (happy)?

From verses 3 and 4, what is the result of not confessing sin (keeping silent)?

From verse 5, what happens when we confess our sin?

From verse 6, what should godly people do?

From verse 7, what two things does God promise?

From verse 8, what does God promise?

From verse 9, what should we not be like?

From verse 10, what difference is there between the wicked and those who trust in God?

From verse 11, what should believers do?

Every day thank God for saving you and for the things He is doing in your life. Talk to God about yourself, your family, your friends, and others you know.

- 5. (Week 5)** Read Psalm 33 every day for a week. Again, each day after you have read it, quietly sit back and think about what you have read. Thank God for the truths that you learn. Again, after you have read this psalm for two or three days, begin asking and answering questions like these:



From verses 1-3. Most of us don't have harps and lyres, but what can we do to show our joy and give God praise?

From verse 4, what does it say about the Word of God?

From verse 5, what does God love?

From verses 6 through 9, what is God's relationship to the earth?

From verse 8, what should our attitude toward God be?

From verse 9, who controls the people and nations on earth?

From verse 10, how long will God's plan stand?

From verses 12 through 15, who does the Lord watch?

From verses 16 through 19, what will not save a nation? Who delivers us in times of trouble?

From verses 20 through 22, what does it mean to "wait" on God?

Who is our hope in?

What should we do while we wait?

**6. (Week 6)** Read Psalm 34 every day for a week. Follow the same pattern that you followed in weeks one and two. Take time to think about what you read. This time, as you read it verse by verse, you make up the questions in your own mind and then think about the answers. From this psalm, ask yourself questions that have to do with what God does for His people and what our response should be. Don't forget to take time to talk to the Lord and thank God for all the things you learn.

**7. (Week 7)** Now read Psalm 139 every day for a week. Again, take time to think and meditate about what you have read. This is a very personal psalm. It covers how deeply the God of the universe knows and cares about you personally. He protects and leads you. He not only knows you, but He designed you personally and has a purpose for you. The last two verses are a beautiful prayer of submission to the God who knows you so well. Again, after you have read it for two or three days, begin asking yourself questions about what is said and thanking God for the truths you discover.

**8. (This will take about two weeks.)** Genesis, chapters 1-3. Read one chapter a day. Obviously, this will take three days by reading one chapter a day. After you read all three chapters, start with chapter one again and read all three chapters again. Repeat this process until you have read all three chapters at least four times. These are very important chapters. They are the foundation on which all of the rest of the Bible is built. These chapters should be understood exactly as they are written. We don't need to try to change or modify them to accommodate modern "scientific" evolutionary theories. We accept God as a higher authority than man.

**9. (This will take about two months.)** Now we are going to a longer passage of Scripture in the New Testament. The book of Mark has 16 chapters. The length of the chapters vary. Read about one chapter a day. After you have read all 16 chapters, start over again and read it all the way through again. Then read it all the way through a third time. The purpose of this reading is to get to know the Lord Jesus Christ better. Jesus is not only our Savior; He is also our example of living that we are to follow. If we are to be like Him, we need to know Him as well as possible. Reading the book of Mark through three times will help us to know Him better and to begin to live more like Him. Again, as you read, think and meditate about what you read

**10. (About four or five months)** Now read the Book of John. John has 21 chapters. It is a little "deeper" book and you may need to go a little slower. There are some very long chapters. You may wish to take two or even three days to read and think about some of the chapters. You will not

understand everything, but keep on reading anyway. As you move along in your reading, you will understand more and more all the time. Read the whole book at least two or three times. The book of John emphasizes the truth that Jesus is God. After you finish this reading, you should have an even greater appreciation of Jesus who is God Himself, and have a deeper commitment to serve Him.

