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MOTIVATING GIFT-BASED SERVICE AT GRACE BAPTIST
CHURCH, SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA

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Rodney James Martin
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MOTIVATING GIFT-BASED SERVICE AT GRACE BAPTIST
CHURCH, SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA

Rodney James Martin

Read and Approved by:

Stuart W. Scott (Faculty Supervisor)

Shane W. Parker

Date _____

I dedicate this project to the members, past, present, and future, of Grace Baptist Church

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PREFACE

This project is a team accomplishment. It would not have been possible without the guidance and direction of the staff and professors at SBTS, the cooperation of the senior pastor of Grace Baptist Church, the encouragement of the elders on my review panel, the patience and understanding of my wife, Terri, and the motivation and enablement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He alone provides hope and purpose for true life. I am thankful for all who participated in this project, especially my faculty supervisor, Dr. Stuart Scott, and Dr. Shane Parker. Also, the editorial comments of Mrs. Marsha Omanson were extremely helpful. Finally, the formatting and editing assistance of Betsy Fredrick was invaluable. I am indebted to all those who used their spiritual gift to help shape this project and sharpen my ministry.

Rod Martin

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of Grace Baptist Church (GBC) in Santa Clarita, California, is to “Make and multiply Christ-followers who magnify the glory of God.” In other words, the mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. This mission is in compliance with the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). A number of programs, classes, and ministry opportunities have been established at GBC to promote this mission. Most of these opportunities, however, are attended by less than 10 percent of the members. Likewise, a minority of the membership are using their spiritual gifts to serve in the church. Many church members, and even more non-member attendees, are uninvolved in the work of the church. This ministry project promoted gift-based service by teaching the identity, gifts, and role of a believer in the church. Once this project is implemented it can be a foundational tool for motivating new believers and new members for gift-based service within the church.

Context

Grace Baptist Church is one of the largest Protestant churches in the city of Santa Clarita, a community of 181,960¹ people located thirty-five miles north of Los Angeles. The church has nearly 2,000 adult members and an equivalent number of adult non-members.

GBC started in a home in 1961, and gradually grew. A series of pastors led the church until the early 1980s. At that time a pastor joined who stayed for twenty-three

¹ City-Data.com, “Santa Clarita, California,” accessed November 17, 2018, www.city-data.com/city/santa-clarita-california.html

years, retiring in 2006. A pastor search committee was formed and after thirty months a new senior pastor was hired, starting early in 2009. Thankfully, a dedicated core group of active members maintained the church momentum during the pastor-search process. Much has changed in the past nine years. Several discipleship opportunities have been added, some of the old traditions were discontinued, the mission statement was revised, and several staff positions have changed. Activities that did not support the church mission were dropped.

Members of the church are from diverse backgrounds and many church denominations. In my experience, few have a solid biblical foundation. A disappointing number, especially those coming for counseling, cannot clearly explain elementary concepts such as man's purpose, salvation, sanctification, the gospel, the church, and discipleship. Most who seek counseling or mentoring are not actively serving in the church. This problem exists because most believers have never been discipled. They do not understand their identity in Christ, they are unfamiliar with spiritual gifts, and they are not actively serving in the church. Many are only consumers of information. They do not act on what they have heard. In short, they are hearers but not doers. Fortunately, many of the pastors, elders, and volunteers are aware of this problem. In response to these concerns, classes in theology were established for the membership. In addition, a discipleship pastor was hired, and a mentoring program began.

Even though a number of discipleship opportunities (theology classes, mentoring, etc.) have been developed, only a small percent of the membership participates. For example, an eight-week Bible-based class in overcoming anger is offered twice yearly for men. Attendance at this class ranges from four to eight men, with only about half attending GBC. Once, no one signed up for this class. Some of the better-attended classes start with about 150 people and drop to half that number several months later when the class ends. Some members, men in particular, recognize that something is missing in

their Christian education so they sign up for mentoring, but they remain a small percentage of the membership.

Something must be done to motivate interest in ongoing, active, gift-based service in the church. This need should not be construed as a criticism of GBC in particular. As a result of moving sixteen times, my wife and I have attended numerous churches and observed similar characteristics in each church. GBC has been entrusted with much and is striving to be a good steward. GBC expresses a strong interest in discipleship and makes great effort to ensure that quality discipleship opportunities are available to all attendees. Because the leadership of GBC is dedicated to discipleship, this church environment is excellent for launching a program to enhance biblical motivation for gift-based service. In summary, GBC is a large church that is endeavoring to make disciples of Jesus Christ and learning how to use God's resources in the power of His Spirit to accomplish His purposes. The question for this project was how to nurture members to actively serve through the use of their spiritual gifts.

