



The Journey Guide

Table of Contents

● Introduction	5
● Creeds	7
● Nicene Creed	8
● Are Creeds for Today?	9
● The Case for Creeds	11
● History of the Nicene Creed	12
● Heresies Addressed by the Nicene Creed (chart)	13
● Nicene Creed vs. Apostle's Creed Comparison (chart)	14
● True Conversion or Counterfeit	15
● Three Basic Tests of Conversion	16
● A Deeper Look	18
● Disciplines of the Faith	21
● Pre-Introduction to the Spiritual Disciplines	22
● Introduction: Door to Liberation	23
● Meditation	24
● Prayer	25
● Fasting	26
● Study	27
● Simplicity	28
● Solitude	29
● Submission	30
● Service	31
● Confession	32
● Worship	33
● Guidance	34
● Celebration	35
● The Kingdom of God	36
● God's Story—The Story of the World	37
● The Seven Major Themes of the Kingdom of God in Scripture	39
● Ekklesia	47
● DNA of the Church	48
● DNA Process Flow Chart	49
● Five Fold Ministry: Function	50
● Five Fold Ministry: Description	51
● Apostolic Mission: Making God Known	53
● Making Disciples	54
● The Lord's Supper	64
● "One Another" Verses	67
● Inductive Bible Study	71
● Part One—Four Steps of Inductive Study	74
● Part Two—Important Concepts and Understandings for Bible Studiers	78
● Part Three—IBS Appendices	90
● Daily Readings Through the Bible For a Year	96

Original Version, 2015, Kansas City, MO, .15.03.18, This Version: Kansas City, MO 16.02.11

Introduction

In 2014, I went on a journey to Yellowstone National Park. I had to travel two days from my home in Kansas City, MO to get there. I realized before the trip that there were a number of worthy sites along the way, so I planned them into the itinerary. As I embarked on the adventure, I discovered there were so many more places to see and things to do along the way than I had first realized. Some of these things I was able to do, and others, for the sake of time, I had to forgo. When I arrived at my destination, I was only able to stay a couple of days before I would need to return home. In those two days, I hit only the highlights of one of the largest national parks in the world. When I returned home, I realized how much there was to see and do along the way, even on the way home., and how much more time I could have spent at Yellowstone. The week long journey was as much fun as the destination, so much so, that the lines were blurred between where the journey ended and the destination began.

Following Jesus is biblically termed “discipleship.” And discipleship is a journey, much like the one I took to Yellowstone. There is much to do on the way, and even when you think you have arrived, there is still so much to discover and do, that we never accomplish this in our lifetime. The term discipleship, which simply refers to a follower, implies a continual, progressive journey. Perhaps that is what we will do for eternity on the new earth (Revelation 21). In any case, if you are reading this, I suppose it is because you have already embarked on this critical journey of discipleship. As I heard a respected Messianic Rabbi once say, “Enjoy the journey.”

One of the problems with discipleship in our time is that there is no standard format, or pathway, that is used or taken. There is no biblical 1-2-3 of discipleship. For our western mind, this presents a logical problem. We want everything to be laid out in three or four steps, an easy to follow method that results in arriving at being some kind of official disciple. Although many have attempted to create this, there is no biblical precedence for it. It is an illusion at best. In reality, discipleship is simply a life path we choose. Everybody follows someone or something. You can always tell who, or what, someone is truly following because their life begins to take the form and/or characteristics of the one followed. In essence, who or what we follow is what we pattern our lives after. If you have chosen to truly follow Jesus, the Messiah, then your life will increasingly take on the characteristics and qualities of his life. This, in essence, is what John meant in 1 John 2:6, “Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did” (NLT).

That said, then, there may be questions as to what is the purpose of this book. This is simply a guide to those necessary foundations to get you started on your journey. It is not a comprehensive guide, nor can it be. I remember that when I graduated from college I was handed a degree. It signified that I had accomplished a set of criteria that someone who, supposedly, had traveled down the path of my chosen career had determined was essential to get me started. I had, in no way, mastered the subject. It was simply a set of tools that would help me begin my career journey. Those tools would only be enough to get me started. I remember that when I graduated, I felt pride in having accomplished the requirements of the degree, but I felt less sure of myself than when I began because the more I studied, the more I realized there was to learn, and the more I realized I didn't know. It is much the same in our pursuit of God. I can't know what your whole journey holds, but this book can serve as a starting point to give you some essential tools to get you started. It is meant to be used as a reference. It is not a fireside book that you would probably curl up with while you drink a cup of coffee or hot chocolate. There are several ways it can be used: First, it can be used for personal reference regarding the essential aspects of being a disciple of Jesus, the Messiah. Secondly, it can be used as a guide to teach or help someone else begin their discipleship journey in order to assure the essentials are not missed.

Important to note is that this is a compilation of resources, either developed or collected into one place. Where I have used other's material, references will be given so you can locate them for yourself to either verify or dig deeper. This material was pulled together during a two year discipleship training journey in a house church setting. It was put together as a continual resource for those participants, but is being made available to others who may benefit. I have attempted to assemble it in a somewhat progressive order, though you may find your journey requires a different order--however you feel led of the Lord to use it. It is NOT to replace the Bible, but can be used along side of it to get you started. There is no substitute for the Word of God and the Holy Spirit as our Teacher. Enjoy your Journey!

CREEDS \ˈkrēdz\

:a statement of the basic beliefs of a religion.

“Then he asked them, 'But who do you say I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'”

Matthew 16:15-16

NICENE CREED

WE believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God; begotten, not created; of the same essence as the Father, through whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became human; who for us too, was crucified under Pontius Pilate; suffered and was buried; the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; He shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead; and His Kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life Giver; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who together with the Father and Son is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

We believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

Are Creeds for Today?

I can remember as a young person attending a United Methodist church. Every week we would have certain rituals that we would do during the regular worship service. We would sing the doxology, the Gloria Patri, say the Lord's prayer, read a Gospel reading, an Old Testament Text, and a New Testament Epistle. We would also always say the Apostle's creed:

"I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen"

At the time I considered this to be all "dead religion." It was like reciting the pledge of allegiance each day at school. It seemed to lose its meaning and became only a recitation. Perhaps also there were some who thought that this appeased or pleased God in some way, leading to "points" for heaven, or helping them to get into heaven. No one ever told me why we said it, we just did. As a young questioning teenager I decided that this had NO place in my Christian walk. We must keep it real, not just recite dead creeds.

It wasn't until years later, almost twenty-five, that the Lord led me to learn more about Christian history. As I did, I learned why they had created these creeds. Most occurred before the canonization of scripture, that is before the Bible as we know it came into being. All that existed of the New Testament were letters and Gospels that had circulated for years among churches and believers. As a result, many heresies and wrong teachings arose that taught opposite of the Bible or slightly different. The early saints developed Creeds to counter these heresies and to preserve true and pure doctrine. In these creeds, truth was preserved so that it didn't get lost. For without the truth, men cannot believe and be saved. Jesus said, "you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." The Truth He spoke of was not just any truth regarding any situation, but the truth of who He is, the Son of God, our Messiah, come to redeem us from our sins. Knowing this, believing and clinging to this, would save us.

Today, we have the Word of God in so many different forms, printed, audio, and video. It has been well preserved over the centuries, and the truth is available to us anytime we want it. However, we rarely take the time to truly "seek Him with all our hearts" as we are called to do. With so much information coming at us today, the truth gets easily lost or twisted or shielded or forgotten. And unfortunately, because we serve a god of convenience in our western world, it is too much trouble to search for truth. In fact, we've become so naive as to believe almost anything we see on the big screen, TV, or hear in a music CD, etc.

In addition, Christians today, have too often yielded their responsibility to learn the truth to the pastor or Sunday School teacher. They say that it is "their job" to study and learn, while everyone else goes on with life. Then we can just sit for an hour or so a week and let them tell us what they learned. We can grunt with approval or disapproval and go home.

In our home church, we have chosen to use the Nicene Creed--the most widely accepted creed in Christendom even today. It was established in AD 382 at the council of Nicaea to overcome many of the false teachings of the day. Interesting to note is that the New Testament was being assembled at the same time, and the doctrines of the Nicene Creed were used to help put it together, while at the same time the New Testament scriptures, as we know it, helped create the Nicene Creed. We chose to use this creed because of its wide acceptance and its accuracy. Some of our group have committed it to memory. And although we don't recite it each time we get together, we do so on occasion as a reminder of the basic doctrine of our faith.

Recently, one of the young men in our fellowship was called on the carpet by one of his friends to state what he believed. He was with a group of his friends, and all were challenged at that moment to state their faith. The young man in our fellowship shared that he simply stated the beliefs of the Nicene creed, reciting it and expounding where necessary. No one else in the group knew where to begin, except that they believed in Jesus. Needless to say, they were all quite gun-shy after that, as they really were not equipped to defend their own beliefs, much less even state them.

I was quite proud of our young brother for proudly stating and defending his beliefs. He stated how confident he felt that he was able to do so with ease and certainty. He also impressed the one who questioned him.

In essence, the creed, when used properly, is a powerful tool to help us know and understand what we believe as Christians--what is sound, pure, foundational faith. I guess we can always just say "we believe the Bible," but so many claim they believe it, but aren't on the pathway to heaven, for their beliefs may not be the truth, as the Bible is often twisted to mean what folks want it to say.

In essence, we live in an increasingly post-Christian era, and fewer and fewer people are exposed to sound doctrine and Christian faith. Perhaps the creeds of old will once again be revived to help us know what we believe and then to explain to a lost world what the Truth of the Gospel is. We need something accurate and concise and the creeds are just that. What will the church do in this age of information to preserve and defend sound doctrine? Will we overcome the "god of convenience" that we have served for so long, and take this new challenge seriously? Or, heaven forbid, will we get lost in the sea of information, allowing God's truth to blend with worldly thought and religion, lost amid the oceans of information and misguided philosophies?

Fortunately, we have a promise that "heaven and earth will pass away, but My Word will never pass away." God will preserve His Truth through His people. Will you be one of them?

Posted by stehmanp at 5:26 PM EDT

Updated: Monday, 26 October 2009 10:33 AM EDT

The Case for Creeds

Heresy Arises in the Church

With the death of the original apostles, heresies began to arise among the church. This was not unexpected (2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1), because the apostles themselves battled heretical thought. Heresy, in the first century, was seen as any person or group who had a differing opinion than the majority or traditions, and was not approved by the rest of the religious body.

By the beginning of the second century the mainstream body of Christian doctrine was forming and was either followed, or attacked, by various differing religious groups. Heresy, however, cannot exist or occur, unless there is first an established orthodoxy—a standard system of beliefs accepted by the majority.

In the first four centuries of the church, the letters of the Apostles, at that time referred to as the “Memoirs of the Apostles”, were circulated by teachers who used to gather pupils around themselves. These teachers would often establish churches, not in the building sense, because buildings were not seen until the end of the third century. There was much confusion among the early schools and teachers, and not everything done in the church was accurate. Heresies, however, as divisive and volatile as they were, provided the maturing church with a great service, forcing certain guidelines to be drawn, and boundaries set against going too far into tradition or paganism. An example of this can be seen in Marcion, who rejected the Old Testament as well as the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, forcing the church to draw up a New Testament canon.

Throughout Christian history, the predominating heresies were mostly around the Person of Christ and who He really was, mostly surrounding His deity. The volatility of these heresies led to much conflict in the church. Concerning this one issue of the deity of Christ were no less than eight different heresies debated, accepted by some, and rejected by others within the early Christian church.

Authority of Creeds

The word “creed” comes from the Latin word “credo,” which means “I believe.” Creeds never precede faith, but presuppose it. The Church is not founded on symbols but on Christ; not on any words of man, but on the word of God; yet it is founded on Christ as confessed by men, and a creed is man's answer to Christ's question, “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15-16) (2). Whenever controversies arose concerning the true meaning of Scriptures in the Church, it became necessary to formally express their true sense, to guard it against error, and to regulate the public teaching of the Church. Peter gave the first confession, or creed, when he responded to Christ's question to the disciples of who they believed Him to be by saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). It followed that the teaching of the original Apostles, along with the teachings of Jesus, as expressed in the writing of the four Gospels, was to become the basis of all sound teaching and doctrine. Whenever, therefore, any of these teachings were contradicted, in even the smallest iota, it became known as a heresy, and was refuted by the leaders, using the authority of the known writings of the Apostles.

The authority of creeds is not to be confused with the authority of Scripture. The creed, at its best, is a relative and approximate confession of the revealed truth of Scripture. The Bible is the authority behind the creed, which is never seen to be of equal status with the Bible. It is effective only as much as it accurately reflects the true revelation of the Bible. It is intended to be a concise expression of the already accepted truth of God's Word, confessed by its adherents. They are summaries of the essential doctrines of the Bible, uniting its professors in a common bond, and guarding against false doctrine and practice. They are profoundly useful in the instruction of new followers, and distinguish the Church from the world, and truth from heresy.

Bibliography

- Shaff, Philip; The Creeds of Christendom, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, reprinted 2007, pp. 4-9.
- “Heresies of the Early Church”, Lecture One, Arkansas Institute of Holy Land Studies.
- Pritchard, Ray; Credo; Crossway Books. Wheaton, IL. 2005. pp. 11-25.

History of the Nicene Creed

In the first three centuries, the church found itself in a hostile environment. On the one hand, it grappled with the challenge of relating the language of the gospel, developed in a Hebraic and Jewish-Christian context, to a Graeco-Roman world. On the other hand, it was threatened not only by persecution, but also by ideas that were in conflict with the biblical witness.

In A.D. 312, Constantine won control of the Roman Empire in the battle of Milvian Bridge. Attributing his victory to the intervention of Jesus Christ, he elevated Christianity to favored status in the empire. "One God, one Lord, one faith, one church, one empire, one emperor" became his motto. Furthermore, Constantine saw the state as the "bearer" of religion to the world. He had received Christianity, not through the church, but, as he proclaims, from Christ himself, in a vision, and, therefore, God had placed the emperor—and thereby the empire as well—under the protection of the Cross and in direct dependence on Christ. (Alexander Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy* [New York, St. Vladimirs Seminary Press, 2003], pg. 80.)

The new emperor soon discovered that "one faith and one church" were fractured by theological disputes, especially conflicting understandings of the nature of Christ, long a point of controversy. Arius, a priest of the church in Alexandria, asserted that the divine Christ, the Word through whom all things have their existence, was created by God before the beginning of time. Therefore, the divinity of Christ was similar to the divinity of God, but not of the same essence. Arius was opposed by the bishop, Alexander, together with his associate and successor, Athanasius. They affirmed that the divinity of Christ, the Son, is of the same substance as the divinity of God, the Father. To hold otherwise, they said, was to open the possibility of polytheism, and to imply that knowledge of God in Christ was not final knowledge of God. (Quoted from *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part I, Book of Confessions*; Geneva Press, Louisville, KY, 1996, by the Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church)

The Nicene Creed, as we know it today, came into existence as the result of three church councils. The first council, the Council of Nicea, was held in A.D. 325, and called together by Constantine himself in hopes to resolve the rifts within the church. The basic form of the creed came into being when Eusebius of Caesarea suggested that they use, as a starting point, the creed which his own see used as a baptismal declaration, one that had been passed down through several generations, and he asserted was the teaching of the apostles themselves. The emperor and the council agreed, and it formed the basis of the original Creed. Few changes had to be made; however, they secured the deity of Christ by declaring him to be "of one substance with the Father," thus, overriding the Arians.

Unfortunately, the resulting creed did not bring the enduring peace to the church as was hoped. A second council convened in A.D. 381 in Constantinople, which resulted in securing the deity of the Holy Spirit as an equal part of the Trinity. Some of these changes were already part of the Common Book of Prayer at that time, but were added to the Creed to form most of what we know today as the Nicene Creed. The Eastern Orthodox Church accepted this creed, and still uses it to this day.

The Latin, or Western, form of the creed differs from the Eastern form by only one phrase, known as the Filioque, which created one of the biggest schisms between the Eastern and Western churches, besides the Pope. The Filioque phrase was added during a third council, the Council of Toledo, A.D. 589. To complete the victory over Arianism, the phrase "and the Son", was added to show the Spirit proceeding, not just from the Father, but from the Son also. This secured the deity of each part of the Trinity. The Eastern Church did not receive this addition, even to this day, but the Western churches have embraced it, though some had expressed opposition at the first.

The Nicene Creed has stood the test of time as the most universally accepted creeds. The Apostles Creed, however, is the most widely recited creed in the Western churches. It got its name, not because it was written by the Apostles, but because it was a summary of their teachings. The Eastern churches never accepted that creed. The sheer brevity and accuracy of the Apostles' Creed made it useful for baptismal declarations, as well as catechetical instruction. It was the Nicene Creed, however, that provided the necessary doctrines to combat the critical heresy's, preserving the deity of each part of the Trinity, in a concise, easy to understand form.

Heresies Addressed by the Nicene Creed

Name	Scripture Cited	Doctrines
Adoptionists	Luke 3:22	Believed that at birth, not conception or baptism, God adopted the human Jesus as His special Son and gave Him an extra measure of divine power.
Apollinarians	John 1:14	Jesus was not equal human and divine, but one person with only one nature. Within Jesus' flesh resided a divine mind and will and He had a physical body but not a human mind or spirit. His divinity, therefore, sanctified His humanity. (1 John 1:14, Word became flesh, not a human mind or will).
Arians	John 1:14	The Son was the logos (Word) who was created by God before the beginning of time. He was not eternal or perfect like God, though He was God's agent in creating everything else. (homo-ousios vs. homoi-ousios, present at Council of Nicea, A.D. 325)
Docetism	Phil. 2:8	A gnostic group who believed that the divine Christ would never stoop so low so as to touch flesh, which they considered evil and the creation of a lesser god. Therefore, they assert that Christ only “seemed” to be human, and only “seemed” to die (for God can't die). Christ left the physical Jesus before the cross
Ebionites	1 Tim. 2:5	Jewish Christians who taught that God is one, and Jesus must be understood in the OT categories. The name comes from the term “poor”, and the group generally held to an ascetic view and vow of poverty. They were Judaizers, requiring followers to keep strict adherence to the Jewish Laws and all devout Christians were bound to it. Observed the Sabbath and held agape love feast on Sunday. They accepted Jesus as Messiah, but denied His deity. Rejected all Paul's writings. Rejected the Virgin Birth. Taught that Christ descended on Jesus at His baptism and departed before the crucifixion, since God cannot die.
Gnosticism	n/a	Dualism—Material world (evil) and spiritual world (good). The true God was unknowable, and the world could not be created by him, since the world is evil and God is good. Therefore, the earth was created by a lesser God, the creation of an aeon, who was created by the unknowable God. Salvation is through knowledge. Gnosis was a knowledge transmitted and revealed to those initiated into it. Salvation was freeing of spirit from matter, obtained by teaching of revealed truth. Allegorical interpretation of Jewish and Christian writings.
Marcionism	n/a	Yahweh, the God of the OT, was evil, creating this evil world, was a lesser God (Demiurge), and the God of the Jews. He therefore rejected the OT, all Gospels but part of Luke, and some of Paul's writings. Jesus was the representative of the God of love. (Formed a canon of 11 books). Embraced Docetist view of Christ as “phantom”, seemed man.
Modalists (Sabellians)	Exodus 20:3; John 10:30	God's names change with His roles, or modes, of being. Therefore, when God is the Son, He is not the Father. There is also no permanent distinction between the three persons of the Trinity, otherwise you have three gods
Monophysites (Eutychians)	Col 1:19	Jesus could have two natures. His divine swallowed up His humanity like a drop of honey in the sea.
Nestorians	John 2:19	Taught that if Jesus' humanity was dismissed, He cannot be the Savior of mankind. It would be better stated that He had two natures and was actually two persons: the divine Christ as well as the human Christ together in Jesus.

Nicene Creed	Apostles Creed	Heresy Refuted
We believe in one God, the Father Almighty (Deut. 6:1; 1 Cor. 8:6)	I believe in God, the Father almighty,	Marcionism Gnosticism
Maker of heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1; Is 44:24)	creator of heaven and earth	Gnosticism
And of all things visible and invisible. (Rom. 1:20; Col. 1:16)		Gnosticism
We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, (John 1:14; Heb 1:6)	And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.	Arianism (Arius) Gnosticism
Begotten of the Father before all ages, (Ps. 2:7; John 3:16)		Arianism Adoptionism
God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, (John 1:1, 5, 8:12, 1 John 5:20)		Arianism
Begotten not created (Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5)		Arianism
Of the same essence as the Father, (John 10:30; Col. 2:9)		Arianism
Through whom all things were made. (John 1:1-3; Eph 3:9; Col. 1:15-17)		Arianism Gnosticism
Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy spirit and the virgin Mary And became human (Matt. 1:23; Rom 1:3)	He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.	Docetism Ebionism Marcionism
Who for us too was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried (Mark 15:15; Acts 2:36)	He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.	Docetism Marcionism
The third day he rose again according to the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. (Matt. 16:21; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Mark 16:19; 1 Peter 3:21-22)	On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.	Modalism Marcionism
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his Kingdom will have no end. (Luke 1:33; Acts 1:10-11; 10:42)	He will come again to judge the living and the dead	Modalism
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver (Job 33:4; 2 Cor. 3:17; Titus 3:5)	I believe in the Holy Spirit,	Pneumatomachians (The Spirit Fighters)
Who proceeds from the Father (John 14:26; 15:26; Luke 11:13)		Pneumatomachians (The Spirit Fighters)
And the Son. (Filioque, A.D. 589) (John 15:26; 16:7; 20:22)		Greeks, Arians
Who together with the Father and Son is worshiped and glorified, (Isaiah 6:3; 2 Cor 13:14)		Pneumatomachians (The Spirit Fighters)
Who spoke by the prophets. (Num. 11:29; Mic. 3:8; Acts 2:17-18; 2 Peter 1:21)		Pneumatomachians (The Spirit Fighters)
We believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25-28; 1 Cor. 1:2, 10:17; 1 Tim 3:15)	the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints,	
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sin, (Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Eph 4:4-5)	the forgiveness of sins,	
And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. (Is. 11:6-10; Mic. 4:1-7; Rev. 21:1-5, 21:22-22:5)	he resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.	
Amen.	Amen	

True Conversion or Counterfeit

“If someone claims, 'I know God,' but doesn't obey God's commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. But those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.”