**11. (About one month)** Now to a shorter book. The book of 1 John has only five short chapters. Read a chapter a day. Carefully think about what you read. Repeat this process until you have read the book through at least four times. 1 John is a sobering book. It makes us examine our own way of life and ask ourselves if we really know God and if we are living a life pleasing to Him. 1 John tells us that if we are continually living a sinful pattern of life, then we really don't know Him. Instead of continuing in that unbroken lifestyle of sin, we confess the sin and turn from it. All Christians, even mature ones, will sin, but we should always be growing in our walk with Him. There are many tests given for us to use to evaluate our lives. This book (1 John) should cause us to deepen our commitment to walking with Him. Don't move through this book quickly. Spend a lot of time thinking and meditating about what you read.

**12. (About two months)** Now go back to the Old Testament and the first book of the Bible again, the book of Genesis. Genesis is an entirely different kind of a book. It is historical in nature. It tells of man's beginnings and where we came from. Genesis is fifty chapters long. Read a chapter a day. Genesis is an important book, but for now you only need to read it through once. You may wish to come back to it later. A basic understanding of Genesis will help you to understand what God is like, and it will also help you to understand much of the New Testament. It should be noted that we accept the historical and scientific accuracy of all of Genesis, including the first eleven chapters. Jesus Himself quoted from each of the first eleven chapters of Genesis which indicates that He Himself accepted their authenticity.

**13. (About one month)** Now go back to the New Testament and the book of Ephesians. Ephesians is a short book with only six short chapters that are loaded with good teaching and practical instructions for life. Read a chapter a day and be ready to spend a lot of time meditating. Read through the entire book at least four times.

**14. (About three months)** Now for the book of Romans. Romans is sixteen chapters long. It covers essentially all the foundational truths of our faith. It is a "heavier" book than most others. Don't hurry through it. Sometimes you may wish to spend two or three days in one chapter. You should read it through at least two times. Romans gives us the foundation of truths upon which our faith is built. Essentially all the major doctrines of our faith are covered in this book. You may wish to buy a commentary to help you understand some of the passages. John MacArthur's commentary on Romans is a good one to keep handy as you read this book.

**15. (About two months)** The book of Proverbs is an entirely different kind of a book. Through the use of proverbs or wise sayings, Solomon, under the inspiration of God, gives advice on how to live. While some of the verses or proverbs tie in to the verse before or after it, most of the verses are individual proverbs. Proverbs covers almost every conceivable topic. You will never digest all of this book. There is simply too much there. If you have school age children, this is an excellent book to read to them. In a very natural way, it allows you to discuss with them right conduct in almost every part of life. It should be noted that a proverb is a general truth about life. It is not saying that every proverb will be true one hundred percent of the time in every person's life. In Proverbs there are thirty-one chapters. Read it at least once. You may wish to read it through again.

**16. (About two months)** Now let's go to the books of 1 and 2 Peter. These books together have eight chapters. These are very practical books giving instruction on various aspects of our walk with God. These are not long chapters, but read just a single chapter a day and spend plenty of time thinking and meditating on the contents of each chapter. These are books that will have to be read at least three or four times through to begin to digest the contents. You will greatly benefit from the reading of these books.

**17. (About two months)** 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Like 1 and 2 Peter, these two books combined have eight chapters. Follow the same pattern given for 1 and 2 Peter. Read one chapter a day. Spend lots of time thinking and meditating, and stay in these two books until you have read the entire books through at least three or four times. These books will give you a lot of hope and peace about what God has in store for us in the future.

**18. (About two months)** Revelation. Revelation, chapters 4-22, deal with the future. It is not easy reading and you will most likely be a little confused after reading it. Don't expect to understand it all. Read the book through once or twice. It will give you some idea of the judgment that unbelieving people will face.

Now, on your own, you can continue studying the Bible. God gave us every part of the Scripture and each part has a purpose. Studying Scripture is a lifetime pursuit and it is part of our lifetime growing process. Continue studying and applying the Word, and you will have a productive and satisfying lifetime walk with God.

*Appendix Three***Recommended Books**

1. Shepherding a Child's Heart
  2. Shepherding a Child's Heart (Parents' Handbook)
  3. Instructing a Child's Heart
- (All three of these are authored by Tedd Tripp.)