1 John 2:4-6

Three Basic Tests of True Conversion

In addition to the root of our belief, we need only look at **the fruit of our behavior** to know whether or not we are truly saved. What has Jesus done in me? Is this all just some intellectual exercise, or has there been a change? The Apostle John is very practical here. He shows us how our salvation ought to show up in our behavior, and he gives three tests.

The Commandment Test

And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked (1 John 2:3-6).

I wonder if John had been in a testimony meeting where somebody was bragging about being saved--saying he was, but his walk and his talk did not get together. If you say you are saved, it is absolutely going to show up in your life. You are going to be keeping the commandments of God. You do not keep the commandments of God in order to be saved; you keep the commandments of God because you are saved.

This presents a serious problem, because not one of us has always kept all of God's commandments. I haven't since I've been saved, and you haven't since you've been saved. Yet the Bible says that we know we are in Him in that we keep His commandments.

Both the problem and the solution are found in the word *keep*. It is actually a mariner's word. In the apostles' day, sailors navigated by the stars. And a sailor setting his course by the stars was said to be "keeping the stars." It was his intention to sail by the stars.

To *keep* God's commandments, then, means to use the Word of God as the Guide for our lives. It is the desire of every child of God to live by His Word. While we may be blown off course, distracted, or confused, the goal of our lives is to keep the commandments of God.

Ever since I gave my heart to Jesus, there has been a deep, divine, radical change; and there is in me a burning desire to live for God. And there should be in you, too, if you are saved.

This is not to say that I don't sin anymore. The difference is that before I got saved I was running to sin; now I am running *from* it. And if I fail, I turn right around and start running away again.

The commandment test says: if you can willfully and knowingly sin against the will of God with no conviction, no compunction, and no remorse, you need to get saved. A lot of people say, "Well, I walked down an aisle somewhere, and I got saved. I know I'm just an old backslider now, but I'm still saved and going to heaven."

No, you are not. If you are living that way--high, wide, and handsome--and it does not break your heart, then you do not know the God of the Bible.

The Companion Test

"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). When I am saved, I want to be right with my Father, and I want to be right with my brother.

But there are some who would say, "Well, I'm saved, but I have no use for the church." But the Bible says if we love Jesus, we are going to love what Jesus loves; and Jesus loves the church.

The word *saint* (singular) appears in the Bible only five times. The plural appears nearly 100 times. Now, going to church will not make you a Christian any more than going to the garage will make you an automobile. But when you realize that you have been bought by the blood of Christ, when the Spirit of God comes into you, you receive a new nature, and you are going to keep His commandments and love the brethren.

The Commitment Test

The greatest and strongest test is the *commitment test*. All of the others grow out of it. "He that believes on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. . . . These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:10, 13).

In the Bible, the words *believe* and *commit* are the same word. Concerning Jesus, it says, "Many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men" (John 2:23-24). They said they believed in Him, but He did not believe in them. He knew that they were just miracle-mongers. He knew that they were not true believers.

Biblical faith is not just an intellectual exercise. You do not believe *about* Jesus, you believe *in* Jesus. You commit yourself to Jesus.

I did not believe *about* the plane that flew me from Augusta to Memphis; I believed *in* it. I committed myself to that airplane. I did not just say, "Those things can fly. I'm going to Memphis. I believe it can fly. I believe that man is a good pilot. I have confidence in the airline." No, I got on board and entrusted that pilot and that aircraft with my life. He who commits himself to that plane flies to Memphis. And he who commits himself to the Son of God lives forever with Him. I committed myself to that plane. He who commits himself to the Son of God is the one who is saved. Have you done this?

Notice it doesn't say, he who *has* believed; it says He who *believes*. It is always present tense. Have you ever asked someone, "Are you saved?"

They say, "Yes, I'm saved. I remember walking down the aisle when I was nine years old, giving my hand to my pastor and my heart to Jesus Christ. Now, I may not be living for God right now, I'll admit. But I know I'm saved, because I remember what I did when I was a nine-year-old boy. I remember believing on Jesus Christ." The Bible never uses such an experience as proof of salvation. It never points back to some time when you believed on Jesus Christ.

I even hear people say, "If you cannot show me the place and the moment when you received Jesus Christ, you are not saved." That is not biblical. The Bible never says you know when or if you are saved by something you remember in the past. It says, "He that believes."

I am not saying there is not a time when you received Christ. There was a day, absolutely. But that is not the test. The test is, do you believe in Jesus Christ now? Are you trusting in Him today? Is there evidence in your life today that you are the offspring of the living God? That is the proof of your salvation.

A Deeper Look...

Adapted from Winkie Pratney's Counterfeit Conversion, c. 1998, PDF, Winkie Pratney

True Conversion	Counterfeit Conversion
Fear vs. Love	
Seeks the benevolence, or good, of others.	Lives to please/gratify himself
He no longer lives for himself; he begins to live in love for God and others. This change begins to permeate all of life, growing to involve the whole personality.	May do good things for God or others, but does so in order to avoid punishment from God or to gain acceptance from Him or the approval of other people.
Chooses as his goal the glory of God and the good of His Kingdom. He chooses this goal for its own sake, because he sees it as the greatest good, above even his own individual happiness at times.	Makes choices to seek God's favor or to aim at heaven's gate.
Makes choices out of love for God alone.	Make choices out of hope for reward or fear of punishment from God.
The true saint has confidence or faith in God that leads him to obey, and wholly submit himself into His hands.	The counterfeit, like the devil, has only a partial faith and partial submission, He believes and trembles.
The true convert's faith is true love for God. It is selfless, and of the heart and the only kind acceptable faith in God's eyes.	The counterfeit's faith is the religion of fear. It is the religion of law, and not of love. It is totally selfish, and totally non-Christian. It is outward only, and hypocritical.
Loves the Word of God as though it were his own sustenance, and indeed it is, for man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Matt. 4:4)	Prays and reads the Bible because he knows he should, but usually does not enjoy it.
Serves God to truly know Him.	Seeks God for what God can do for him.
Loves the laws of the Lord, and seeks to obey Him out of his love for Him.	He regards the law of God for fear that God will pass him by if he does not, but he does not LOVE to do what God requires in His law
The duties of faith are a sheer joy. Their thoughts are filled with God and ways to serve and obey Him.	He is filled with the spirit of fear, lest he make the wrong move or do the wrong thing. God is not a loving and compassionate heavenly Father to him, but a stern, exacting taskmaster.
The true saint prefers obedience	the counterfeit purposes or intends it, but usually fails to do so. He knows he should

	but fails, because his heart is not in it.
Love for God is His motivation for their obedience. (John 14:21)	Fears keep him outwardly moral. He keeps up a kind of obedience that is formal, heartless, loveless and completely worthless.
The true saint is happy serving God anywhere, in anything.	His happiness in religion is only his hope of heaven or reward. Most of his joys are those of anticipation, because he is not really happy doing right and loving God here and now.
He is not interested in saving his own life, because he has lost it already. (Mk.8:34-35; Lk. 9:23-24; 12:24-26; 14:26)	Only when his hope of heaven is strengthened, he enjoys religion a great deal.
The true child of God is more afraid of sin than punishment. He does not ask, "If I do this, what will happen to me?", but feels, like Joseph, "How can I do this wicked thing and sin against God?"	The counterfeit keeps on sinning, because he does not really hate sin; only punishment for it.
The Christian prays for safety from sin.	The phony prays for a sinner's safety.
Christians feel compassion for the sinner, but grieved anger on God's behalf for the sinner's rebellion.	The man in the religion of fear feels more sorry for the sinner than for God, because he shares his sin and sympathizes with him.
Is appalled at sin, and sees it as the offense that it is to God. Feels broken and even anger that the law of God has been broken.	The counterfeit can never understand how God could allow a loved one to go to hell. They feel more for the "loved one" than for the God whose heart the rebellious "loved one" has broken.
The "Carnal Christian"	
The true saint wants to glorify God because he loves Him, and wants to see Him glorified;	the counterfeit, because he believes this is the way to be saved, and desires it as a means to his great end, his own benefit.
The Christian repents because he hates sin itself, because it dishonors God.	The counterfeit may want to repent, because he is afraid if he does not he will be lost.
the true saint believes in Christ because he loves Him;	the counterfeit claims to believe in Christ that he might have a hope of Heaven.
the Christian obeys God, that he might be more like his Lord;	The counterfeit obeys God because he wants the rewards of obedience.
One gives himself to God to do whatever He asks;	The counterfeit comes to get whatever he can for himself, his own happiness and his

	own selfish purpose in life.
The Christian loves Christ because he has responded to His love provision for us to return to God.	The phony loves because he thinks God is going to save him from Hell and give him eternal life among other things, and he connects the friendship of Christ with his own selfish interests.
The saint loves Him for what He is;	The counterfeit loves God for what He gives.

Carnal verses the spiritual man as discussed in Romans 8:	
CARNAL MAN	SPIRITUAL MAN
Condemned (Rom.8:3)	No condemnation (Rom.8:1)
Walks after the flesh	Walks not after flesh (Rom.8:4)
Under law of sin and death	Free from law of sin and death (8:2)
Minds things of flesh	Minds things of Spirit (8:5)
Carnally minded is death	Spiritually minded is life, peace (8:6)
Enmity (Enemy) against God	Friend of God (Rom. 8:7) cf. Jn 14:15-21
Not subject to God's law.	A subject of God's law (Rom.13:8-14)
Cannot be subject to law (cf. Matt.12:33-35)	God's law the rule of his life (cf. Matt. 7:13-27; I Jn.2:3-7)
Cannot please God (Rom.8:8)	Pleases God (Jn.14:21; 16:27)
In the flesh (Rom. 8:9)	Not in the flesh (not carnal) (Rom. 8:1)
Out of Christ	In Christ if Spirit Indwells (Rom. 8:9)
None of His (Rom. 8:9)	A child of God (Rom. 8:16)
Shall die (spiritual death, Rom. 8:13)	Shall live (Gal. 3:2-3; 5:24)
True Conversion	Counterfeit Conversion
The People Pleaser	
Try to wake up the church and raise the tone of faith.	Oppose any efforts to wake up the church, unless it becomes popular
Attempt to raise the standard of righteousness around them.	Will not rock the boat in order to raise the standard of righteousness around them.
Stand for righteousness no matter what the cost, even to the point of standing alone. They never follow the crowd.	Stands with the crowd when they condemn a man, turns the other way when he is honored. They always follow the crowd

DISCIPLINES OF THE FAITH

“I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:27 NLT

Pre-Introduction to the Spiritual Disciplines

The life of a disciple is a disciplined life. Interesting to note is that the word “disciple” makes up 90% of the word “discipline”. In essence, the disciple is a disciplined learner. This is NOT an option if we are to stay on course. The spiritual disciplines are there to help us stay focused. THEY DO NOT SAVE US, nor do they earn favor with God. They are the iron that sharpens the knife. They are like the training routines that keep an athlete ever fresh and competitive.

I find that in our modern world, the idea of living a disciplined life seems to get a bad rap. It seems to be only for the extreme follower, while everyone else can just be “normal”, live our lives however we want. Paul says, “I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27, NLT). If Paul thought it necessary to be disciplined in his walk, then so must we.

The twelve disciplines listed below are taken from Richard Foster's classic book, entitled, Celebration of Discipline. These are only summaries of the twelve disciplines he mentions. They are meant to give you a basic understanding of each of the disciplines. To best understand them, I recommend that you obtain a copy of the book in some form and spend some time reading it. I'm sure you will not be sorry you took the time to do so. Then, these summaries will serve as a reminders of the highlights.

The twelve disciplines are not listed in some order in the Bible, but are intricately woven throughout. These disciplines have been identified and followed by disciples throughout the ages and have proven effective in helping to sustain and grow one's faith. Foster has conveniently put them all in one place. They are avenues by which God's grace can be applied to our everyday lives as we walk this road of faith.

The twelve disciplines are divided into three categories: 1) Inward, 2) Outward, and 3) Corporate.

Meditation	Fasting	Simplicity	Service	Guidance	Celebration
Prayer	Study	Solitude	Submission	Worship	Confession
Inward		Outward		Corporate	

The inward disciplines have an outward element and the outward has an inward element that is discussed more fully by Foster in the book. All quotes in the summary pages below are from Foster's book, unless otherwise noted.

Most important of all, is that the disciplines are to be practiced. I recommend that you do not wait for some special moment to begin them, or some super-religious experience to occur before you start. As you learn them, begin putting them into practice right away. Begin to integrate them into your life and you will find the rewards far surpass any adjustments that need to be made.

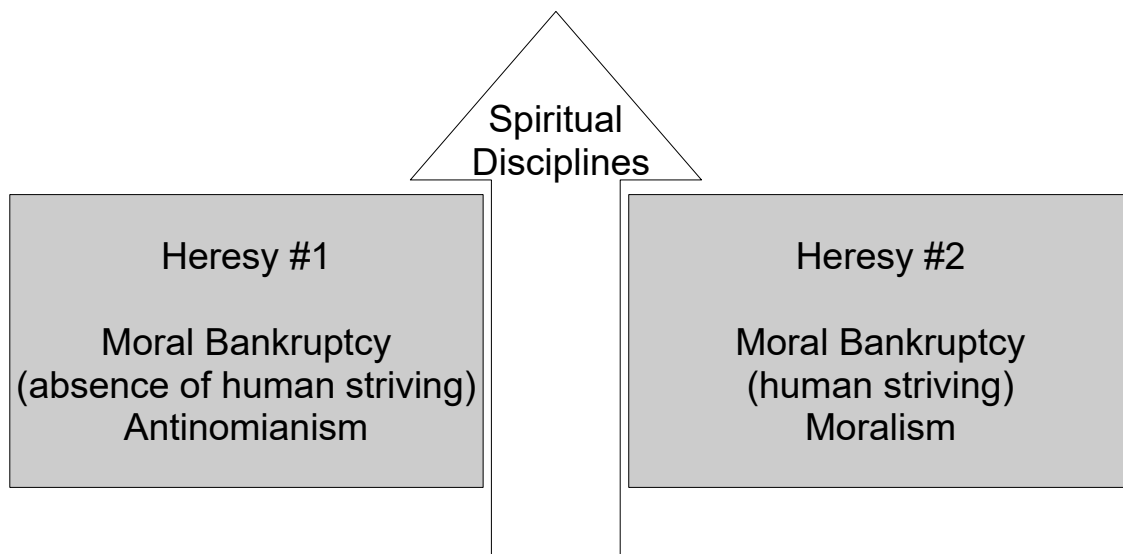
Twelve Spiritual Disciplines

Introduction: Door to Liberation

“The classical Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths”

(Foster, p. 1)

“The apostle Paul said, 'he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life' (Gla. 6:8). A farmer is helpless to grow grain, all he can do is provide the right conditions for the growing of the grain. He puts the seed in the ground where the natural forces take over and up comes the grain. That is the way with the Spiritual Disciplines—they are a way of sowing to the Spirit. The Disciplines are God's way of getting us into the ground; they put us where He can work within us and transform us. By themselves, the Spiritual Disciplines can do nothing; they can only get us to the place where something can be done. They are God's means of grace.” (Foster, p. 6)



“This path leads to the inner transformation and healing for which we seek. We must never veer to the right or the left, but stay on the path. The path is fraught with severe difficulties and incredible joys. As we travel this path, the blessing of God will come upon us and reconstruct us into the image of His Son Jesus Christ. We must always remember that the path doesn't produce the change; it only puts us in the place where the change can occur. This is the way of disciplined grace.” (Foster, p. 7)

=====

*****WARNING – DANGER*****

“It is easy in our zeal for the Spiritual Disciplines to turn them into external righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. . .When the Disciplines degenerate into law, they are used to manipulate and control people. We take explicit commands and use them to imprison others.” (Foster, p. 8)

“If we are to progress in the spiritual walk. . .we must come to the place in our lives where we lay down the everlasting burden of needing to manage others.” (Foster, p. 8)

Meditation

Scriptures:

Genesis 24:63 (Isaac)

Psalm 1:2; 19:14; 63:6; 119:48, 78

What meditation is NOT: Eastern meditation is an attempt to empty the mind, becoming detached from the world.

What meditation IS: Christian meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in order to fill it.

Hebrew word: *Hagah* “emit a sound”, “murmur”, “mutter”

Jewish practice of meditation: “the outward verbalizing of one's thoughts before God, of the poring over His teachings and works...to articulate, in a low tone, thoughts of worship, wonder, and praise.”¹

Christian meditation:

- To hear the voice of God directly, and to respond to it.

- To internalize the Word of God (Psalm 119:11)

- To practice the presence of God (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

- To discover, through revelation, the practical application of God's Word in current situations.

- To simply enjoy, or bask in, the presence of God

- To more fully experience and know Him through revelation and stillness (Psalm 4:4, 46:10)

¹ Wilson, Marvin R. Our Father Abraham Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith. Grand Rapids, 1989. Eerdmans Press, p. 155.

Prayer

Martin Luther: “I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.” and “He that has prayed well has studied well.”

John Wesley: “God does nothing but in answer to prayer.” (Spent two hours daily)

1 Corinthians 3:9- “We are God's fellow workers”

Stoicism demands a closed universe, not the Bible. Those who resign themselves to the way things are as “the will of God” are closer to Epictetus than to Christ.

Exodus 32:14—The result of Moses' intercession is God's relenting from judgment.

Jonah 3:10—God relents from judgment on Ninevah when the people fasted and prayed.

James 5:16b—“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

Learn to Pray as the disciples: “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1)

Where: Matt. 5:5-6 In your room with the door shut (Privately, unseen/unheard by men).

Luke 9:28—Alone.

How: According to God's will (1 John 5:14)

Abiding in His Word (John 15:7)

When: “The inner sense of compassion is one of the clearest indications from the Lord that this is a prayer project for you. In times of meditation there may come a rise in the heart, a compulsion to intercede, an assurance of rightness, a flow of the Spirit. This inner 'yes' is the divine authorization for you to pray for the person or situation. If the idea is accompanied with a sense of heaviness, then probably you should set it aside. God will lead someone else to pray for the matter.” (Foster, p. 35).

“We must never wait until we feel like praying before we pray for others. Prayer is like any other work; we may not feel like working, but once we have been at it for a bit, we begin to feel like working...In the same way, our prayer muscles need to be limbered up a bit and once the blood-flow of intercession begins, we will find that we feel like praying.” (Foster, p. 40).

1 Peter 2:9—We are all priests, and prayer is one way we stand in the gap between others and God.

Fasting

“Throughout Scripture fasting refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes.”
(Foster, p. 43)

Is it a command? Jesus said, “When you fast...” (Matt. 6:16) assuming that folks would fast, but no command is issued anywhere that we *must* fast.

“There simply are no biblical laws that command regular fasting. Our freedom in the gospel, however, does not mean license; it means opportunity. Since there are no laws to bind us, we are free to fast on any day.” (Foster, p. 45)

Paul engaged in “fastings often” (2 Cor. 11:27).

The Purpose of Fasting:

- Must be centered on God—God initiated and God ordained (Zech. 7:5).
- To reveal the things that control us.
- Helps us keep our life in balance (1 Cor. 6:12; 9:27; Ps. 35:13).
- Worship (Lk. 2:37)

The Practice of Fasting:

- A progression should be observed—begin slowly
- Start with partial days, then move to whole days, then multiple days.
- For longer fasts (Over three days):
 - The first three days are the most difficult
 - Expect withdrawal from caffeine (headaches)
 - Bad breath will occur from the toxins being gotten rid of.
 - Weakness by the fourth day
 - Strength returns by the sixth or seventh day, while hunger pains diminish
 - Hunger returns by three weeks and fast should be broken.
 - Fast should be broken slowly, with liquids first, fruits, and juices.

Study

What is study?? Careful observation or consideration of a chosen object intended to bring greater understanding. When applied to Scripture, it brings deeper understanding of its meaning and application.

“The process that occurs in study should be distinguished from meditation. Meditation is devotional; study is analytical. Meditation will relish a word; study will explicate it.” Foster (p. 55-56)

The study of Scripture:

Renewing of the mind. (Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:8)

Laying up the Word in our heart (Ps. 119:9, 11)

Inner transformation (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

Four Steps:

- 1) Repetition: Ingrained habits of thought as a result of regularly channeling the mind in a specific direction.
- 2) Concentration: Centering the mind, focusing the attention on that which is being studied.
- 3) Comprehension: Understanding what is being studied with insight and discernment, providing the basis for a true perception of reality.
- 4) Reflection: Perception of the significance of what is studied in relation to ourselves, to God, to our reality

“When we come to the Scripture, we come to be changed, not to amass information. In the study of Scripture, a high priority is placed upon interpretation: what it means...In study, we are not seeking spiritual ecstasy...we are seeking to be controlled by the intent of the author.” (Foster, p. 60)

Study not just Scripture, but reality in things, events, and actions, especially nature, God's creation. We begin by paying attention, observing prayerfully.

When you study, learn to ask questions in order to find the answers.

“Study produces joy. Like any novice we will find it hard work in the beginning. But the greater our proficiency the greater our joy...Study is well worth our most serious effort.”
(Foster, p. 66)

Simplicity

“Simplicity is an inward reality that results in an outward life-style” (Foster, p. 69)

Simplicity is the needed perspective that sets us free to receive the provision of God as a gift that is not ours to keep, and that can be freely shared with others.

Simplicity is NOT asceticism and NOT materialism, but a balanced perspective.

Focus on the Kingdom ==> Inward Reality of Simplicity ==> Outward Simplicity

“If what we have we receive as a gift, and if what we have is to be cared for by God, and if what we have is available to others, then we will possess freedom from anxiety. *This is the inward reality of simplicity.*” (Foster, p. 77)

Scriptures

- If riches increase, set not your heart upon them (Psalm 62:10)
- He who trusts in his riches will wither (Proverbs 11:28)
- No servant can serve two masters...You cannot serve God and mammon (Luke 16:13)
- Take heed and beware of all covetousness, for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (Luke 12:15)
- Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth (Matthew 6: 19, 21)
- Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction (1 Timothy 6:9)
- For this you know with certainty, that no . . . covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Ephesians 5:5)

Outward Results from an Inward Reality of Simplicity

- Our significance no longer comes from position or possessions.
- Liberation
- Speech becomes truthful and honest.
- The lust for status and position is gone (we no longer need status and position).
- We cease from showy extravagance (on the grounds of principle).
- Our goods become available to others.

Solitude

“Loneliness is inner emptiness. Solitude is inner fulfillment. Solitude is not first a place but a state of mind and heart.” (Foster, p. 84)

“There is a solitude of the heart that can be maintained at all times. Crowds or the lack of them have little to do with this inward attentiveness.” (Foster, p. 84)

Supporting Scriptures:

- . . . He [Jesus] rose and went forth to a lonely place. (Mark 1:35)
- “Come away by yourselves to a lonely place.” (Mark 6:31)
- Jesus went alone into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11)
- And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. (Matthew 14:23)
- ...draw near to hear rather than offer the sacrifice of fools... (Ecclesiastes 5:1)

Pathway to solitude:

- Turn off unnecessary noise (radios, TV's, ipods, etc.)
- Turn off cell phones at designated times
- Listen to silence
- Recognize alone time or create it

Outward manifestations:

- Freedom to be alone (to better hear the voice of our Father)
- Can say what needs to be said when it needs to be said
- Distinguish the pure voice of the Lord
- Freedom to remain silent
- Freedom to let our justification rest entirely with God (We don't need to straighten others out)

Fruits of Solitude:

- Greater sensitivity to the voice of God
- Greater awareness of the presence of God
- Increased sensitivity and compassion for others
- New freedom to be with people
- New attentiveness to other's needs

Submission

“What freedom corresponds to submission? It is the freedom to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get our own way. The obsession to demand that things go the way we want is one of the greatest bondages in society today.” (Foster, p. 97)

“Do you know what a liberation it is to give up your rights? It means you are set free from the seething anger and bitterness you feel when someone doesn't act toward you the way you think they should. It means freedom to obey Jesus' command. 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.' (Matthew 5:39)” (Foster, p. 98)

Christ's example:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He see the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.” (John 5:19)

“...nevertheless not My will, but Yours be done.” (Luke 22:42b)

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps...who when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously”

(1 Peter 2:21,23)

Submission to:

- **God**
 - Submit to God, resist the devil... (James 4:7)
- **Word of God**
 - “If you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book...” (Deuteronomy 30:10)
- **One another**
 - Submitting to one another in the fear of God. (Ephesians 5:21)
 - Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility (1 Peter 5:6)
- **Father and mother**
 - Children obey your parents in the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-3)
- **Government**
 - Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. (Romans 13:1)

Service

“Enables us to say 'No!' to the world's games of promotion and authority. It abolishes our need for a 'pecking order.' . . . Therefore the spiritual authority of which Jesus spoke was an authority not found in a position or a title but a towel.” (Foster, p. 111)

Self Righteous Service	True Service
Impressed with the “big deal”	Any size service is important
Requires external rewards	Rests contented in hiddenness
Highly concerned with results (i.e. gratitude)	Serves without expecting anything in return
Affected by moods and whims	Serves because there is a need
Picks and chooses whom to serve	Indiscriminate
Temporary	Life-style
Destroys community—glorifies self	Builds community—unpretentious and quiet

Result of True service in the disciple's life: The grace of humility

1. Service of Hiddenness (Matthew 6:1-4)
 2. Service of Small Things (Acts 9:39)
 3. Service of Guarding the Reputation of Others (Titus 3:2)
 4. Service of Common Courtesy (Titus 3:2)
 5. Service of Hospitality (1 Peter 4:9)
 6. Service of listening (James 1:19)
 7. Service of Bearing One Another's Burdens. (Galatians 6:2)
 8. Service of Sharing the Word of Life (2 Corinthians 14:26)
 9. Service of Being Served (John 13:7-10)
- “Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. . .” (Matthew 20:25-28)
 - “Serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13)
 - “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 should do as I have done to you. (John 13:1-17)

Confession

Scriptures

- Luke 15:20
- John 20:21-23
- James 5:16
- 1 Peter 2:9

When to use:

- We have doubted our forgiveness and despaired at our confession
- We have feared that we had made confession only to ourselves and not to God
- Haunting sorrows and hurts of the past have not been healed
- Feeling unworthy of the forgiving grace of God.

Advantages:

- Helps us to take full responsibility for our sin, paving the way for repentance and forgiveness
- The word of forgiveness is given in the absolution (1 John 1:9)
- Penance—not to earn forgiveness, but to understand the seriousness of sin.

Tips on giving a confession

- Definite sins of the heart (anger, gluttony, slothfulness, lust), but not full details
- Sorrow is necessary, as we understand and abhor the sin we committed
- A determination to avoid sin—desire to be conquered and ruled by God.
- A definite termination point in self-examination (to avoid self-condemnation)
- Go to whom who can trust
 - Confidentiality
 - Empathy & understanding
 - Gives assurance of forgiveness

Tips on hearing a confession:

- Understand the deceptive nature of the human heart to keep from superiority
- Keep all information confidential
- Pray for gift of discernment and the light of Christ
- Be quiet and listen
- Keep the Cross at the center
- Pray for their forgiveness
- Declare their forgiveness in Jesus is now effective in them.

Worship

Worship = Adoration

The Object of our Worship: “You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.” (Matthew 4:10)

Why We Worship: 1) For who God is (Isaiah 6:3)
2) For what He has done (Psalm 18:1-3)

The Result of Worship: Confession and humility (Isaiah 6:5)

The Priority of Worship: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30)

How do we worship?

“It begins in us as we enter the Shekinah of the heart. While living out the demands of our day we are filled with inward worship and adoration. We work and play and eat and sleep, yet we are listening ever listening, to our Teacher.” (Foster, p. 41)

“Of all today's miracles the greatest is this: to know that I find thee best when I work listening. . . Thank Thee, too, that the habit of constant conversation grows easier each day. I really do believe all thought can be conversations with Thee.” (Frank C. Laubach, *Learning the Vocabulary of God*, pp. 22-23)

- 1) Live throughout the week as an heir of the Kingdom, listening to His voice, obeying His Word...then you will hear His voice in the gathering.
- 2) Gather with expectation, in unity of spirit, transcending individualism.

The Leader of Worship:

- 1) Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18)
- 2) Christ is alive and present in all His offices—Priest, Savior, Redeemer, Prophet, Shepherd, Bishop
- 3) Christ is alive and present in all His power
- 4) Christ alone decides what human instrumentalities are to be used. (1 Cor. 12:7)

Avenues into Worship:

- 1) Stillness, 2) Silence, 3) Praise, 4) Thanksgiving, 5) Kneeling, 6) Prostration

Consequences of *TRUE* Worship:

- 1) Increased Power
 - 2) Increased Compassion
 - 3) Greater obedience
 - 4) Hear the call to service
- Join in the Lamb's war against demonic powers everywhere.

Guidance

“In our day heaven and earth are on tiptoe waiting for the emerging of a Spirit-led, Spirit-intoxicated, Spirit-empowered people. All of creation watches expectantly for the springing up of a disciplined, freely gathered, martyr people who know in this life the life and power of the Kingdom of God...” (Foster, p. 150-151)

Scriptural Examples:

- Acts 13:-13
- Acts 15 (15:28)
- 1 Corinthians 12:7, 12-14.

-

Post biblical examples:

- Francis of Assisi (Foster, p. 154)
- Church of the Savior, Washington, D.C. (Foster, p. 155)
- Personal example (Foster, p. 156)

Spiritual Director/Mentor/Father (1 Corinthians 4:15)

- The relationship is of an adviser to a friend
- Ordinary caring and sharing of the Christian community
- Whole life, making concrete daily experiences of sacramental significance
- Both are together learning and growing in the realm of the Spirit
- NOT an appointed ecclesiastical authority.
- Both willing to share struggles and doubts
- Determined by prayer

Limits of corporate guidance

- Manipulation and control
- “quasi-magic” formula by which the group imposes its will on the individual
- Must NOT become separate from biblical norms.

Celebration

Celebration brings joy into life, and joy makes us strong (Nehemiah 8:10).

The Path to Joy: Obedience to God

“ To elicit genuine celebration, obedience must work itself into the ordinary fabric of our daily lives...Joy is not found in singing a particular kind of music, or getting with the right kind of group, or even in exercising the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, good as all those may be. Joy is found in obedience.” (Foster, p. 165)

“Joy is the end result of the Spiritual Disciplines having functioned in our lives.” (Foster, p. 166)

The Benefits of Celebration

- Saves us from taking ourselves too seriously.
- It is healing and refreshing to cultivate a wide appreciation for life. Our spirit can become weary with straining after God, as our body can become weary with overwork.
- Effective antidote for the periodic sense of sadness that constricts the heart.
- Gives us perspective.
- Balance: “high and mighty” regain balance, weak and lowly receive stature.
- Frees us of a judgmental spirit.
- Tends toward more celebration.

Practice of Celebration

- Make noise (noise is appropriate at the right time).
- Dance (2 Samuel 6:14-16)
- Accent the creative gifts of fantasy and imagination (Acts 2:17, Visions/dreams)
- Make family events into times of celebration.
- Celebrate the festivals of our culture.

“Celebration gives us the strength to live in all the other Disciplines. The other Disciplines faithfully pursued bring us deliverance from those things that have made our lives miserable for years, which in turn evokes increased celebration. Thus is formed an unbroken circle of life and power.” (Foster, 171).

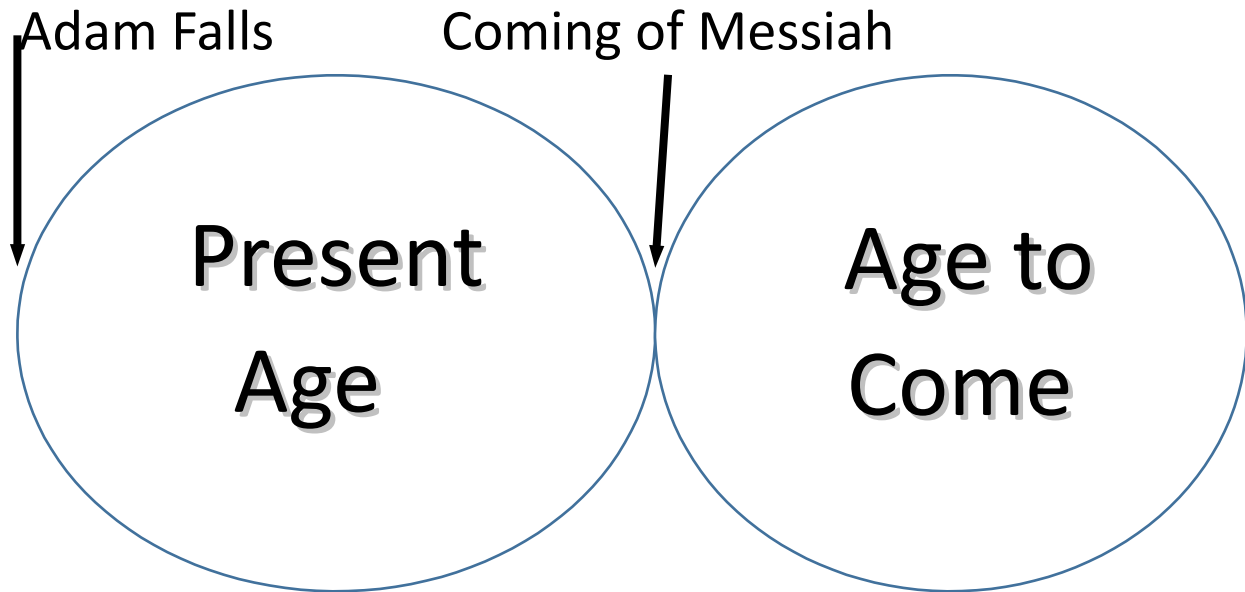
The Kingdom of God

“The time promised by God has come at last!’ he announced, ‘The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!’”

Mark 1:15 NLT

God's Story--The Story of the World

Jewish Diagram of the Ages



The Jewish view of the ages was divide into two worlds: Present Age and Age to Come

These two ages were characterized by the following:

Present Age

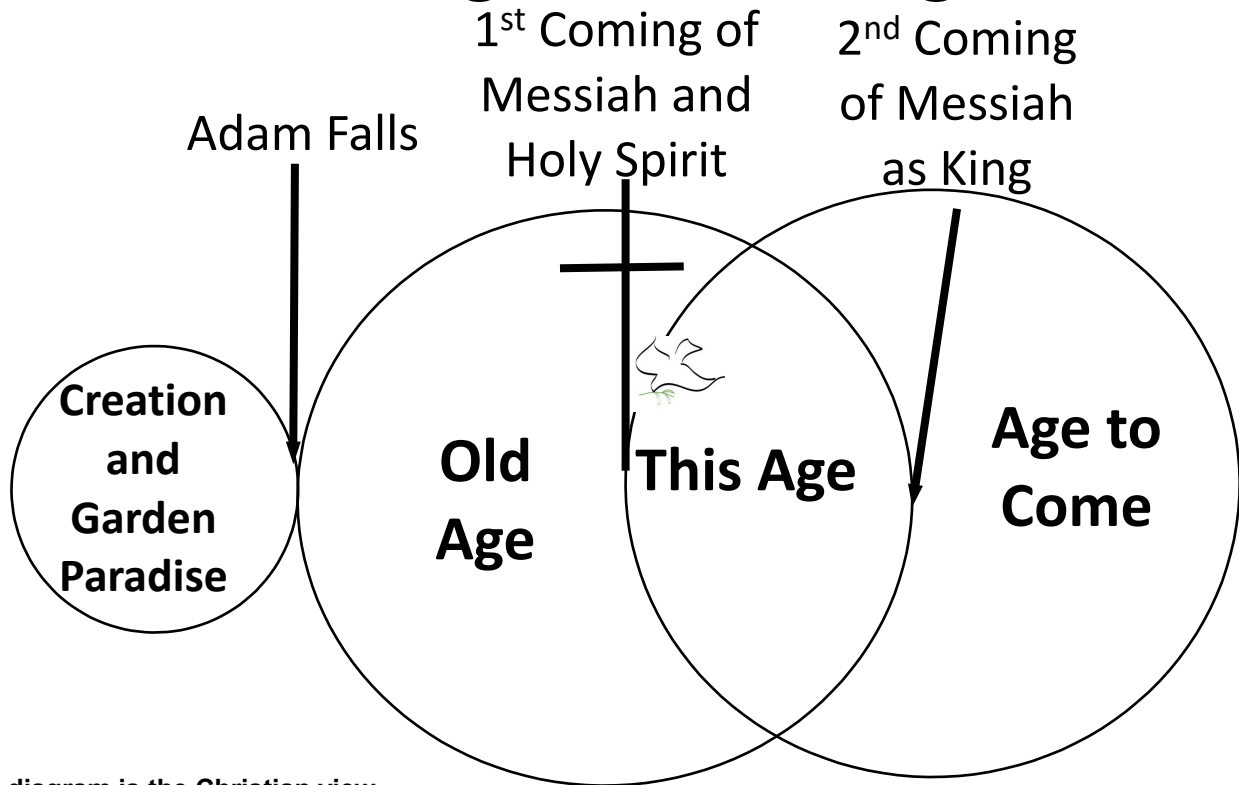
Stained by sin and evil
Sin, Satan, Pain, Death
The Curse pervades all aspects of the creation.

Age to Come (Age of the Messiah)

God's Spirit poured out (Joel 2)
Knowledge of God, Justice, and Mercy
Peace fill the earth (Is. 11:9)
Gentiles ruled by God (Is. 49:6)
Nations flock to Zion (Is. 2:3)
OR
Nations obliterated (Ps. 2:9)

This view missed the redemptive role in the coming Messiah as Suffering Servant, who would redeem the world of it's sins through death and resurrection.

New Diagram of the Ages



This diagram is the Christian view.

Creation and Garden Paradise: Here is where it all began (Genesis 1-2). God created the world in its perfect state, unmarred by sin or the curse. Mankind lived in perfect harmony with God and with one another. The perfect image of God is reflected in man.

Adam Falls: Adam and Eve, deceived by Satan, God's enemy, disobey God's explicit, instructions to NOT eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 3). As a result, a curse comes upon the earth, and mankind is estranged from God, thrown out of the Garden paradise.

Old Age: During this age, the effects of man's disobedience and the subsequent curse are seen in various levels. Satan appears to rule the world with evil. Most importantly here, however, is that God is beginning to set the stage to restore the earth and mankind to His original intended state through a Messiah, or deliverer. It is the story of God's pursuit of all mankind, as His plan of redemption through this Messiah for the whole world is beginning to be laid out in Abraham and the nation of Israel. (Genesis 4-Malachi)

This Age: The current age is marked by the 1st Coming of Messiah and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Messiah long expected, arrives on the scene, but not in the way many expect Him to come. His death, and subsequent resurrection, accomplish the necessary redemption work, and defeat of Satan, God's enemy, but cause many to reject Him as Messiah because He did not "restore the Kingdom" (Acts 1:6) at that time, but returned to His Father in Heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit in His stead until the final restoration is to occur. This Age is the beginning of the Kingdom of God, but is still beset by the curse. Both the curse and the Kingdom co-exist until God's appointed time. Satan still rules, but God's Kingdom grows through His people and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Age to Come: At the appointed time, Jesus, the Messiah, will return to restore all things, judge evil and Satan, and all evil doers, redeem those who have chosen to believe on Him and follow Him. The curse will be broken, earth will be restored (remade) to a perfect state, and God and man will dwell together in harmony for evermore.

Seven Major Themes of the Kingdom of God in Scripture

Seven major themes run throughout Scripture, each of which portrays a critical aspect of the Kingdom of God, and is a **sign of the Kingdom to come**. Together they give a somewhat holistic view of how the Kingdom will manifest. Taken from Howard A. Snyder's Kingdom, Church, and the World.

I. The Kingdom of God As Shalom

(The Peaceable Order)

- A. Mentioned 350 times in the Old Testament
- B. Harmony and wholeness: resulting in healing
- C. Jeremiah 33:6-- “the time will come when I will heal Jerusalem's wounds and give it prosperity and true peace.”
- D. Other OT references:
 - 1. Kings 4:25
 - 2. Micah 4:1-4
 - 3. Isaiah 9:6-7 (Messiah's Rule)

II. The Kingdom of God As Age of Sabbath

A. The Sabbath is:

- 1. Ceasing from work (Gen. 2:2-3)
- 2. Sanctification of time (Exodus 20:11).
- 3. Liberation and redemption (Deut. 5:15)
- 4. Reveals God as the God of time. (Mark 2:28)
- 5. Faith in God's provision (Exod. 16; Lev. 25:1-7)
- 6. God's gift (Exod. 16:29)

B. Genesis 2:2-3, “On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.”

- C. Each week climaxes with the seventh day (Sabbath)
- D. (Eph. 2:14-17). All history climaxes with the shalom of the Kingdom (final Sabbath) (Heb. 4:7). We experience Sabbath now—peace and reconciliation with God and others through our Messiah, Jesus, as we help proclaim and bring the final Kingdom. (Hebrews 4:7-11)

What implications does “Kingdom of God as Age of Sabbath” have for our everyday life? How do we live this out?