Shepherding a Child's Heart is a fairly comprehensive book on parenting that emphasizes the priority of genuine spiritual training of a child. It is a good book to read for those committed to raising godly children. There is also a handbook or workbook with Scriptures and questions that goes along with this book. The workbook would help one to understand and digest the material in this book. This book is highly recommended for those who are serious about raising godly children.

Instructing a Child's Heart is another book by the same author. This book takes a more in-depth look at the Christian life and how to teach and train a child in these Biblical teachings.

These three books are excellent resources for parents who are committed to teaching Biblical principles to their children. They are not quick reading, but they are worth the time it takes to read and begin to digest their content.

4. What the Bible Says About Parenting. God's Plan for Rearing Your Child
  5. Being a Dad Who Leads
  6. Successful Christian Parenting
- (All three of these are authored by John MacArthur.)

All three of these are excellent books written by a solid Bible teacher. They are some of the best on this whole issue of child raising and having a Biblical family. These three books, along with the three above by Tedd Tripp, all set a solid foundation for following Biblical teaching relating to raising children.

7. Parenting. Ready or not! 52 Devotions and Tips for New Parents  
By Daria Greening and Andrea Gower

This is a fairly small book that is divided into 52 daily (weekly) readings that are practical and encouraging. This is not a heavy book to read and it is enjoyable and practical. It is a good book to have for busy times when a parent needs a mental or spiritual pick-up.

8. To Train Up A Child  
By Michael and Debi Pearl

The Pearls are an Amish couple, and their book reflects that perspective. The book deals with real life situations and gives very good advice on how to handle many situations that parents face with their children. This is a good "how to" book.

9. Family Matters – Parenting

By David and Carolyn Culver

This book deals with broad concepts on parenting from a Biblical perspective. It is Biblically based and asks numerous questions to be answered by the reader from the Scripture being covered. Answering these questions will cause one to think and help to digest the topics being covered.

10. Don't Make Me Count to Three! A Mom's Look at Heart-Oriented Discipline

By Ginger Plowman

This is a good book on issues relating to Biblical parenting. It is written by a mother to encourage and to advise mothers on matters relating to Biblical training and disciplining children. It is a good book.

11. Parenting With Scripture. A Topical Guide for Teachable Moments

By Kara Durbin

In this book the author encourages parents to use daily opportunities to teach Biblical truths. The book has several verses for each of over two hundred topics related to parenting that can be used to teach children Biblical truth. This is a very good book to find Scriptures that relate to many different aspects of a child's life, and it encourages parents to use them in "teachable moments" in a child's life.

12. For Instruction in Righteousness. A Topical Reference Guide for Biblical Child Raising

By Pam Foster

This is another reference book that gives Scripture references and examples for use with just about any topic or situation that a parent who desires to Biblically train their children will face. This is more extensive than the previous book in this list, but it is a little harder to find a particular topic. This book is very well done and could be a big help to a parent who desires to "train up a child in the way he should go".

13. Training Your Children to Turn Out Right. A Biblical Guide for Christian Parents

By David Sorenson

This is a very solid Biblically based book on how to raise godly children. Some might say it is old fashioned; however, it unapologetically bases its teaching on training kids on solid Bible teaching. It is a good resource on raising children.

14. Impact Parenting

By John and Daria Greening

In this workbook it gives Scripture for various topics relating to child raising and then it asks thought provoking questions about those Scriptures. There is space in the book for writing out the answers. This workbook will help one think through various issues relating to being a parent. This book would be a very good book to use in weekly informal study and discussion groups.

15. Parenting

By David and Carolyn Culver

This is a solid easy-to-read book with good basic guidelines for Christian parenting. There is a lot of Scripture used. There are thought questions to be answered by the reader.

16. You and Your Child

By Charles R. Swindoll

This is a good book dealing many issues relating to raising godly children. It is not a “how to” book but rather it sets good Biblical foundations and gives solid advice on following Biblical patterns for raising children and having healthy Biblical families. It is well worth reading, thinking about, and applying what it says.