III. The Kingdom of God As Age of Jubilee

- A. A Sabbath of Sabbaths (The year following seven sabbath years, or the year following the seventh sabbath year--**50th Year**). (Leviticus 25:8-10)
- B. A reminder that God is owner of the land (and all things) and His people are stewards. (Lev. 25:23)
- C. Four Provisions:
 - 1. The land was to lie fallow (Lev. 25:11).
 - 2. Slaves were to be set free (Lev. 25:41, 54)
 - 3. Debts were to be canceled (Deut. 15:1-3)
 - 4. All land acquired during the previous 49 years returned (Lev. 25:28).
- D. Themes of Jubilee:
 - 1. Justice (Lev. 25)
 - 2. The Land (Lev. 25:23-34).
 - 3. Care for the oppressed (Lev. 25:35-55; Is. 61:1-3).
 - 4. Freedom from Captivity (Lev. 25; Is. 61:1-3)
- E. Jesus announces the Kingdom as Jubilee:
 - 1. Luke 4:14-21 (Isaiah Sabbath Reading in Nazareth)
 - 2. Matt. 6:12, Lk 11:4 (Lord's Prayer)
 - 3. Matt. 5:3-6 (Beatitudes)
 - 4. Matt. 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount)

- F. Jesus is the Messiah, who brings the fulfillment of the Jubilee justice. This he demonstrates by:
 - 1. Healing, feeding, forgiveness, resurrection, etc.
 - 2. Jesus proclaims the Kingdom as Jubilee, and demonstrates it's "inbreaking" as the new order of
 - 3. God's Kingdom, beginning in limited form in this age, and fulfilled in the next.
- G. In this age, the Kingdom comes through suffering and servant hood (1 Cor. 1:20-2:7).
- H. In the age to come, the Kingdom will come in power and wrath toward all untruth and injustice:
 - 1. The seventh Trumpet (Rev. 11:15; Lev. 25:9).
 - 2. The world becomes His Kingdom (Rev. 11:15)
 - 3. Returning to its rightful owner (Lev. 25:23)
 - 4. He begins to reign in great power (Rev. 11:17).
 - 5. Judgment ensues (Rev. 11:18).
- I. How do we practically demonstrate the meaning of Jubilee in the world today?
 - 1. Jesus can be presented as the one who brings Jubilee, the liberator from bondage.
 - 2. The Jubilee gospel focuses on the gospel of the poor.
 - 3. Jubilee means demonstrated commitment to economic justice in society.

IV. The Kingdom of God As House of God

- A. House of God also refers to the family/fellowship of God—oikos, oikonomia.
- B. Ephesians 2:19-22
- C. God's ultimate plan (oikonomia)--Eph. 1:10
- D. "At the right time" All things reconciled (unity)
- E. "The unique role of the church, as Jesus' body on earth, is to be the visible household where God's peace now reigns and the point of the in-breaking and accomplishing of God's reign throughout God's house

in the broadest sense—the whole cosmos.”

--Howard A. Snyder

- F. How do we practically demonstrate the meaning of The Kingdom as the House of God in the world today?
1. Rediscover the home as center of activity, community, primary meetings,
 2. Cultivate the sense of being the family of God—where every believer is at home.
 3. Family to believers who are single, rejected, broken, etc.
 4. Affirm God's love for the whole human family and the whole created order, showing God's justice, mercy and truth to all everywhere.

V. The Kingdom of God As The Promised Land

- A. Land↔ Shalom:
1. Leviticus 26:6, “I will grant peace (shalom) the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid.”
 2. “flowing with milk and honey” (Exod. 3:8).
- B. God placed man in the Garden (land) at creation with perfect Shalom.
- C. God promised Israel land:
1. As “an everlasting possession.” (Gen. 17:8)
 2. As a “community of peoples” (Gen. 48:4)
 3. “All peoples on earth will be blessed.” (Gen. 12:1-3)
- D. The promise of land to Israel, then is a foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom of God to the whole earth:
1. Ps. 2:8, “Only ask, and I will give you the...whole earth as your possession.”
 2. Ps. 24:1, “The earth is the Lord's and everything in it.”
 3. Ps. 47:2, “For the Lord Most High is awesome.

He is the great King over all the earth.”

4. Ps. 47:9, “For all the kings of the earth belong to God.”

VI. Kingdom of God As The City of the King

- A. “Cities” run throughout the Bible: Gen.==>Rev.
- B. First recorded city: Built by Cain in rebellion against God (Gen. 4:17)
- C. Good cities (e.g. Zion) vs. Evil cities (e.g. Babylon)
- D. Davidic Kingdom is to Kingdom of God as the City of David is to the City of God.
 1. Jerusalem ==> New Jerusalem
 2. Ps. 46:4; 48:1; 87:3-4
 3. City of God fulfills God's promises in the Kingdom
- E. Jerusalem = City of the Great King (Matt. 5:35).
- F. Jews rejected Jesus, and rejected the fulfillment God's Shalom.
- G. The NT looks forward to the new City:
 1. Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22
 2. Revelation 21:1-4
- H. Here the Kingdom:
 1. Heaven and earth are reconciled
 2. Shalom has come
 3. The Garden has been restored
 4. God, man, and woman are reconciled
 5. All creation reconciled, restored.
- I. God's Kingdom begins in a Garden and ends in a city which has become a garden. (Rev. 22:1-5)
- J. How do we live this out:
 1. Cities are places of power— where the people of God confront the principalities and powers—economic, political, educational, cultural.

2. Cities are places of the poor—to minister to
3. Cities are places of mission—bring the Gospel to the poor.
4. Urbanization of the world demands God's people bring the Gospel to the city.
5. Urban church planting
6. Bring forth justice, and other Kingdom values to city communities.

VII. Kingdom as Justice for the Poor

A. Justice is who God is:

1. “Everything He does is right and all His ways are just.” Daniel 4:37
2. He shows himself to be “just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:26)
3. “Yet the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all...my righteous servant will justify many” (Isaiah 53:6,11)
4. To be justified is to be forgiven, to be made right with God. For what purpose???
5. To live justly on earth.
6. To be His body, a community of the justified who work justice.
7. “God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong (1 Cor. 1: 27)

B. Why is justice so central to the Kingdom?

1. God created within each of us a craving for justice.
2. Most lives are scarred and warped because of unjust treatment received, especially as children.
3. Injustice grieves God's heart because it is the antithesis of who He is in character—love.

C. Therefore, “THE PURPOSE OF THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S JUST AND LOVING RULE OVER ALL CREATION, BRINGING FORTH A WORLD OF HARMONY AND

BEAUTY THAT TRULY GLORIFIES GOD. THIS IS THE
'NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH' WHERE JUSTICE REIGNS"
--H. A. Snyder

D. According to Matthew 6:33

1. "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..."
2. "Righteousness" is (Gk.) *dikaiosyne*: "to be as one ought to be, the condition acceptable to God, along with justice, the virtue which gives each his due."

E. According to Psalms 23:3

1. "He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake"
2. "Righteousness" is (Hb.) *tsedeq*: "Justice, rightness, what is right or just or normal, rightness, justness."

F. According to Micah 6:8 (a comparison between versions regarding the Hebrew word, "*mishpat*" as it is translated: "...what does the Lord require of you...")

1. CEV: "See that justice is done"
2. GNT: "to do what is just"
3. Holman, NIV: "to act justly"
4. NASB: " but to do justice"
5. NET: "to promote justice"
6. NKJV, KJV: "to do justly"
7. NLT: "to do what is right"
8. OJB: "to do mishpat"
9. Hebrew: "Mishpat", "justice, judgment".

G. More Old Testament references:

1. Jeremiah 22:3
2. Isaiah 1:17; 10:1-2; 42:4; 51:4-5; 58:6-9
3. Psalms 10:16-18; 72:1-14; 82:1-4;

113:5-7; 146:7-10

H. New Testament references:

1. Jesus came to preach good news to the poor (Luke 4:18, cf Mt. 5:3)
2. Jesus' ministry to the poor was proof of His messiahship (Lk. 7:22).
3. True liberation and justice for the poor begin at the point of faith in Jesus Christ as Messiah and Lord.
4. Jesus clearly identified himself with the OT theme of justice for the poor.
5. Mary's song sings of God's justice to the poor (Lk 2:46-55).

I. How we live this out:

1. Meet the needs of the poor within the congregation of the saints. (Be a community of justice)
2. "that there might be equality" (2 Cor. 8:13-14)
3. Ex: Acts 4:34-35; 24:17; Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8; Gal. 2:10
4. Work for justice in our communities, nation, and world.
5. Proclaim Jesus as liberator of poor and oppressed
6. As their Savior and Messiah, receiving ultimate justice in God's judgment of the world and in the New Jerusalem.
7. As their hope and victory over a world of injustice.

Ekklesia \ek-klā-sē'-ä\

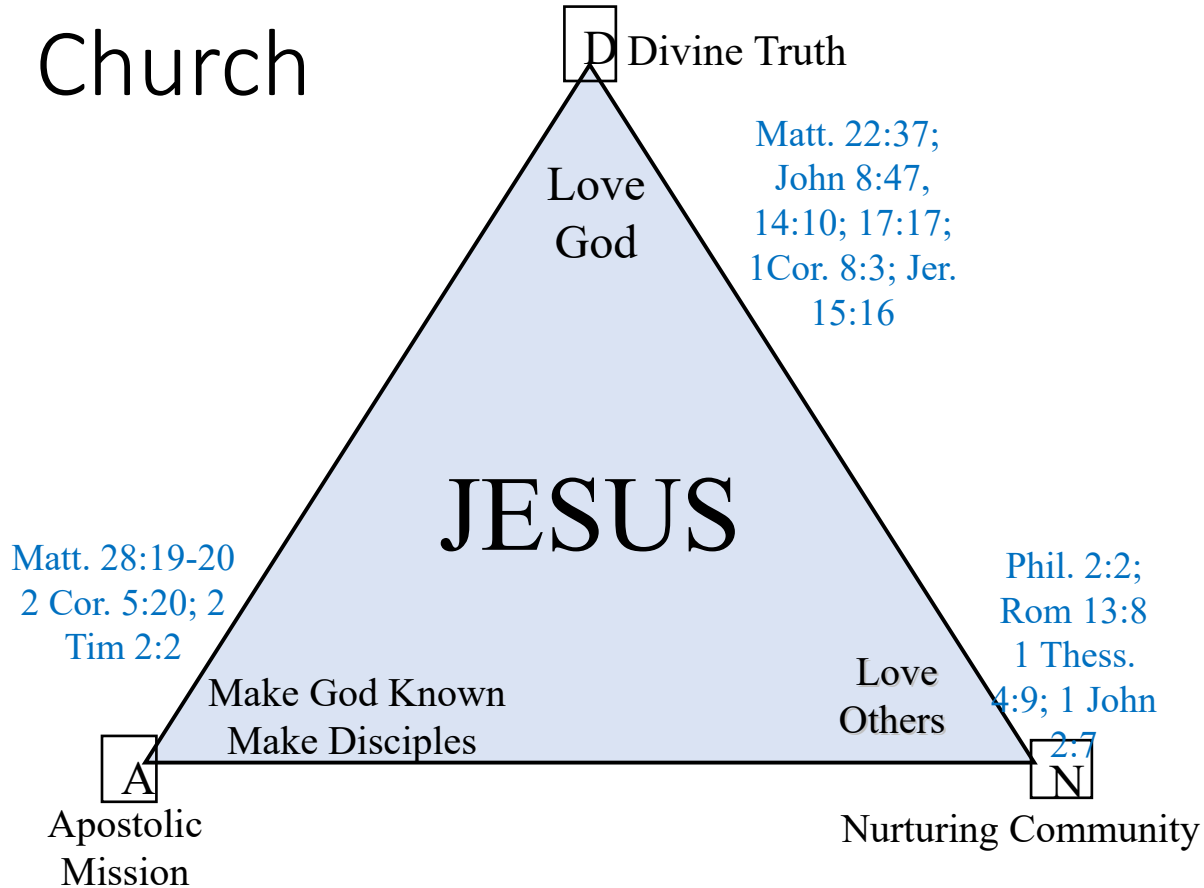
: a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, a purposed assembly.

-Ekklesia as nurturing family.

-Ekklesia as manifestation of divine truth.

-Ekklesia as community of redemption.

DNA of the Church



The above diagram shows the basic characteristics, or DNA, of the Church. The Church is simply the community of the followers, or disciples, of Jesus. Jesus did not put a stipulation on the minimum number of followers needed to be a fellowship of believers. He only stated that wherever two or three are gathered in His name that He would be in their midst (Matthew 18:20).

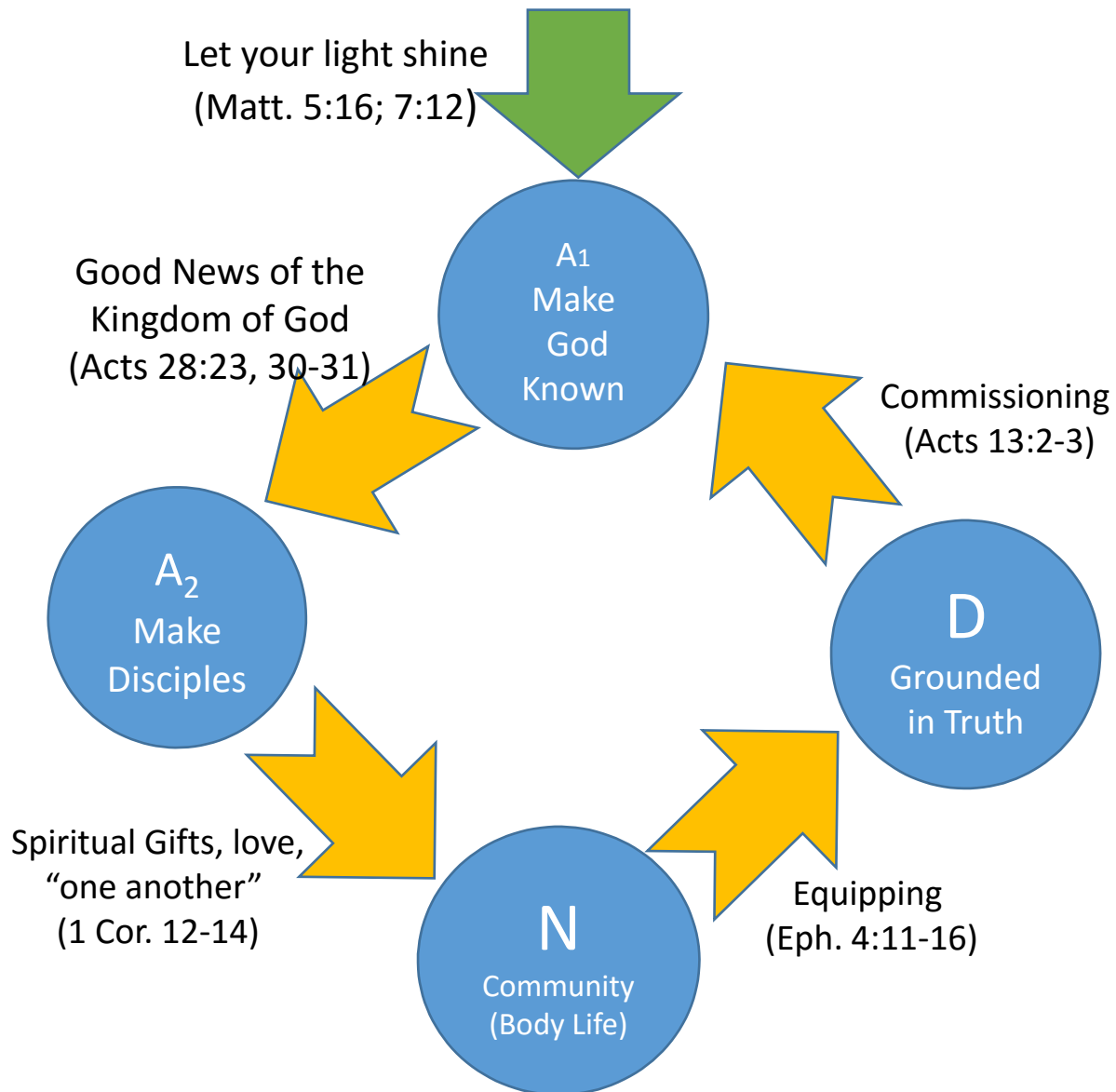
Jesus is at the center of the Church. He is the Messiah, the deliverer sent from the Father above to redeem mankind from the curse of sin and death and restore them to God and one another.

D—Divine Truth—God's truth is the reality in which we live and it is revealed in His holy Word. As God's people, we pursue Him through His revealed Word and obedience to it. In this way, we Love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength as we are commanded in Deuteronomy 6.

N—Nurturing Relationships—The Church is a community of the followers of Messiah. We nurture one another through loving one another, as Jesus commanded. God is love and we demonstrate this to each other and the world as we lay down our lives for each other.

A--Apostolic Mission—We have a mission from Jesus to make disciples. That is, to tell all who will listen about the Good News that the curse of sin is broken and death has been defeated because of Jesus' death and resurrection and all evil will one day be judged and done away with. This mission begins by Making God Known to a world estranged from Him, and then Making Disciples of all who will receive God's plan of redemption in Jesus.

DNA Process Flow Chart



The above diagram is simply meant to show a flow chart of how things should function in the Body of Christ. We are not called to plant churches, but make disciples. The church is simply the gathering together of the followers of Christ for encouragement and to carry out His mission.

First, we start by carrying out the mission of God, letting our light shine, by making God known through living out Kingdom core values in front of and amongst unbelievers we come in contact with, and by doing good works and needs outreach wherever possible. As we have the opportunity, we share the Good New of the Kingdom of God, leading to some who believe the message and want to be disciples. We make disciples of these new followers by teaching them how to follow the Lord, and bring the new disciples into the fellowship of the community of the faithful, allowing them to experience the love of "one another," mutual edification, and community life. Here they are grounded in the truth of God's Word and His way, especially the Kingdom of God, and are further equipped and then commissioned to start the process all over again.

Five Fold Ministry: Function

According to 1 Corinthians 3:10, who laid the foundation of the Corinthian church?

In Ephesians 2:19-22, Paul refers to them as “God's household” and they were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Paul sets forth an order within the body of certain functions and gifts.

First: apostles

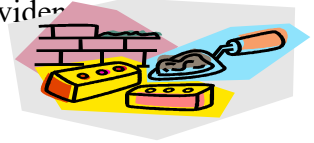
Second: prophets

Third: teachers



These are not meant to be an hierarchy, or an order of importance. Instead, they appear to be a succession, NOT suppression.

In other words, the apostles and prophets are first on the scene, laying the necessary foundations for the faith, as well as the vision and direction. The teachers then continue the equipping of the saints beyond the foundation laid. The remainder of the gifts also begin to become evident as the local body grows into the dwelling place of God.



In 1 Corinthians 3:6, Paul uses another analogy of planting. Paul (the apostle) plants the original seed necessary, then Apollos comes in behind him to water the seeds planted.

God causes the growth. In verse 3:9, Paul declares that those involved in the work of kingdom expansion (planting and watering) are co-laborers.

The role of the **5** fold ministry is for the equipping of the saints

in order that the saints can do the work of the ministry for the body to be built up.

FIVE FOLD MINISTRY: Description*

(Ephesians 4:11-16)

Apostle

- Have a very high leadership anointing
- People recognize great spiritual authority in them
- They don't stay in one place too long.
- Lays foundations—not a builder
- Not concerned about details—big picture
- Starts new works
- Sets things in order
- Spend much time in prayer / solitude
- Ordain new leaders
- Corrects theological errors
- Casts a Kingdom vision

Prophet

- A strong Kingdom vision and message
- Reveals God's specific will
- Operates with a word of wisdom
- Low tolerance for sin and hypocrisy
- Sees what others cannot
- Will expose corruption and heresy
- Power to bless and curse
- Planter—not a builder or detail person
- Often must tear down before building
- Law person, not grace oriented.

Evangelist

- Tremendous anointing to bring others to Christ
- Will move about.
- Preach the Gospel
- Great at calling people to a decision for Christ.
- Connect well with people
- Planters, not builders, very scattered
- Grace oriented, not law oriented.

Pastor

- Anointed to bring others maturity in Christ
- Loves his community
- Stays in one place
- Loves detail
- Teaches the scriptures
- Nurtures and cares for people
- High mercy gift
- A builder, not planter—detail oriented.
- Grace oriented, not law oriented.

Teacher

- Anointed to teach the scriptures to the Church
- Ministry to the Church
- Some stay, some move depending on accompanying gift.
- Loves to study the scriptures
- Very detail oriented
- Builders
- Loves the truth
- Balanced between grace and law.

(This is an accompanying gift, that usually goes along with other gifts)

*Derived from Teaching by Richard Greene—Keystone Project Training (2011), “Five Fold Leadership Gifts”, MP3.

http://keystoneproject.org/wp-content/uploads/audio-files/13_The_Five-Fold_Leadership_Gifts.mp3

Apostolic Mission: Making God Known

In reaching out to others in ministry wherever your mission field is, wherever God places you to be His witness, use the following acronym to help make God known to those around you as the first step toward making disciples.

B → Bow in Prayer for God's guidance

L → Listen! Learn! Live out Kingdom Values

I → Identify connect points

N → Needs outreach

G → Good News!

B – L – I – N – G Method

B: Bow in Prayer for God's guidance. God is the one who knows the hearts of others. Pray for that “person of peace” to be revealed, that person who is open to the Gospel message and wants to hear more and follow. God can lead that person to you. Be patient and persistent in prayer.

L: Listen! Learn! Live out the Kingdom Values. Be aware of people around you—what they value, their culture. Listen and learn. Don't impose or preach at this point. Live out the values of love and service to others, looking for opportunities to do these things, thus letting your light shine.

I: Identify connect points. Your connect points are where the Gospel becomes relevant to their lives. For example, perhaps they value service to others, show how Jesus was the ultimate servant (John 13). Or, perhaps they value war and victory, show how God is the ultimate warrior, and Jesus is the ultimate conqueror of all time. This understanding will arise as a result of the “L” stage.

N: Needs Outreach. Look for ways to make God known through physical needs around you. Is the greatest need education, food, housing, jobs, or anything else? This can be done on an individual level or within a community.

G: Good News. Here is where you get to tell the Good News of the Gospel—the coming Messiah, Kingdom vision, God's big-picture purpose, etc. This will happen in small ways at first, but as curiosity peeks, more doors will open. You will connect people to Jesus because of how you lived Kingdom values in front of them and how you make the connection between their culture and values and needs to the Good News of the Kingdom.

Making Disciples

Good parents teach their children to grow up and start their own families and/or to make their way in the world. They give them the necessary life skills to make good decisions. They set good examples daily on how to deal with life circumstances, one another, and people outside the family. The goal is that the children will be equipped to deal with life and become fruitful, productive members of society.

So, too, in making disciples, we train them up so they can become followers of Jesus, not followers of us, and so they can go out and make more disciples for Jesus (2 Tim. 2:2) and become builders of His Kingdom. In essence, we are to train the new disciples with the skills necessary to function in the Kingdom of God and the world as Jesus' disciples: To interact and relate to their heavenly Father, to other disciples, and to those outside the Kingdom.

Here is a chart showing the parallel between how a parent should train his children, and how we should train new disciples.

<u>Parent/Child</u>	<u>Trainer/Disciple</u>	<u>Scripture Ref.</u>
Feed themselves	Read the Word	Matt. 4:4; 2 Tim. 2:15
Drink	Of the Spirit	John 4:13-14
Walk	Walk by faith and obedience in the Spirit.	Gal. 5:16, 25
Clothe Themselves	Be clothed in righteousness, the new self	Colossians 3:10,12-14;
Clean up	Be Light/Salt in the world	Matthew 5:13-16
Help Others	Do Good to others	Titus 2:14; 3:8
Friends/Family—how to treat	Family of God—how to treat one another.**	Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:31-5:3
ID & Use Talents	ID and Use Spiritual Gifts	1 Cor. 12, 14
Pro-create	Make Disciples	Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8
Self-Discipline	Spiritual Disciplines	1 Corinthians 9:27

Jesus commanded us to make disciples. This is NOT an option: Matthew 28:19-20 says,

“Jesus came and told his disciples, 'I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of this age.'”

What is a Disciple?

1. A disciple is a change agent. We live counter-culturally in the midst of a dominant culture, but we live—make decisions about all aspects of life—based upon Kingdom of God values, mission, and principles. To live counter-culturally means that we live by a different set of values—God's values, while the dominant culture—the greater culture around us, often referred to “the world”—lives by their own godless values. As a result, we stand out, just like a light that is turned on in a dark room. There may be only one light bulb, but it can be easily seen in the midst of the surrounding darkness. In essence, we step in the middle of the surrounding culture with God's values and ways of living as a stark contrast. If we do this correctly, there will be an inward conviction by others that their lives are not being lived rightly. This is brought about by the Holy Spirit (see John 16:7-10). As a result one of two responses will occur: 1) Disdain and hatred, like they hated Jesus (John 6:18), or, 2) A desire to change, leading to repentance (John 8:47).

2. A disciple lives a radically transformed life. You have to live by a different set of core values than others around you. This life involves getting to know the ways of the Lord and to live them out uncompromisingly on a daily basis. Failure to do so should be immediately met by repentance by us and, and if we have offended anyone, to seek forgiveness and make restitution where necessary. All this gives glory to God, and helps to show your genuine intention to be Jesus' disciple (1 John 1:9, Matthew 5:23-26).

3. A disciple lives the core values of the Kingdom -- Jesus summed it up by quoting Deuteronomy six when He said we are to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” He included, “and love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18).” He later put it another way, “Treat others the way you want to be treated (Matt. 7:12).” Our concern is to live in accordance with God's ways, and thus to make Him known to those we come in contact with.

Getting Started:

Keys to successful disciple making:

1. In selecting disciples, separate those that are living for the Lord from those that are not.
2. Call them to complete surrender, then guide them to a complete core value development in their life. They must re-prioritize their time, resources, passions, convictions, gifts, and abilities around the Kingdom of God. When the cost of discipleship is presented up front, total surrender and total following can follow.
3. Be what the movement should be. You must first become what disciple should be, setting the example.
4. Those whom you are led to disciple should:
 - a. Exhibit a radically transformed life.
 - b. Live by the values of the Kingdom of God.
 - c. Show a passion to please God daily and to live according to His ways.
 - d. Align their lives with His will
 - e. Seek God through His Word, prayer, devotion, and obedience.
5. The Life (Cost) of a Disciple

- a. Holding nothing back (family, vocation, culture, friends, etc.)
 - b. Everything in your life aligns under God's mission of the Kingdom
6. Making Disciples to the Fourth Generation-- it takes four generations of close supervision to ensure the correct encoding remains and endures

The Cost of Being a Disciple (Story): A group of missionaries are on their way to an island inhabited by cannibals, where they are going to live as missionaries to these natives. On the way there, as they were traveling by boat, the ship captain tried to persuade them to give up this suicide mission. Each day he tried to tell them how irresponsible this mission was, even futile. Finally the day came when they arrived at the island, and as they were getting into the little boat that would take them from the ship to the island, the captain tried one last time. He told them that this mission was pointless and that they would be dead within fifteen minutes of landing on that shore, and that the cannibals would eat them. One of the missionaries looked at the captain and said to him, "Sir, we died before we ever got onto your ship."

(If we don't understand that statement, we don't understand being Jesus' disciple.)

Making God Known:

Do not use meetings or buildings to win disciples. Use lives (disciples) to make disciples.

Making disciples is intentional. It doesn't happen by chance or accident.

In all the we do day to day **is to make God known**. How do you make God known?

We make God known in all we do, whether we feed the poor, help the homeless, help the helpless, cook a meal, clean the yard, etc.

We make God known in **how we treat others (love, fairness, mercy)**.

We make God known in how we live our lives each day, by **living out the core values of the Kingdom (faith, truth, integrity, joy, peace, etc.)**.

We make God known by **doing justice (fairness) and righteousness**.

Justice is the restoration of righteousness.

Righteous living is embracing God's design.

Righteousness is not a matter of religious activity, but of following God's purpose and design.

We make God known by **UNDOING and even BEARING THE CURSE IN OTHER'S LIVES AS PART OF THE RESTORATION WE ARE CALLED TO BRING AS WE PROCLAIM AND BRING THE KINGDOM WHERE WE ARE AT.**

Basic Steps of Disciple Making:

1. **Person of Peace:** Jesus sent His disciples ahead of him in Luke 10. They were to find a home where the people are “peaceful,” and to stay there and pray for God's peace to be on that home. This was a home that was opened to Jesus and his disciples. Likewise, the person of peace is anyone who the Lord reveals to you that is opened to the Gospel (not hostile or antagonistic). They may show signs of seeking for God, curiosity about Him or Jesus, or at least they are not opposed.
2. **Build Relationship:** People most often make life changing decisions from people they trust. Build a positive relationship with the person of peace, letting them see your faith, how you treat them and others with love, justice (fairness) and mercy, and how you conduct yourself in all situations with integrity and truth. This should result in a curiosity as to what you are all about, allowing you to converse about your faith in the Father and his Son, Jesus. Do so, however, as opportunities arise and questions are asked of you concerning the hope that is within you.
3. **Point of Decision:** At some point in this process, your person of peace will come to recognize that they want to decide for or against a life of following Jesus. Here is where you lay it all out, telling about God's grand plan, the results of sin in the world and in our lives, the Father's solution provided through Jesus, and the coming Kingdom. Show them how they can be a part of it, but ALSO show them how sin has left them apart from God's eternal life, however, God is now extending that invitation for them to become part of His family, His Kingdom. It is here they must come to terms with their own sin and be ready to forsake it. Lead them, through questions and the Bible, to understand the impacts of the decision (Luke 14:28-29). They must be shown that to be a disciple of Jesus it is putting all on the line, forsaking past sin and sinful relationships, and taking on the purpose of God, as Jesus did. They need to be shown that they are without the life of God (as intended from creation), and that, in essence, they are as dead men.
4. **Baptize:** In the process of the conversation around their point of decision, it is imperative that they understand they are dead because of their disobedience and sins (Ephesians 2:1, 5). Ask them what we do with dead people. Of course, their response should be that we bury them. If you are satisfied through the witness of the Spirit that they show signs of true repentance, and are truly ready to follow the Lord, then baptize them. Explain to them Romans 6:1-4, the purpose of baptism in “burying” our old self, and taking on the new life of Jesus. This can be done wherever there is suitable water for immersing, whether it be a body of water, stream, river, etc., or a bathtub, or other large container filled with water. If nothing like that is available, or if the person is incapable of being immersed due to a physical condition, then fill a large bucket with water, and pour water over them directly three times, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism should follow immediately, or as soon as possible, after the point of decision. Then pray over them to receive the Holy Spirit, and have the saints welcome them into the fellowship as a new family member.
5. **Parent:** Now you become their parent in the Lord, as Paul became the parent of the

Corinthians and of Timothy (1 Corinthians 4:14-16; 1 Timothy 1:2). You begin to teach them, as a parent, the ways of the Kingdom. But most importantly, you teach them how to follow the Lord, so that they will grow closer to him, increasingly relying on Him, and less on you, just as a parent prepares their child for life on their own, less and less dependent on a parent's provision and direction.

What to Teach a Disciple:

Give them something greater than themselves.

What are we calling people to sacrifice for--meetings?? The Kingdom vision is about something SO MUCH BIGGER than ourselves that folks should be willing to die for it. We must call our disciples to this high level of passion--Passion is the willingness to sacrifice for something greater than ourselves..

Teach them (and show them) how to live the core values of the Kingdom.

Matthew 5-7 (Beatitudes)--What a disciple's life looks like.

Meek, compassionate, humble, just, merciful, pure in heart, peace makers.

(We change core value by changing our behavior to Kingdom behavior)

We seek to demonstrate God's Kingdom while simultaneously working to change circumstances around us (salt and light).

We are counter-cultural because we follow the Lord, behaving as Him.

We follow the Spirit in obedience.

[Jesus raised the cost of discipleship (life of surpassing righteousness [5:20]), He did not lower it. Obedience is required. Matt. 5:17-19]

- Life of reconciliation and peace. (5:9)
- Perfect purity of mind and body, of absolute faithfulness to the Lord. (5:8)
- Keeping our word (5:33-37),
- Non-violence and charity (generosity) to others (6:1-4, 22-23).
- We do things unto the Lord, in secret, not to be seen by men (6:1-18).
- Life of prayer, believing that it works. Kingdom prayer, "your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (6:9-13)
- Life of forgiveness and mercy (6:12-18).
- Life of trust and non-materialism—We trust God for ALL our needs (6:19-34).
- Life of non-judgment and non-hypocrisy.(7:1-6)
- Life of faith in God, seeking, knocking, asking, that God will provide. (7:7-11)
- Life of obedience to His Word (7:15-26).

[Get them involved in Kingdom missional work in order to develop Kingdom missional values.]

Show them how to endure trials, temptation, and suffering.

Matthew 10

Deny ourselves--live an obedient life

Take up the cross--the Cross is not about you, as Jesus' cross was not about Him. Your cross is surrendering your life to lift the consequences of the curse off of others. Committed to God's redemptive purpose, to reconcile others to God.

Follow Him--through the Holy Spirit's leading, and in conjunction with the Word of God.

A willingness to suffer for righteousness, to be rejected for the sake of the Kingdom and righteousness.

Other Scriptures: Matthew 5:9-14, 1 Timothy 4:5, Hebrews 10:32-39, 1 Peter 3:13-22; 4:12-19.

Lead them in loving God, their enemies, and others whole-heartedly

We are to be "circumspect", attentive to every detail. Disciplined, intentional about every detail of our life--"walk by the Spirit".

Teach them to read the Word of God and to listen to the Holy Spirit:

1. Gather together around the reading of God's Word.
2. Read the Bible together, beginning with Genesis:
 - a. At first, each person takes turn reading verse by verse.
 - b. As questions arise, stop and answer them as briefly and as best as possible, or write the questions down. Stay on course and continue reading as quickly as possible.
 - c. Keep a log of questions per book/chapter, esp. those that cannot be answered.
 - d. Ask the Lord to reveal the answers to unanswered questions and spend time researching them outside of the reading time if possible.
3. Each meeting should pick up where the last one left off, continuing to read through the scriptures.
4. Get together to do this as often as the participants desire and are able, even as much as daily. Weekly meetings should be the minimum, but may not be effective enough to promote growth.
5. As hunger for the Word becomes apparent and increases, and the ability for self-initiative is seen, introduce the idea of reading a set number of chapters

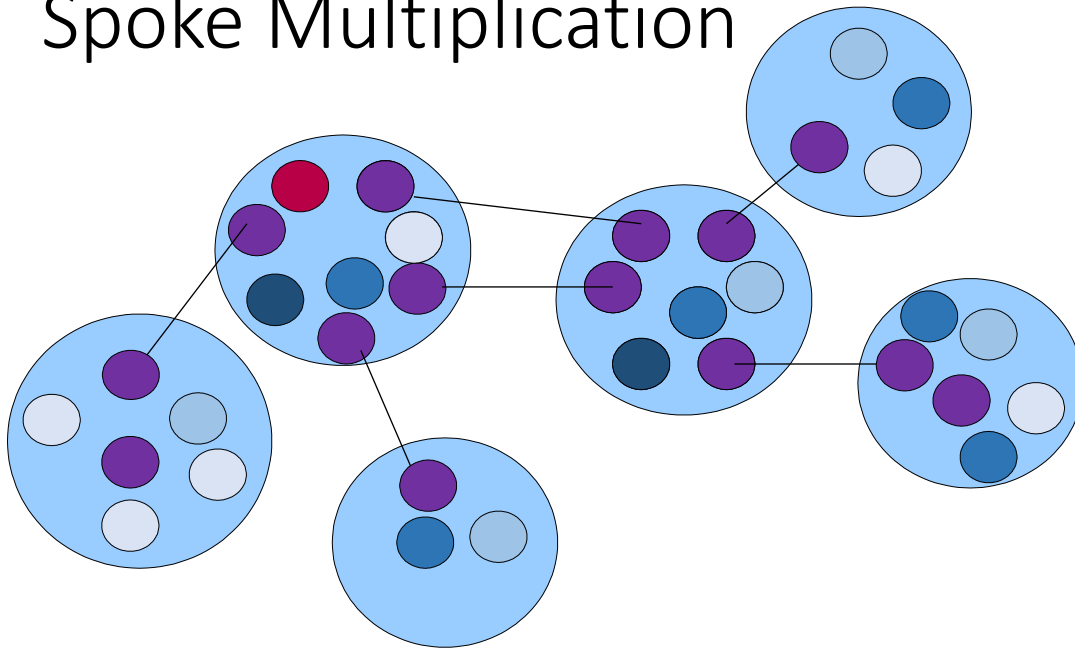
individually between meetings, encouraging them to write down questions, praying for the Lord to reveal them, and bringing them to the next meeting. (Choose a number of chapters to read that is attainable by the participants, and not a burdensome amount.)

6. Once individualized reading begins, start each meeting with a recap of what they read, asking them to sum up what they remember, and then address any questions they had or recorded. Ask them to tell you ways that the Lord has revealed to them how to apply what they have learned, and how their understanding has increased.
7. Before departing, read one chapter together from the beginning of the next section of assigned/agreed upon reading.
8. Pray for one another as the Lord leads, particularly the prayer given to His disciples. If meeting in a public place, use discretion on long prayers, as these can be misunderstood by outsiders to be prideful demonstrations of religious piety. Long prayers should be reserved for private gatherings.
9. Continue these gatherings as long as is necessary for the habit of daily reading to take hold. In time, they may seem weary in gathering. This may be a sign they are ready to do more private reading and study and are growing out of the need for your constant direction. This is the goal. At this point, introduce the Bible reading schedule, and offer to meet with them on occasion, or as needed.

The result of disciple making is the ekklesia, the gathering of the saints, which should arise organically as the disciples gather for mutual edification and doing God's work together. Organically means that which is naturally developing and sustaining. It is the result of its own genetic material and design, the genetic DNA of the Kingdom of God. This emerges organically, naturally by its existence. The ekklesia is the gathering of disciples. WE begin with making disciples, and as those disciples come together to live out their faith, encourage one another, and work together to make God known, there is the ekklesia.

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of this age.”

Spoke Multiplication

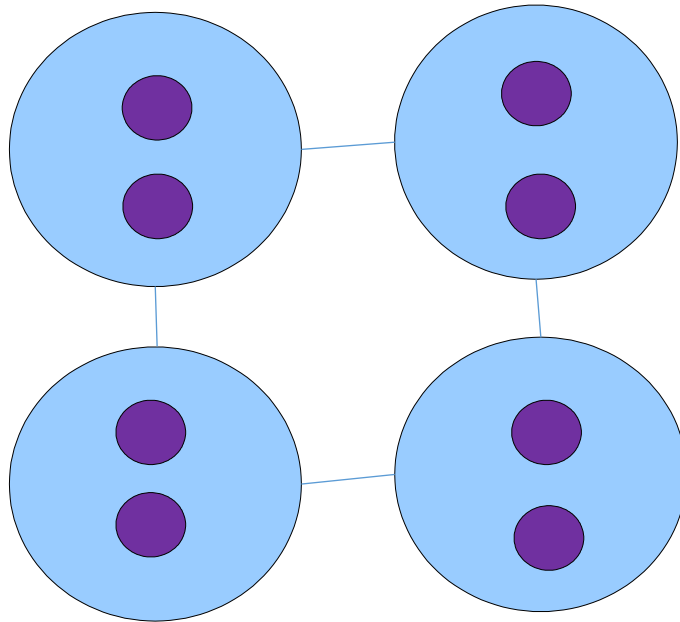


Spoke Multiplication is an organic form of Kingdom growth that begins with one core group of believers who meet regularly as an independent community of faith, also known as a church. This fellowship of believers are equipped and built by one or more elders, who shepherd, teach, and demonstrate the life of a disciple. This fellowship functions as a loving and nurturing community, learning to love one another and others as Jesus did, and learning to take responsibility for their own spiritual growth and that of each other. Over time, as some members mature, they become able to begin to reach out and disciple others outside the fellowship. They begin to take responsibility for these new follower's spiritual growth, but rather than leave the first fellowship where they have built valuable, edifying, familial relationships, they remain functional within that original fellowship while shepherding a new fellowship simultaneously. This process continues, with each maturing disciple tied to two groups, their original fellowship and the new one they are shepherding. This continues as fellowships multiply endlessly.

One major advantage of this method is that relationships necessary for nurturing are left intact, allowing for a continual edification, while still allowing for outreach and Kingdom growth. This is much like a family, when the children are nurtured by caring parents until they grow up and begin their own families. They still remain part of their original family, even if they are not active participants every day.

A big caution in this method is that it can grow disproportionately large if not managed. When there are no trained trainers, new additions are simply assimilated rather than placed into new fellowships causing oversized groups.

Church of Two (CO2)



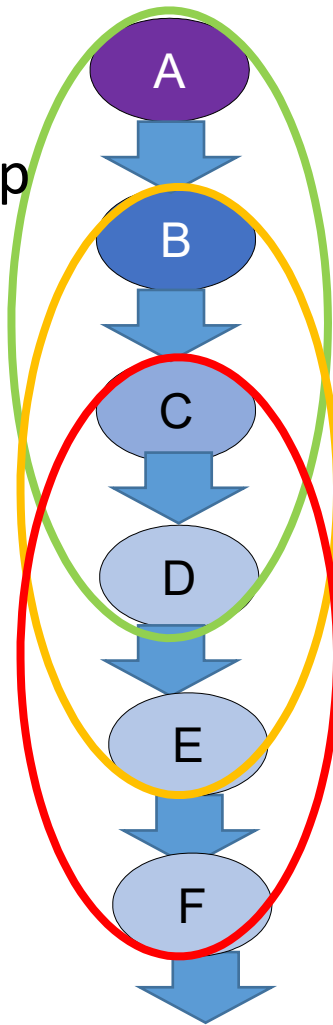
The **Church of Two (CO2)** method begins with two people who meet regularly for fellowship, study of God's Word, prayer, confession, and even outreach. In time, as a third person joins, the group assimilates them. When a fourth person joins, the group is split into two groups of two. This division is done based on relationships within the group. It may not happen immediately, but as soon as is possible. This creates two groups from the one, and the process now continues with both groups.

The major advantage to this is its simplicity in structure. Furthermore, no one gets lost in the shuffle, for everyone participates, allowing for maximum discipleship, feedback, and maturity.

The challenge with this small of a group may be that it seems a bit isolated from the larger body, but it can be networked with other small CO2's and regular gatherings and outreaches can be arranged to overcome this. This is a powerful method during times of great persecution, but can be utilized anytime, because they can meet anywhere, and the logistics for two to three people meeting is extremely minimal.

1:1⁴

Discipleship



This is the **One-on-one to the Fourth method**. This is primarily one-on-one discipleship, but the key is that each disciple maker helps their disciple to make another disciple, down to the fourth generation. Each new disciple knows they must make a disciple who is to make a disciple, and they are responsible to see that the process is carried out to the fourth generation.

This method is extremely efficient, because each person can concentrate most of their energy on one disciple, yet see to it that the process is continued. The origin of this method comes from 2 Timothy 2:2, where Paul encourages Timothy to take what he has learned and to teach it to reliable men who can teach others also. This is four generations. Though Paul was most likely not stating a formula for successful disciple making, it seems to work out that when this process is done, it almost always assures the stability of the disciples and assures continual growth. When done correctly, it can multiply disciples extremely fast, causing a movement.

Caution must be made to tie disciples into the larger body through larger group meetings and outreaches.

The Lord's Supper

by Phillip Stehman

The Lord's Supper was originally celebrated wherever the followers of Christ gathered as an entire meal for the first three hundred years or so by the Church. It was not until the Roman emperor, Constantine, when Christianity became the national religion of Rome, that the Lord's Supper was reduced down to the "elements" of the bread and the cup that are observed today in a ritualistic ceremony known in some circles as "Holy Communion" or the "Eucharist." The term "Lord's Supper" is still often attached to this observance, but the term is in no way a proper description of how it is observed today. Imagine for a minute you are an unbeliever and you heard talk about The Lord's Supper, and when you arrived to see this "celebration" you noticed a small wafer and a tiny cup of juice. What would your impression of the Lord be? Certainly, you would not be impressed that there is any celebration occurring. The observance is held with somber reflection and even tears. This is a far cry from its original intent. So what is the Lord's Supper supposed to be?

A Covenant Dinner

A covenant is an agreement between a lesser party and a greater party. Each party has certain terms that they are expected to fulfill. There are rewards for fulfilling and consequences for not fulfilling these requirements. A good example of a covenant is the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. The Law was a covenant between God and the nation of Israel. In Exodus 24:7-11, Moses read the Book of the Covenant to the people, who agreed to follow it, then Moses splattered the blood over the people, confirming the covenant. Then it says, "Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel climbed up the Mountain. There they saw the God of Israel . . . In fact, they ate a covenant meal, eating and drinking in His presence."

Similarly, the original Lord's Supper was part of the Passover meal that the Lord commanded the Israelites to eat the night the angel of death passed through the land of Egypt and passed over the Israelites. The lamb was slain, the blood was put on the door posts, and the lamb meat was eaten. Unleavened bread was to be eaten because there would be no time for the bread to rise and it would have to be eaten quickly. This observance was to be held yearly to remember the act of deliverance that the Lord had done so that all generations would know the mighty deed of the Lord.

The Passover is a foreshadowing of the day when the Lamb of God, Jesus the Messiah, would shed his blood, and that blood would stop the angel of death from taking the souls of those who applied that blood to their own lives by faith. Jesus applied this truth during the Last Supper with his disciples when he described the bread as his broken body, and the wine as the blood of the new covenant. This new covenant would extend beyond Israel to the whole world, for Jesus was the Messiah of all mankind, for everyone, everywhere, need a deliverer from sin.

Furthermore, the meal in ancient times was a sacred act intended to bring unity to those who shared it, resulting in sacred ties. No wonder it was used to seal covenants between men and God and between men. No wonder Paul says we are not even to eat with so called believers who "indulge in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or is a drunkard, or cheats people. Don't even eat with such people" (1 Corinthians 5:11). I'm sure this is not referring only to a casual one-on-one dinner at the local market place, but was intended to eliminate such from the fellowship meal that occurred when the church came together.

Symbols

The two main symbols in the dinner were the bread and the wine, or "cup" as some refer to it as. Both the bread and the wine are created as a result of crushing. The wheat and the grapes both have to be crushed in order to produce the bread and the wine. This symbolizes the "crushing" and "bruising" that our Messiah endured for the sake of our sins (Isaiah 53:5). Out of the crushing comes a bread and a wine that is able to be consumed. So, also, Jesus was crushed in order that He can become the "bread of life" and the "blood of the new covenant." The bread further signified common food that was available to everyone. Both rich and poor had access to bread, and so it is with Jesus. He is accessible to all regardless of social status, race, or positions in society.

In addition, the wheat represents the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus said that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it cannot bear fruit (John 12:24). The wheat seed dies in the ground yielding growth to a new plant that yields many more seeds. This is a symbol of Jesus' resurrection, in that His death, burial, and consequent resurrection resulted in the salvation of many, in essence, the fruits of eternal life passed on to all who, by faith, adhere to and embrace it.

The Wedding Feast

On several occasions, the Lord made references to a wedding when talking of His imminent return (Matt. 22, 24, Luke 12). Accompanying weddings in the Jewish community was a large festive feast. This is seen in John 4, where Jesus turned the water into wine. The wedding feast is alluded to in some of Jesus parables mentioned above, as well as in Revelation (Rev. 19:9). Jesus mentioned during the Last Supper, "Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my father's Kingdom" (Matthew 26:29). This seems to be an allusion to the wedding supper in Revelation 19:9.

The Love Feast

The early church celebrated the love feast. It was called a "love feast" because, unlike other feasts in the Greek and Roman times, where people were treated differently according to their social status and economic capacity, and the rich and poor would not eat together, nor would servants, slaves, and masters, such was not so at a love feast. Here, as representing the Kingdom of God, all these walls were broken down. "Agape", the Greek word referring to unconditional love, was shared by all, and all the saints gathered together, regardless of their status in society, to celebrate the Lord. This supper had implications for the past, present, and future as alluded to in the brief discussion above.

In regards to the past, it remembered the death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and how those actions redeemed us from sin and eternal destruction, the bread representing His broken body, and the wine representing His shed blood. In regards to the present, it was an act of bonding between brothers and sisters who, together, share this same covenant relationship with one Lord and Savior. As to the future, it looked forward to the day of celebration, the wedding supper of the Lamb of God, when the Church, His bride, would be united with Him forever, and this reunion would be celebrated with a large dinner. All of this is a testimony to the world of our fellowship with one another and with our Lord and Savior.

Form and Substance

In essence, then, the Lord's Supper, is indeed a supper of celebration. People of all races and economic status who have been chosen to follow Jesus as their new Master, gather together to eat a large meal together. Each person brings as he/she is able to, but all contribute in some way. If a person is not able to contribute food, they would help to prepare the food. All would come together, and all would sit down together and eat. During the meal, or somewhere near the beginning, a loaf of bread is broken and passed around, reminding all that we, though many, are ONE BODY. Furthermore, it is the ONE BODY of Jesus that was broken for our sins on the Cross. The meal is enjoyed by all, and toward the end, or afterward (Luke 22:20), a cup of wine or juice is shared by all, as someone reminds everyone of that shed blood of our Savior and its implications for our lives today, and for eternity.

Warning

Paul warned the Corinthians of the consequences of not following the protocol of the meal: "When you meet together, you are not really interested in the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11:20). He then spells out some consequences: "For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself. That is why many of you are weak and sick and some have even died" (1 Cor. 11:29-30). He also uses the word "unworthily" in 11:27. This has often been interpreted to mean we have some unconfessed sin in our lives. This in no way fits the context, but is read into the text due to experiences we have had in contemporary services where it has been explained this way. The situation in Paul's day was that folks weren't considering other people and were just eating to get full regardless of how much was left for others. It could be that they started to eat early before everyone arrived, allowing for less food for those who came late. Since the first century was not as time driven as we are today, this is a good possibility. Whatever the case, the principle here is that the supper is to be celebrated together by all, and all are to participate in its preparation and the eating thereof. To do otherwise is not to honor the body of the Lord, for it is unto Him that we share this vital meal of both remembrance and celebration.

Conclusion

Now, go back to the beginning where we discussed the unbeliever who observes the Lord's Supper. If they were to observe a ritual morsel of bread and small cup of juice as a "remembrance" and "celebration," of our Lord, as mentioned above, it would not leave much of an impression. But consider that same unbeliever who sees people from all races, in a world of racial prejudice, rich and poor alike, in a world separated by rich and poor neighborhoods, all come together at a table with a feast of food, considering one another, celebrating, laughing, singing, and the like without regard to worldly position or possession, all honoring the God of the universe and His act of reaching out to His lost creation in order to restore them to himself in the greatest act of love history has known. What does this say about our Lord? Would he be a God of exclusivity or available to all? Would he be a God of plenty, or a God of scarcity? Would he be a God of celebration or a God of judgmental introspection? The Lord's Supper is as much a testimony to the world as it is a reminder and celebration to His followers. It tells us all that we sit down with the King of Kings, who is not too good to associate with even the lowliest of His creation, and that His love breaks down all barriers and division. To be one of His is to be accepted at His wedding supper, as part of His bride, where all the barriers of the curse--poverty, division, scarcity, selfishness, etc.--are done away, and the restored creation has already begun!

“One Another” Verses**

Leviticus 19:11	"Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another."
John 13:14	Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. [meaning to humbly serve one another]
John 13:34	"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
John 13:35	By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
John 15:9, 12	I have loved you even as the Father has loved me...This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.
Romans 12:10	Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.
Romans 12:16	Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.
Romans 13:8	Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.
Romans 14:13	Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.
Romans 15:7	Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.
Romans 15:14	I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.
Romans 16:16	Greet one another with a holy kiss.
1 Cor. 1:10	I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.
Galatians 5:13	You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.
Ephesians 4:2	Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
Ephesians 4:32	Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
Ephesians 5:19	Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,
Ephesians 5:21	Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
Colossians 3:13	Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one

	another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
Colossians 3:16	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.
1 Thess. 5:11	Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
Hebrews 3:13	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 10:24	And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.
James 4:11	Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.
1 Peter 3:8	Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.
1 Peter 4:9	Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.
1 Peter 5:5	Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
1 John 1:7	But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
1 John 3:11	This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.
1 John 3:23	And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.
1 John 4:7	Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.
1 John 4:11	Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
1 John 4:12	No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.
1 Peter 4:8	Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.
James 5:16	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 5:9	Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!
Hebrews 13:1	Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought always to

	thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.
2 Thess. 1:3	We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.
1 Thess. 5:15	Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.
1 Thess. 5:13	Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.
1 Thess. 5:11	Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
1 Thess. 4:18	Therefore encourage each other with these words.
1 Thess. 4:9	Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.
1 Thess. 3:12	May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.
Colossians 3:13	Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
Colossians 3:9	Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices
Galatians 5:26	Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.
Galatians 6:2	Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
1 Cor. 12:25	so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.
Galatians 5:15	If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.
1 Cor. 11:33	So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other.
Romans 1:12	that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.
Ephesians 4:16	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.
Philippians 2:3-5	Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.
1 Cor. 13	If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy,

and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice, but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless.

When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.

Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

Inductive Bible Study

“Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Inductive Bible Study

With Study Aids

The purpose of Bible study is to know God more in understanding, trust, obedience, and love. The inductive study method is for **deep, systematic** study of a **text** selection from the Bible – a book, a chapter, a paragraph, and even a single sentence. One way is to choose a text to master and study that text, usually a book or a section of a book. Another way is to choose a topic, such as a theological doctrine, and study all the texts related to that topic.

Before beginning:

- Read *this* entire document.
- Choose the text to study and a Bible version to use as the primary version. It doesn't matter which translation, because you will read from others in the Interpretation phase.
- Get a notebook or legal pad, and a pen or pencil, of course.
- Gather some study tools. Refer to Appendix 2.
- Read an objective book on Bible translation such as *The Complete Guide to Bible Translations*, and an objective book on Bible interpretation such as *How to Read the Bible for all It's Worth*.

Study Process:

- Go through the 4 steps of Bible study – Background, Observation, Interpretation, Application – writing down on paper everything necessary to complete each item that applies to the text. The 4 steps have parts that are order-critical for various reasons. Items noted by Roman numeral, alphabetical letter, and number are meant to be taken in the order indicated. Items indicated by bullets are not order-critical and so can be taken in any order.
- Focus on the items of each step one at a time without sidetracking. The purpose of the study is to understand and apply the chosen text, so stay focused on it.
- The Observation step is the key to effective study but the step where it is easy to get off track. Only observe during this step, using a standard text Bible, not a study Bible. Do not look up anything; just observe. You should have only your Bible and your blank paper in front of you during this step. Develop the habit and skill of observing a text very carefully.

- Adapt the method to your situation as helpful or necessary, but do not neglect being systematic so that you maximize your use of time and mental energy.

Suggestions for Group Study:

- Make sure everyone agrees on the principles of Bible interpretation that will be applied during the group study.
- Decide on a primary version of the Bible for every person to use, if possible. Different versions can and should be looked at for the Interpretation phase of the study, but the group study will be much more efficient if the primary text used by each person is the same translation.
- In order to handle the order-critical items efficiently in group study, a system of note organization is required that links the Observation section with the Interpretation section. The group might want to agree on a universal method before beginning, though it is not critical. Appendix 3 shows one way to handle note organization.
- A good approach is to do in the group setting as much as necessary to get the members to a certain level of proficiency with study methods and study tools. As a group becomes experienced, more and more of the study should be done individually, allowing the group to either spend less time together or to use the same time frame to study a greater number of texts. The end goal is to produce independent studiers who can then train others.

Part One:

4 Steps of Inductive Study

I. Background & Introduction

Read some general materials on the text to find the following information. A good study Bible might be sufficient for this.

A. **Author**

1. Person
2. Time and place of writing
3. Other relevant information

B. **Audience**

1. Person(s)
2. Time and place
3. Relationship to author if any
4. Relevant historical events before or during the authorship date
5. Other relevant information

C. **Setting(s)**, if different from audience

1. Time and place
2. Relevant historical events before or during the time setting
3. Other relevant information

D. **Type(s) of literature** – didactic, narrative, poetry, letter, prophecy, proverb, etc.

E. **Main characters** (excluding the audience)

F. **Purpose / Theme**

G. **Other key information** – key concepts developed, unique ideas presented, etc.

H. **Outline** – Obtain a general book outline, and develop the chapter/section portions as desired

II. Observation

Read the full text carefully without stopping. Read the text again, noting Questions (Item A). Finally, read and examine the text a third time to pull out details per the remaining items (Items B-G). Write down verse references as much as possible.

A. **Questions** – things you don't know or understand, or that you want to understand more fully

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Words | 5. Allusions (references) |
| 2. Phrases | 6. Seeming contradictions |
| 3. Sentences – one or more | (intra-text, inter-text) |
| 4. Grammatical items | 7. Other |

B. **Main Events/Occurrences** (for narratives, stories, prophecies)

C. **Historical/Cultural References**

D. **Internal Scripture References** (scripture quoting scripture)

E. **Rhetorical Techniques** (ones that seem striking or particularly significant or confusing/difficult)

- Questions
 - Question – Answer
- Rhetorical Question
 - General Questions (to provoke thought)
- Comparison / Contrast
- General / Specific
- Problem – Solution
- Cause – Effect
- Climax
 - Illustration
 - Hyperbole
 - Metaphor or Simile
 - Personification
 - Other

F. **Key Concepts** – ideas that stand out as particularly significant and/or occur more than once

1. Words
2. Phrases
3. Sentences – one or more

- Commands
- Promises
- Warnings
- Expressions of precedence/importance
- Paradoxes
- Expressions of time, e.g. when something will occur; what has to occur before something else
- Lists (not related to precedence/importance or time, e.g. qualifications of an elder)

G. **Any other idea or piece of information that is noteworthy**

H. **Complete the text outline** (if the original outline needs filling in or adjusting)

III. Interpretation

Read the summary of Bible Interpretation Principles in Appendix 1 **every time** before engaging the Interpretation section, until the principles become second nature. Then, dig into the text per each item below, using contextual analysis and study tools. Note Bible cross-references to build a practical understanding that the scriptures are an inter-connected whole.

Before beginning, be aware of the interpretation principles that apply to the literary genre of the text. Look them up if they are unfamiliar, e.g. *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth*.

A. **Take a look at the book outline and keep it handy for reference as necessary.**

This serves as necessary big-picture structural context. The details pulled out during study fill in the big picture, and the big picture helps to interpret the details. They are two sides of a coin and are mutually supporting – the big picture, the details.

B. **Begin by reading the text in other Bible versions.**

1. Read one version of each translation type that is different than primary version – formal equivalence (NAS, NRSV, ESV), functional equivalence (NLT, NCV, CEV, GNT/TEV), and mediating (NIV, TNIV, HCSB, NET, CEB). Pay attention to the how ideas come across a bit differently, and to how words are used.
2. If studying the New Testament, read a version that brings out the Old Testament ideas and themes (*Kingdom New Testament, Complete Jewish Bible*).

C. **Next, read some overarching interpretive materials on the text, such as notes in a study Bible, commentaries, and/or an exegetical guide.** This will provide a general overarching understanding of the text and begin to address some of the items below.

D. **Answer Questions from the Observation section.** It is not necessary to answer all

the questions, especially in full detail. Generally, hit a handful of the most significant questions.

E. **Look into Main Events/Occurrences** to extract meanings and implications.

F. **Look into Historical/Cultural References** to extract meanings and implications.

G. **Look into Rhetorical Techniques** to expand the concepts.

H. **Look into Key Concepts** to extract and expand the meanings.

I. **Read the whole text one last time in the primary translation, then answer the following additional questions**, writing down the verse references:

- What is revealed about God?
- What is revealed about man? (all men, saints, sinners, Jews, Gentiles, etc.)
- What is revealed about the church or Kingdom of God?
- Are there any ideas or instructions that should be noted as applying only to the target audience and not being universal in nature?
- What is the single over-arching idea of the text, the main idea?

J. **Fill in the details of the outline to the depth desired.** Having a final outline of the text is the best way to review and recall the most important concepts at a later time.

K. **Finally, put the text in your own words using common English** – a paraphrase if a verse or a paragraph, a summary if a longer text like a chapter or a book. This is the test to see if you really understand the heart of the text and are able to explain it to others.

IV. Application

A text has unchanging meaning but unlimited applications from person to person.

A. Did I correct any misunderstanding that I had?

B. Did I learn any new truth?

C. Specific application:

- Is there any change/improvement I need to make in my life?
 - Ways of thinking
 - Attitudes
 - Behaviors
- Is there any principle I can apply to a current situation I am dealing with?

D. How do I plan to internalize the new knowledge and/or operationalize the applications I have committed to?

Part Two:

Important Concepts & Understandings for Bible Studiers

Bible Interpretation Principles

This list is not 100% comprehensive but is more than sufficient for deep Bible study.

1. **The original text of the Bible was “God breathed” (inspired by God) and is therefore perfect, without error or contradiction.** There are a number of reasons to believe this, but they are not detailed here as it is naturally assumed that a Bible studier believes the Bible is reliable.
2. **Determining what a text means requires understanding what the text meant at the time it was written.** This requires a number of elements of textual analysis, as detailed below.
 - **All texts should be taken according to the meaning the author intended to convey to the specific audience.** This requires taking into account the author, the audience, the relationship between the author and the audience, the historical and cultural circumstances, the shared understanding between the author and audience, the rhetorical techniques used, and the reason for the writing.
 - **Some principles of translation depend on the literary genre of the text (historical narrative, proverb, prophetic literature, etc.).** For example, historical narratives like Acts should be interpreted in light of the didactic literature of the New Testament letters. Every Bible student should read a book that explains these principles, such as *How to Read the Bible for all It's Worth* or *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*.
 - **A rule of thumb is to take texts literally unless they are clearly not literal.** The Bible uses metaphors, but do not read metaphors where they do not exist. The Bible uses figures of speech, but do not read figures of speech where they do not exist. The Bible uses truisms, but do not read truisms where they do not exist. Etcetera. On the other hand, Bible writers use a lot of rhetorical techniques to convey ideas that cannot be comprehensively transmitted in the English translations, so we can easily in some passages take literally what is not meant to be literal, or take lightly what is meant to be

greatly emphasized. The bottom line is that one needs to study the Bible to catch the passages where literal or non-literal readings – either one – may be incorrect.

- **Be careful to not read things into a text; let the text reveal itself.**

For example, a parable is generally making a single theological point, so reading multiple notions into a parable is usually in error. That is not to say that there might not be numerous rich details to dig into in order to enlighten the main theological point(s) of a text.

- **Words and phrases sometimes convey unique biblical meanings and therefore must be examined carefully.** Authors of scripture had to convey new theological ideas for which there were no words or phrases in the native languages, especially Greek. So, they used words and phrases in new ways to convey new meanings. Those words and phrases must be examined carefully to avoid the mistake of just picking up their lexical definitions (dictionary definitions). Examples of concepts that require careful study of the underlying words are: 'sin', 'law', 'righteous/righteousness', 'belief/believer', 'faith', 'saving faith', 'justification/justify', 'redemption/redeem', 'propitiation', 'sanctification/sanctify', 'being made right with God', 'kingdom', 'nature/flesh', and even 'love'.

- **Some texts employ structural patterns that we do not use in English, especially rabbinical styles.** The Old Testament is full of rabbinical styles/structures that are not obvious to modern readers and are largely or entirely obscured in the English (and any other non-Hebrew language) in any case. The New Testament contains some special language patterns, as well, including rabbinical styles carried from the Hebrew into the Greek. The New Testament also contains a few early creeds – memorized oral theological statements that early believers spoke to one another before the New Testament was canonized. The writings of Paul, especially Romans, can be very complex and contain layers of references beyond what we are used to in modern language. For all the above mentioned patterns/styles, it is helpful to find some study resources that point out the various structures or patterns in the various texts.

- **Some texts record the same events as other texts, but from different perspectives, so what look like discrepancies or errors are not.** For example, the four Gospels portray Jesus' different aspects. Matthew = King aspect. Mark = servant aspect. Luke = Human aspect. John = Divine Son aspect.

- **Paul's letters to the churches (the Epistles) are each written for one of three theological purposes.** Romans, Ephesians, and Thessalonians are written to explain correct doctrine. Galatians and Colossians are written to correct doctrinal errors being taught in those churches. 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Philipppians are written to correct incorrect beliefs and their resulting incorrect practices.

3. **Always examine the context when examining a word, phrase, or sentence.**

- **Why:**

- **The same word can mean different things in different texts, and even in the same sentence.** Though some words are quite broad while others are quite specific, all words have a semantic range, which means they are broad enough that they can mean different things in different contexts. In addition to this, the New Testament uses Greek words in non-standard ways to communicate theological concepts that did not exist in Greek.
- **The ideas conveyed by words, phrases, and sentences cannot contain meaning that is outside the meaning of the broader text in which the text being analyzed occurs.** That is, the ideas “inside” of which the text being analyzed occurs constrain the possible meanings of the analyzed text. They are like walls of meaning outside of which one cannot reach for meaning, if the text is to be interpreted correctly.

- **How:**

- **Be aware of the whole book in which the text refers.** Refer to a general outline of the entire book in which the text being analyzed occurs. Determine and keep in mind the purpose/theme of the book.
- **Read and examine as much surrounding text as necessary** to nail down the meaning of the text under analysis – text before, and text after. First look at sentences, then paragraphs, then whole chapters – as much as is necessary to nail down the context. If reading alone does not nail down the context, then make a detailed outline of the surrounding text, and determine any sub-purpose/sub-theme of the surrounding text.

4. **Theological/doctrinal ideas are fully developed by a variety of Scripture passages, so do not envision complete doctrines from single passages.**

Understanding this can clear up a lot of confusion and supposed contradictions. Each doctrinal passage enlightens one or more aspects or depths of a doctrine, not the whole doctrine. For example, in the resurrection of Jesus, Jesus had a part, and the Father had a part, and the Spirit had a part. There is no single passage that states this. There are a number of passages, each of which adds understanding to the resurrection event as a whole.

5. **Dealing with difficult passages:**

- Ideas that occur in one or two passages are to be interpreted by ideas that occur in numerous passages.
- Unclear ideas are to be interpreted by clear ideas.
- Implicit ideas are to be interpreted by explicit ideas.

- Undeveloped ideas are to be interpreted by fully developed ideas. The Scripture contains progressive revelation, so ideas that come later explain more fully the ideas that came prior.
- If there appears to be a contradiction in scripture, there are three possibilities: 1) one or more of the texts under scrutiny is being incorrectly interpreted, 2) the texts under scrutiny are providing complementary knowledge [such as the passages that state who raised Jesus from the dead], or 3) there is a paradox [two true ideas that seem opposite to the human mind but are in fact both true].
- Do not try to resolve paradoxes. Instead, marvel at God's infinite being. (God's personal name is "I am Who I am". God cannot be put in a box, cannot be explained fully by human logic. The Bible reveals some things about God that humans cannot understand. Also, there is knowledge of God that God chose not to reveal in the Bible. Finally, the existence of paradoxes is necessary in order to build other doctrines. Trying to explain away paradoxes results in undermining certain essential doctrines.

6. There are three core concepts to be aware of and keep in mind every time one reads and studies the Bible. They illuminate all the other ideas in the Bible.

- **The central theme of the Bible is the restoration of a corrupted, dying universe – including physically and spiritually dying human beings – into a promised new perfect kingdom.** The Bible begins with a perfect universe. That universe falls into a decaying condition because of sin. Moral corruption adversely affects the physical material of the universe. God promises to restore that universe – not to take people out of it but to restore it.
- **The idea of 'covenant relationship' expresses God's plan for restoring the universe to a perfect condition.** The restoration of the dying universe begins with God's covenant with Abraham, later expanded into God's covenant with Moses. The covenant with Moses is impossible for people to keep perfectly, so God keeps the covenant on their behalf via Jesus. Jesus fulfills the covenant on behalf of all people, both Jews and non-Jews. He thus begins a new age, a spiritual age with a spiritual Kingdom that will eventually culminate in the establishment of a perfect spiritual and physical kingdom via the re-creation of a perfect universe.
- **The whole Bible points to Jesus; He is the One through whom God will restore the universe to a perfect condition, and the One who fulfilled the covenant on man's behalf and thus allows people to be part of the restored universe, or new kingdom.** He is the living Way to restore the universe promised to Adam in Genesis, and is the person predicted throughout the Old Testament who would establish God's perfect kingdom. The Old Testament predicts and foreshadows Jesus' coming, and what he would do for the world, over and over from beginning to end. In the Gospels, Jesus states that he is establishing a new kingdom and the person through

whom God makes people right with himself. The New Testament writings after the Gospels explain in depth what Jesus accomplished through his life, death, and resurrection; what this means for people, particularly for his followers; how the perfect kingdom will come about; and what the restored universe or kingdom will be like.

7. **Have an attitude of humility that results in the below mental practices in order to avoid making inaccurate interpretations.**

- **We should be aware that interpretation is subjective**, that we are human beings with prejudices, personal agendas, theological agendas, cultural thought patterns, false expectations, pride, personality traits, and other things that can get in the way of clear interpretation. Therefore, interpretation should be approached carefully.
- **We should look for and consider interpretations that differ from our own**, especially the work of scholars and the historical interpretations of the church, so that we do not distort scripture to fit our own preconceptions or self-centered motivations. Unique interpretations are usually wrong.
- **We should stake positions on doctrinal beliefs relatively slowly**, after careful analysis and checking historical orthodox understandings. The faster one stakes a position, the more likely it is to be incorrect or inaccurate, and pride often makes it hard to uproot a stake when its error or inaccuracy becomes evident.
- **We should consciously look for our incorrect ideas and beliefs in order to shed them.** We all have errors that can be shed, and will continue to take into our minds some number of incorrect ideas and beliefs through the course of life. The goal is to make the shedding of erroneous ideas greater than the accumulation of them.

Word Interpretation – How to do a Word Study

A word study can easily result in a poor understanding of a word and therefore a poor understanding of a passage in which the word occurs. Do word studies properly!

- First, understand the following general concepts.
 - A word study is for the original words of Hebrew and Greek, not for English. A single Greek or Hebrew word is often translated with different English words in different places in the Bible. Also, one Greek or Hebrew word might be translated as a phrase in English, or a phrase in Greek or Hebrew translated as a single word in English. The goal is to understand what the original text meant, so it is the original Greek and Hebrew words that must be studied.
 - A word study is not a concept study. If you want to do a concept study, you will have to conduct studies of all the words that relate to and define the concept. For example, if you want to study the meaning of 'saving faith', you will need to do a word study of the Greek words *pistis*, *pisteuo*, and others.
 - Avoid looking at root meanings. A word derived from a root usually has a substantially different meaning than the root meaning. You want to know the meaning of a word, not the meaning of its root.
- Second, you must understand and keep in mind the linguistic principles of word meanings.
 - A word in one language cannot mean exactly the same thing as a word in another language (no word concordance). Two words may have 50% similarity, or 80% similarity, or 99% similarity, but never 100% identical meaning.
 - Every word has a range of meaning.
 - The precise meaning of a word is determined by its context.
 - Word meanings change over time.
- Begin by **looking up the lexical definition** of the word – Greek lexicon or Hebrew lexicon. **Caution:** Pay special attention to words that convey theological concepts. New Testament writers had to use Greek words to convey ideas about a God who was unknown to Greek culture, so the writers had to use some Greek words in unique ways. When you encounter a Greek word that is used to convey a theological concept (sin, law, salvation, regeneration, justification, resurrection, etc.), you will know that the Bible is using that word in a non-standard way. The lexical definition might contain quite a bit of meaning that is carried into the way the word is used in the Bible, or it might contain just a kernel of meaning that is carried into the way it is used in the Bible.
- For a fuller, richer meaning of the word, **look it up in an expository dictionary.**

- If your purpose is to understand a word in order to **understand a specific text that the word appears in**, examine the word in its context in order to grasp the precise meaning. The context of the sentence will properly constrict the lexical definition of the word, then the word will help illuminate the meaning of the sentence that contains it. Examine as much context as is necessary – a paragraph, a number of paragraphs, a chapter.
- If your purpose is to understand the **full breadth of the meaning of a word** so that you can better understand its particular meaning any time you encounter it in a text, or if you are studying a **key theological word** such as *pistis*, *pisteuo*, *nomos*, *dikaioo*, *apolutrosis*, *paraclete*, or *nomos*, check the word in a concordance. Read every passage of scripture where the word occurs in order to grasp its full range of meaning as used in the Bible. (Some books and study Bibles explore the most important Greek and Hebrew words that are central to biblical theology. These are very helpful and can be read and consulted as desired.) Then, pay careful attention to the context of each word usage whenever you encounter it in scripture, in order to understand the precise meaning of the word in each context.

Bible Versions

Methods of Bible Translation

It is commonly written and said that there are three methods of Bible translation, or two methods with some translations lying between the two methods. Even many scholars repeat this idea in an attempt to simplify things for the layperson. But the simplification is false and results in incorrect ideas about the various Bible versions and even results in needless controversy. Serious Bible students need to understand the translation issue with some clarity.

Below are the three supposed methods.

- Translate ideas in the original language into ideas in English. This is called **dynamic equivalence** or **meaning-for-meaning** or **functional equivalence**. Examples: NLT, NCV, CEV, BNT/TEV.
- Translate words and structures in the original language into words and structures in English, word for word and structure for structure. This is called **formal equivalence** or **word-for-word** or **literal**. Examples: NAS, NRSV, ESV, KJV, NKJV.
- Translate ideas and words and structures – strike a balance between the two extreme methods. These are called **mediating** translations. Examples: NIV, TNIV, HCSB, NET, CEB.

This way of thinking of translations is common but wrong. There is actually just one method to translate one language into another: translate **ideas**. It is impossible to translate a language word-for-word, impossible to translate structure-for-structure. All Bible translations seek to translate ideas from the source language into a target language that conveys, as closely as possible, those same ideas. Thus, all translations seek, first and foremost, what is called **functional equivalence**. If translators did not seek to translate idea-for-idea, their translations would be totally inaccurate in conveying the source language's meaning, or incomprehensible in the target language, or both.

Translations like the ESV, NRSV, KJV, and NAS – and, to a lesser extent, the NIV, TNIV, HCSB, NET and CEB – pay some attention to the **form** of the English in addition to the **meaning**. Form = words and structures. They seek to modify the **form** of the target English away from its common form and somewhat toward the form of the original Hebrew and Greek. The form cannot be adjusted greatly, because it would result in incomprehensible translations. But it is adjusted enough that it results in, to varying degrees, un-natural English that no one in real life reads or writes or speaks. Biblish. The advantage of these

translations, though, is that they are a little easier to conduct Greek and Hebrew word studies with.

Why are There Different Bible Versions, if the Translation Method is Fundamentally the Same?

Bible versions differ from one another in how they render the English. Some versions render the English in plain colloquial ways. Some versions retain historical technical terms for theological ideas, such as 'grace', 'justification', 'righteousness', and 'redemption'. Some versions incorporate more clearly the ideas in the New Testament that are from the Old Testament. Some versions use more formal language and structure. Some versions use more simple language and structures. Actually, all versions contain some mix of approaches in rendering the English.

No Bible Translation Contains 100% of the Meaning of the Original Texts

The first point is that the original manuscripts, which were "God-breathed" and perfect, do not exist. What exist are manuscript copies that themselves are the result of a series of copying. The existing copied manuscripts all differ from one another, so we know there are errors in the copies; they are not 100% precise duplicates of the original perfect texts. None of the errors result in a doctrinal problem, however. That is, all the errors are in passages of minor, non-doctrinal matters, or are surface errors such as spelling.

The second point is that languages are enormously different from one another. Each culture in the world views the world differently from all other cultures, so languages contain different ways of thinking. For example, Hebrew is a relatively simple language, but one that uses a lot of figures of speech. Greek, on the other hand, is a very complex language with many verb tenses and can be used to create very intricate sentences. Of course, grammar differs tremendously from one language to another. Also, languages contain historical and cultural references that cannot be understood unless the history and culture is understood. Furthermore, different languages use different techniques to convey meaning apart from standard literal conveyance. Most importantly, words do not have one-to-one correspondence between languages (no word concordance). This means that a word in one language never means exactly the same thing as a word in another language.

The full extent of meaning in a language cannot be conveyed in a translation – most meaning can be, and core concepts certainly can be, but the complete depth and range of meaning cannot be. Each Bible translation captures something of the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew texts that another translation does not. Therefore, it is advisable to read, or at least refer to, several translations – one from each of the three supposed translation methods. For daily reading, the strictly functional equivalent Bibles are probably best for most people. For studying the underlying Hebrew and Greek words and grammar,

the “formal equivalence” Bibles are best because they are easier to use with study tools such as Greek and Hebrew lexicons.

All Modern Mainstream Translations are Reliable for General Readers

Reliability = how well the meaning of the Greek/Hebrew texts are interpreted + how well the meaning is conveyed in English in ways that readers can understand. **Greek & Hebrew texts : Interpretation : Rendering in English : Comprehension by the reader.** All four of these components must be of good quality in order to produce an English Bible that is reliable. Note, though, that if a person is reading a Bible s/he cannot comprehend well, that Bible is not reliable for that person.

The bottom line is that all the mainstream English translations are reliable for people of normal native English reading proficiency. They are not perfect, but they are reliable. They all convey the core, the heart, of the theological and doctrinal ideas conveyed in the original God-inspired texts. God chose to inspire the original texts in Hebrew and Greek and to lead people to copy those texts as accurately as possible and to translate those copies into other languages. God’s ways are perfect. Don’t trip up by focusing on the fact that the original perfect texts do not exist any longer or that translation of the imperfect manuscript copies is incapable of conveying 100% of the original meaning. The meaning conveyed in the mainstream Bible translations we have today is reliable and more than sufficient for people to comprehend the core ideas about God, and to understand how to be made right with God and how to live accordingly.

A final point about reliability is that all languages change through time, and the modern global language of English is changing particularly rapidly. Therefore, every translation must be updated periodically to take into account changes in the English language.

Which Translation is Best?

It should be clear, after reading the above information, that there is no “best” translation. It is generally best to stick with a primary translation for reading, and to consult a selection of translations for study. Apart from that, choose a translation that fits the situation in which it will be used: young people, old people, children, foreign people, academic people, non-academic people, text for reading out loud, etc.

Why Should a Person Study the Bible?

1. Bible translation cannot capture the full breadth and depth of meaning of the original inspired texts, for reasons of linguistics (word concordance, grammar equivalence, unique patterns, figures of speech, etc.), history, and culture. Study is required in order to bring out the fuller meaning of the original “God-breathed” texts.
2. Every Believer should try to understand the Bible more and more fully through her/his own effort in order to be aware of correct doctrine, be able to discern incorrect doctrine, and be able to biblically respond to doctrinal error. The institutional church has explicitly and implicitly encouraged Believers to be passive participants; true in-depth Bible study that results in tidal waves of Bible knowledge is replaced by talking-about-the-Bible get-togethers, video lectures, study guides and such. Most Believers rely to a dangerous degree on pastors, popular teachers, a local church’s or denomination’s official teachings, audio sermons, and study guides. This has left most Believers vulnerable, to varying degrees, to incorrect teaching. The full truth of God is under constant attack from forces outside and inside the Church – age old pagan concepts of God, modern pagan concepts of God (e.g. New Age ideas), false science, skeptics, heretical groups and movements, apostates, and well-intentioned but ignorant Believers. Each Believer needs to have read, researched, thought out, and prayed over – according to one’s abilities – an array of biblical doctrines.
3. Scriptures contain quite a number of difficult and obscure passages – difficult and obscure in the original languages themselves. Why would God inspire the text to contain so many depths and facets and difficult parts and obscure passages? Following is an explanation by William Whitaker in his book *A Disputation on Holy Scripture, against the papists, especially Bellarmine and Stapleton* (Cambridge, 1588, translated by William Fitzgerald of the Parker Society, 1849).

First, God would have us to be constant in prayer, and hath scattered many obscurities up and down through the scriptures, in order that we should seek his help in interpreting them and discovering their true meaning. Secondly, he wished thereby to excite our diligence in reading, meditating upon, searching and comparing the scriptures; for, if every thing had been plain, we should have been entirely slothful and negligent. Thirdly, he designed to prevent our losing interest in them; for we are ready to grow weary of easy things: God, therefore, would have our interest kept up by difficulties. Fourthly, God willed to have that truth, so sublime, so heavenly, sought and found with so much labour, the more esteemed by us on that account. For we generally despise and condemn whatever is easily acquired, near at hand, and costs small or no labour, according to the Greek proverb, *ἐπὶ θύρας τὴν ὑδρίαν*. But those things which we find with great toil and much exertion, those, when once we have found them out, we esteem highly and consider their value proportionally greater. Fifthly, God wished by this means to subdue our pride and arrogance, and to expose to us our ignorance. We are apt to think too

honourably of ourselves, and to rate our genius and acuteness more highly than is fitting, and to promise ourselves too much from our science and knowledge. Sixthly, God willed that the sacred mysteries of his word should be opened freely to pure and holy minds, not exposed to dogs and swine. Hence those things which are easy to holy persons, appear so many parables to the profane. For the mysteries of scripture are like gems, which only he that knows them values; while the rest, like the cock in Æsop, despise them, and prefer the most worthless objects to what is most beautiful and excellent. Seventhly, God designed to call off our minds from the pursuit of external things and our daily occupations, and transfer them to the study of the scriptures. Hence it is now necessary to give some time to their perusal and study; which we certainly should not bestow upon them, if we found every thing plain and open. Eighthly, God desired thus to accustom us to a certain internal purity and sanctity of thought and feeling. For they who bring with them profane minds to the reading of scripture, lose their trouble and oil: those only read with advantage, who bring with them pure and holy minds.

Part Three:

Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of Bible Interpretation Principles

- ▶ The original text of the Bible was “God breathed” and therefore perfect.

- ▶ Determining what a text means requires understanding what it meant at the time it was written.
 - All texts should be taken according to the meaning the author intended to convey to the specific audience.
 - Some principles of translation depend on the literary genre of the text.
 - A rule of thumb is to take texts as literal unless they are clearly not literal.
 - Be careful to not read things into a text; let the text reveal itself.
 - Words and phrases sometimes convey unique biblical meanings and therefore must be examined carefully.
 - Some texts employ structural patterns that we do not use in English.
 - Some texts record the same events as other texts, but from different perspectives.
 - Paul’s letters to the churches are each written for one of three theological purposes: to explain doctrine, to correct the teaching of incorrect doctrine, and to correct errors in thought that result in errors of practice.

- ▶ Always examine the context when examining a word, phrase, or sentence.
 - Be aware of the whole book in which the text occurs – a general outline & the purpose/theme.
 - Read and examine as much surrounding text as necessary to nail down the meaning of the text under analysis – text before, and text after.

- ▶ Theological/doctrinal ideas are fully developed by a variety of Scripture passages, so do not envision complete doctrines from single passages.

► Dealing with difficult passages.

- Ideas that occur in one or two passages are to be interpreted by clear ideas that occur in numerous passages.
- Unclear ideas are to be interpreted by clear ideas.
- Implicit ideas are to be interpreted by explicit ideas.
- Undeveloped ideas are to be interpreted by fully developed ideas.
- If there appears to be a contradiction in scripture, there are two possibilities: 1) one or more of the texts under scrutiny is being incorrectly interpreted, or 2) there is a paradox [two true ideas that seem opposite to the human mind but are in fact both true].
- Do not try to resolve paradoxes.

► There are three core concepts to be aware of and keep in mind. They illuminate everything else contained in the Bible.

- The story of the Bible is the story of the restoration of a corrupted, dying universe that includes corrupted, dying human beings.
- Always be aware that 'Covenant relationship' is the most central theme in the Bible through which the restoration of the universe occurs.
- The whole Bible points to Jesus. He is the restorer and the Covenant fulfiller, in both ways doing for people what they could not do for themselves or for their world.

► Have an attitude of humility that results in the below mental practices.

- Be aware that interpretation is subjective.
- Look for and consider interpretations that differ from our own.
- Stake positions on doctrinal beliefs relatively slowly.
- Consciously look for our incorrect ideas and beliefs in order to shed them.

Appendix 2: Guides & Study Tools

Reference Tools

- Bibles
 - Multiple Bible translations (individual Bibles, parallel Bibles)
 - Study Bibles (contains a lot of interpretive notes, background info, cross references, etc.)
 - Harmony of the Gospels / Synopsis of the Gospels
- Greek and Hebrew studies and references
 - Greek
 - Greek-English interlinear Bible
 - Greek concordance (with Greek dictionary/lexicon)
 - NAS Discovery Bible (for understanding basic verb tenses and emphasis in the Greek)
 - Hebrew
 - Hebrew-English interlinear Bible
 - Hebrew concordance (with Hebrew dictionary/lexicon)
 - Both Hebrew & Greek
 - Exhaustive English concordance (with original-language dictionary/lexicon)
 - Expository dictionary (gives in depth definitions but may not list every word)
 - Books that explain the common words and/or key words, and the theological concepts they are used to develop
 - Books that explain Greek and Hebrew grammars
- Text study aids
 - Commentaries (refer to more than one author in order to sample from more than just one person's thoughts)
 - Exegetical guides and other books on the text being studied – deep meanings of the original words, grammar, and rhetorical techniques such as figures of speech; histories; backgrounds; and other helpful information.
- Background research aids
 - Bible dictionary, Bible handbook, or Bible encyclopedia
 - Books on culture, traditions, history, contemporary religions, and such

Useful Books on Bible Study & Interpretation

- *Knowing Scripture* – general principles of interpretation
- *How to Read the Bible for all It's Worth* – the types of literature in the Bible and how to interpret them
- *Understanding Scripture* – the types of literature in the Bible and how to interpret them
- *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* – how to approach the reading of each book's literary genre
- *The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study* – a comprehensive system of Bible study
- *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* – a concise explanation of how the entire Bible is tied together around a set of core themes

Useful Books on Translations & Canonization

- *The Complete Guide to Bible Translations* – brief overview of translation methods; explanation of each modern English translation with advantages and disadvantages of each
- *How to Choose a Translation for all It's Worth* – detailed explanation of translation methods; brief explanation of each modern English translation
- *A User's Guide to Bible Translations: Making the Most of Different Versions* – detailed explanation of translation methods; overview of English Bibles since the Reformation, with suggestions for choosing a modern English translation to fit the purpose of its use
- *How We Got the Bible* – how the Bible went from original writings to modern translations and how writings were accepted into the canon of Scripture
- *How We Got the Bible: A Visual Journey* – pictures and images to help one understand what manuscripts look like, what the original languages look like, and such

Appendix 3A: Worksheet for Observation Section – Example

Observations for the text of: _____Romans 3_____

Nu m- ber	Observation	Sub-section / Item
		<u>Questions</u>
1	faithful (3)	word
2	What happens “through faith in his blood?” (25)	gram reference
3	justified (24)	word
4	uphold the law (31)	phrase
5	purpose of the law is to make people conscious of sin	sentence
6	law (21)	word
7	Is being a Jew an advantage of not? (1, 9)	contradiction
		<u>Rhetoric</u>
8	sin - justification	Problem - Solution
9	Jews under sin – Everyone under sin	Specific - General
10	Is God’s wrath unjust?	Q & A
		<u>Key Concepts</u>

11	just/justice/justification (5, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30)	words
12	works of the law (28)	phrase
13	law (19, 20, 21, 28, 30)	word
14	righteousness via faith (22)	sentence
Or:		
1	faithful (3)	A.1.
2	What happens "through faith in his blood?" (25)	A.4.
3	justified (24)	A.1.
4	uphold the law (31)	A.2.
5	purpose of the law is to make people conscious of sin	A.3.
6	law (21)	A.1.
7	Is being a Jew an advantage of not? (1, 9)	A.6.
8	sin - justification	E. P-S
9	Jews under sin – Everyone under sin	E. S-G
10	Is God's wrath unjust?	E. Q-A
11	just/justice/justification (5, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30)	F.1.
12	works of the law (28)	F.2.

Reading Through the Bible In a Year

Congratulations on taking this challenge!

Reading through the Bible is one of the most important steps in your spiritual journey and growth! The Bible is at the foundation of our faith, and it is also one of God's primary methods of revealing Himself to all mankind. Getting to know God takes time and discipline. It is an intentional, lifelong pursuit, a deliberate effort to not only know about Him, but to **know Him** and who He is and His eternal plan and purpose. This challenge will NOT be easy, and your effort will be tested around every corner of place and time. But you must BE STRONG and COURAGEOUS. Make every effort to read your designated daily reference. If you forget, or get behind, DON'T GIVE UP!! Pick right back up and keep going!! Be persistent and unrelenting in your discipline, as this builds strength, character, and leads to victory (Romans 5:3-4, 2 Peter 1:5-9)!

As a result of your reading, the Bible will no longer be a book of disjointed chapters and verses, of mere stories and teachings, but will become a contiguous account of the plan of the One True God unfolding throughout history that leads to its climax in the consummation of the ages. You will obtain a contextual understanding of His promises, and your understanding and faith will deepen.

As you read, keep in mind the three main levels of interpretation:

- 1) The overall purpose of God
- 2) God's redemption of humankind through Israel
- 3) The principles gained through each portion of scripture

Besides simply reading, there are several ways that can enhance and heighten your experience. These are some suggestions to choose from only if you feel led. They may be a hindrance to some who work better on their own:

- 1) Meet with a partner(s) regularly, sharing your struggles in accomplishing the task, your victories, and what new things God revealed to you. Encourage each other in continuing the journey and pray for each other.
- 2) Read portions with your partner when you meet. Agree to read certain parts on your own and discuss when you come back together again. Share what you learned, questions, insights, “ah-ha” moments, etc.
- 3) To further deepen your experience, it may be helpful to keep a journal. This helps you to remember new things learned so you can refer back to them, and to share with your reading partner and others. Always read and study with the intention of sharing it with someone as God opens the door of opportunity to do so. This helps you to retain more of what you read, and makes you an emissary of the Good News.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Genesis 1-3		<input type="checkbox"/>	32	Leviticus 1-4		<input type="checkbox"/>	63	Deuter. 14-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Genesis 4-7		<input type="checkbox"/>	33	Leviticus 5-7		<input type="checkbox"/>	64	Deuter. 18-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Genesis 8-11		<input type="checkbox"/>	34	Leviticus 8-9		<input type="checkbox"/>	65	Deuter. 21-23
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Genesis 12-15		<input type="checkbox"/>	35	Leviticus 10-12		<input type="checkbox"/>	66	Deuter. 24-26
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Genesis 16-18		<input type="checkbox"/>	36	Leviticus 13		<input type="checkbox"/>	67	Deuter. 27-28
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Genesis 19-20		<input type="checkbox"/>	37	Leviticus 14-15		<input type="checkbox"/>	68	Deuter. 29-31
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Genesis 21-23		<input type="checkbox"/>	38	Leviticus 16-18		<input type="checkbox"/>	69	Deut. 32-34
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Genesis 24-25		<input type="checkbox"/>	39	Leviticus 19-21		<input type="checkbox"/>	70	Joshua 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Genesis 26-28		<input type="checkbox"/>	40	Leviticus 22-23		<input type="checkbox"/>	71	Joshua 5-7
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Genesis 29-30		<input type="checkbox"/>	41	Leviticus 24-25		<input type="checkbox"/>	72	Joshua 8-9
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Genesis 31-32		<input type="checkbox"/>	42	Leviticus 26-27		<input type="checkbox"/>	73	Joshua 10-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Genesis 33-35		<input type="checkbox"/>	43	Numbers 1-2		<input type="checkbox"/>	74	Joshua 12-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Genesis 36-38		<input type="checkbox"/>	44	Numbers 3-4		<input type="checkbox"/>	75	Joshua 15-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Genesis 39-41		<input type="checkbox"/>	45	Numbers 5-6		<input type="checkbox"/>	76	Joshua 18-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Genesis 42-44		<input type="checkbox"/>	46	Numbers 7		<input type="checkbox"/>	77	Joshua 21-22
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Genesis 45-47		<input type="checkbox"/>	47	Numbers 8-10		<input type="checkbox"/>	78	Joshua 23-24
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Genesis 48-50		<input type="checkbox"/>	48	Numbers 11-13		<input type="checkbox"/>	79	Judges 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	Exodus 1-3		<input type="checkbox"/>	49	Numbers 14-15		<input type="checkbox"/>	80	Judges 4-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	Exodus 4-6		<input type="checkbox"/>	50	Numbers 16-18		<input type="checkbox"/>	81	Judges 7-8
<input type="checkbox"/>	20	Exodus 7-9		<input type="checkbox"/>	51	Numbers 19-21		<input type="checkbox"/>	81	Judges 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	21	Exodus 10-12		<input type="checkbox"/>	52	Numbers 22-24		<input type="checkbox"/>	83	Judges 11-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	22	Exodus 13-15		<input type="checkbox"/>	53	Numbers 25-26		<input type="checkbox"/>	84	Judges 14-16
<input type="checkbox"/>	23	Exodus 16-18		<input type="checkbox"/>	54	Numbers 27-29		<input type="checkbox"/>	85	Judges 17-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	24	Exodus 19-21		<input type="checkbox"/>	55	Numbers 30-31		<input type="checkbox"/>	86	Judges 20-21
<input type="checkbox"/>	25	Exodus 22-24		<input type="checkbox"/>	56	Numbers 32-33		<input type="checkbox"/>	87	Ruth 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	26	Exodus 25-27		<input type="checkbox"/>	57	Numbers 34-36		<input type="checkbox"/>	88	Samuel 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	27	Exodus 28-29		<input type="checkbox"/>	58	Deuter. 1-2		<input type="checkbox"/>	89	1 Samuel 4-7
<input type="checkbox"/>	28	Exodus 30-32		<input type="checkbox"/>	59	Deuter. 3-4		<input type="checkbox"/>	90	1 Samuel 8-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	29	Exodus 33-35		<input type="checkbox"/>	60	Deuter. 5-7		<input type="checkbox"/>	91	1 Samuel 11-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	30	Exodus 36-38		<input type="checkbox"/>	61	Deuter. 8-10		<input type="checkbox"/>	92	1 Samuel 14-15
<input type="checkbox"/>	31	Exodus 39-40		<input type="checkbox"/>	62	Deuter. 11-13		<input type="checkbox"/>	93	1 Samuel 16-17

Daily Bible Readings Through One Year

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	94	1 Samuel 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/>	125	2 Kings 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	156	Nehemiah 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	95	1 Samuel 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	126	2 Kings 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	157	Nehemiah 11-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	96	1 Samuel 25-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	127	2 Kings 22-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	158	Esther 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	97	1 Samuel 28-31	<input type="checkbox"/>	128	1 Chron. 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	159	Esther 4-7
<input type="checkbox"/>	98	2 Samuel 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	129	1 Chron. 2-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	160	Esther 8-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	99	2 Samuel 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	130	1 Chron. 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	161	Job 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	100	2 Samuel 8-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	131	1 Chron. 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	162	Job 6-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	101	2 Samuel 12-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	132	1 Chron. 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	163	Job 11-15
<input type="checkbox"/>	102	2 Samuel 14-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	133	1 Chron. 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	164	Job 16-21
<input type="checkbox"/>	103	2 Samuel 16-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	134	1 Chron. 17-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	165	Job 22-28
<input type="checkbox"/>	104	2 Samuel 18-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	135	1 Chron. 20-23	<input type="checkbox"/>	166	Job 29-33
<input type="checkbox"/>	105	2 Samuel 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	136	1 Chron. 24-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	167	Job 34-37
<input type="checkbox"/>	106	2 Samuel 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	137	1 Chron. 27-29	<input type="checkbox"/>	168	Job 38-42
<input type="checkbox"/>	107	1 Kings 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	138	2 Chron. 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	169	Psalms 1-9
<input type="checkbox"/>	108	1 Kings 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	139	2 Chron. 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	170	Psalms 10-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	109	1 Kings 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	140	2 Chron. 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	171	Psalms 18-22
<input type="checkbox"/>	110	1 Kings 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	141	2 Chron. 11-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	172	Psalms 23-31
<input type="checkbox"/>	111	1 Kings 8	<input type="checkbox"/>	142	2 Chron. 15-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	173	Psalms 32-37
<input type="checkbox"/>	112	1 Kings 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	143	2 Chron. 19-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	174	Psalms 38-44
<input type="checkbox"/>	113	1 Kings 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	144	2 Chron. 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	175	Psalms 45-51
<input type="checkbox"/>	114	1 Kings 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	145	2 Chron. 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	176	Psalms 52-59
<input type="checkbox"/>	115	Kings 15-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	146	2 Chron. 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	177	Psalms 60-67
<input type="checkbox"/>	116	1 Kings 18-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	147	2 Chron. 31-33	<input type="checkbox"/>	178	Psalms 68-71
<input type="checkbox"/>	117	1 Kings 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	148	2 Chron. 34-36	<input type="checkbox"/>	179	Psalms 72-77
<input type="checkbox"/>	118	2 Kings 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	149	Ezra 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	180	Psalms 78-81
<input type="checkbox"/>	119	2 Kings 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	150	Ezra 3-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	181	Psalms 82-89
<input type="checkbox"/>	120	2 Kings 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	151	Ezra 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	182	Psalms 90-97
<input type="checkbox"/>	121	2 Kings 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	152	Ezra 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	183	Psalms 98-104
<input type="checkbox"/>	122	2 Kings 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	153	Nehemiah 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	184	Psalms 105-107
<input type="checkbox"/>	123	2 Kings 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	154	Nehemiah 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	185	Psalms 108-116
<input type="checkbox"/>	124	2 Kings 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	155	Nehemiah 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	186	Psalms 117-118

Daily Bible Readings Through One Year

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	187	Psalms 119	<input type="checkbox"/>	218	Isaiah 64-66	<input type="checkbox"/>	249	Ezekiel 29-31
<input type="checkbox"/>	188	Psalms 120-135	<input type="checkbox"/>	2190	Jeremiah 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	250	Ezekiel 32-33
<input type="checkbox"/>	189	Psalms 136-142	<input type="checkbox"/>	220	Jeremiah 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	251	Ezekiel 34-36
<input type="checkbox"/>	190	Psalms 143-150	<input type="checkbox"/>	221	Jeremiah 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	252	Ezekiel 37-38
<input type="checkbox"/>	191	Proverbs 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	222	Jeremiah 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	253	Ezekiel 39-40
<input type="checkbox"/>	192	Proverbs 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	223	Jeremiah 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	254	Ezekiel 41-43
<input type="checkbox"/>	193	Proverbs 9-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	224	Jeremiah 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	255	Ezekiel 44-45
<input type="checkbox"/>	194	Proverbs 14-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	225	Jeremiah 19-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	256	Ezekiel 46-48
<input type="checkbox"/>	195	Proverbs 18-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	226	Jeremiah 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	257	Daniel 1-2
<input type="checkbox"/>	196	Proverbs 22-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	227	Jeremiah 26-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	258	Daniel 3-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	197	Proverbs 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	228	Jeremiah 28-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	259	Daniel 5-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	198	Proverbs 29-31	<input type="checkbox"/>	229	Jeremiah 31-32	<input type="checkbox"/>	260	Daniel 7-8
<input type="checkbox"/>	199	Eccles. 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	230	Jeremiah 33-35	<input type="checkbox"/>	261	Daniel 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	200	Eccles. 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	231	Jeremiah 36-38	<input type="checkbox"/>	262	Daniel 11-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	201	Song of Sol 1-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	232	Jeremiah 39-41	<input type="checkbox"/>	263	Hosea 1-7
<input type="checkbox"/>	202	Isaiah 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	233	Jeremiah 42-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	264	Hosea 8-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	203	Isaiah 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	234	Jeremiah 45-48	<input type="checkbox"/>	265	Joel 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	204	Isaiah 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	235	Jeremiah 49-50	<input type="checkbox"/>	266	Amos 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	205	Isaiah 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	236	Jeremiah 51-52	<input type="checkbox"/>	267	Amos 6-9/Obadiah
<input type="checkbox"/>	206	Isaiah 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	237	Lamentations1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	268	Jon.1-4/Mic.1-2
<input type="checkbox"/>	207	Isaiah 22-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	238	Lamentations3-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	269	Micah 3-7
<input type="checkbox"/>	208	Isaiah 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	239	Ezekiel 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	270	Nahum/Habakkuk
<input type="checkbox"/>	209	Isaiah 29-31	<input type="checkbox"/>	240	Ezekiel 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	271	Zeph./Haggai
<input type="checkbox"/>	210	Isaiah 32-35	<input type="checkbox"/>	241	Ezekiel 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	272	Zechariah 1-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	211	Isaiah 36-38	<input type="checkbox"/>	242	Ezekiel 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	273	Zechariah 7-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	212	Isaiah 39-42	<input type="checkbox"/>	243	Ezekiel 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	274	Zechariah 11-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	213	Isaiah 43-47	<input type="checkbox"/>	244	Ezekiel 17-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	275	Malachi1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	214	Isaiah 48-51	<input type="checkbox"/>	245	Ezekiel 20-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	276	Matthew 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	215	Isaiah 52-56	<input type="checkbox"/>	246	Ezekiel 22-23	<input type="checkbox"/>	277	Matthew 5-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	216	Isaiah 57-59	<input type="checkbox"/>	247	Ezekiel 24-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	278	Matthew 7-9
<input type="checkbox"/>	217	Isaiah 60-63	<input type="checkbox"/>	248	Ezekiel 27-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	279	Matthew 10-12

Daily Bible Readings Through One Year

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Day #</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	280	Matthew 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	311	John 10-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	342	Ephesians 4-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	281	Matthew 15-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	312	John 12-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	343	Philippians 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	282	Matthew 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/>	313	John 14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	344	Colossians 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	283	Matthew 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	314	John 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	345	1 Thess. 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	284	Matthew 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	315	John 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	346	2 Thess. 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	285	Matthew 25-26	<input type="checkbox"/>	316	Acts 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	347	1 Timothy 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	286	Matthew 27-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	317	Acts 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	348	1 Timothy 5-6
<input type="checkbox"/>	287	Mark 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	318	Acts 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	349	2 Timothy 1-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	288	Mark 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	319	Acts 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	350	Titus/Philemon
<input type="checkbox"/>	289	Mark 6-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	320	Acts 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	351	Hebrews 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	290	Mark 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	321	Acts 14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	352	Hebrews 6-9
<input type="checkbox"/>	291	Mark 10-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	322	Acts 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	353	Hebrews 10-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	292	Mark 12-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	323	Acts 19-20	<input type="checkbox"/>	354	Hebrews 12-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	293	Mark 14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	324	Acts 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	355	James 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	294	Luke 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	325	Acts 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	356	1 Peter 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	295	Luke 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	326	Acts 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/>	357	2 Peter 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	296	Luke 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	327	Romans 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	358	1 John 1-5
<input type="checkbox"/>	297	Luke 6-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	328	Romans 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	359	2, 3 John, Jude
<input type="checkbox"/>	298	Luke 8	<input type="checkbox"/>	329	Romans 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	360	Revelation 1-3
<input type="checkbox"/>	299	Luke 9	<input type="checkbox"/>	330	Romans 11-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	361	Revelation 4-8
<input type="checkbox"/>	300	Luke 10-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	331	Romans 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	362	Revelation 9-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	301	Luke 12-13	<input type="checkbox"/>	332	1 Corinth. 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>	363	Revelation 13-16
<input type="checkbox"/>	302	Luke 14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>	333	1 Corinth. 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	364	Revelation 17-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	303	Luke 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>	334	1 Corinth. 9-11	<input type="checkbox"/>	365	Revelation 20-22
<input type="checkbox"/>	304	Luke 19-20	<input type="checkbox"/>	335	1 Corinth.12-14			
<input type="checkbox"/>	305	Luke 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/>	336	1 Corinth.15-16			
<input type="checkbox"/>	306	Luke 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	337	2 Corinth. 1-4			
<input type="checkbox"/>	307	John 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	338	2 Corinth. 5-8			
<input type="checkbox"/>	308	John 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	339	2 Corinth. 9-13			
<input type="checkbox"/>	309	John 6-7	<input type="checkbox"/>	340	Galatians 1-6			
<input type="checkbox"/>	310	John 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	341	Ephesians 1-3			

Daily Bible Readings Through One Year