Rationale

The church has many hearers but a far fewer number of doers. This project intended to motivate hearers to become doers. Motivation for gift-based service was missing because many in the church had not been clearly taught basic biblical foundations with an emphasis on why disciples have been called (their identity) and how God expects them to serve in the church (gift-based service). Each believer has a part to play in the church and each part is important. Understanding the fundamentals of any endeavor is essential, whether in sports, business, the military, or the church. Understanding the fundamentals leads to acceptance of the mission of the organization, and subsequently to motivation for accomplishing the assigned role. People in every organization need to clearly know their position and what is expected of them. Teaching the biblical fundamentals of being an active, serving, disciple in the church should generate interest in

pursuing the role God gives believers. Believers are servants of Jesus Christ and have an important role in serving His church.

The central concepts in this project were the believer's identity in Christ, the spiritual giftedness God has given each of them, and their role in the church. There are other factors, of course, but it is my intention to show how these three concepts can lead members to active gift-based service.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and test a curriculum that will enable members of Grace Baptist Church to understand their identity as servants of Christ, recognize their spiritual giftedness, and assume their role in the body of Christ by participating in gift-based service.

Goals

The following four goals represent a small step in expanding active participation in ministry at GBC. The intent was to motivate gift-based service by teaching the true identity of Christ followers, helping them understand their spiritual giftedness, and encouraging them to use their giftedness to build up the body of Christ, the church.

1. The first goal was to enlist twelve adult attendees to participate in this project.
2. The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum that will address a believer's identity, giftedness, and service.
3. The third goal was to increase the knowledge, motivation, and gift-based service of the participants by teaching the curriculum.
4. The fourth goal was to review the curriculum and revise as necessary.

Research Methodology

The first goal was to enlist twelve adult attendees of GBC to participate in this project. The criterion for selecting these participants was that they attend GBC at least twice a month but are not actively serving in the church. Many people attend regularly, and even attend classes, but are not serving. Each participant had to commit to completing

the eight-week program. The twelve members were selected with input from the pastors, elders, and church leaders. The successful enlistment of twelve participants would complete this goal.²

The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum that will address a believer's identity, giftedness, and service. The curriculum consisted of a comprehensive overview of foundational biblical concepts related to a believer's identity, giftedness, and service. Appropriate homework was included. In keeping with the purpose, the curriculum revolved around why active gift-based service in the church is necessary. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.³ The four-person expert panel consisted of elders from GBC who were working directly in the discipleship of believers. This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the curriculum did not initially meet the 90 percent criterion it was revised appropriately until this goal is successfully met.

Goal 3 was to increase the knowledge, motivation, and gift-based service of the participants by teaching the curriculum.⁴ All twelve attendees were expected to participate in all eight lessons. The knowledge, motivation, and service goals were measured by administering a pre- and post-survey which was used to measure the change

² Since this was a pilot training program, a small group of twelve participants was used to test the effectiveness of the program. Once the program was proven, it was intended to be scaled up for use with much larger groups.

³ See appendix 2 for the evaluation rubric.

⁴ This goal involved teaching the curriculum to the twelve participants and included immediate review and evaluation of each lesson following every class. This included noting things that went well and those that were more difficult. Which concepts were easily understood and why? What questions were asked? Questions indicated areas where the curriculum needed to be expanded. Are there things that need to be added or eliminated? Capturing this information following each lesson facilitated goal 4, the evaluation and revision of the curriculum.

in knowledge and level of service.⁵ This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores.⁶ The participation goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-analysis that was used to measure participation trends. This goal was considered successfully met when at least 50 percent of the participants begin serving in the church. Short-term commitments for entry-level service were deemed adequate.

Goal 4 was to review and revise the curriculum. Successful completion of goal 3 would indicate that only minor revision was necessary. Once again, this goal was measured by the same expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the revised curriculum.⁷ This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If this goal was not initially met, then the curriculum was appropriately revised until the 90 percent criterion was achieved.

The ultimate goal is to develop a process to motivate members for gift-based service and active participation in the church, success will be determined over time. As the curriculum is revised and more members complete the program, motivation for gift-based service should increase greatly. True success will be shown in the long-term as members begin using their spiritual gifts to serve others and become clearly active members of the church.

⁵ See appendix 1 for the survey instrument. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Research Ethics Committee prior to the use in the ministry project.

⁶ The t-test was selected for this analysis as it compares the means of the scores from the pretest and posttest which measured doctrinal knowledge among the select group of median adults. Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), 208-10.

⁷ See appendix 2 for the evaluation rubric.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definition of a key term is used in the ministry project:

Spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.⁸

Two delimitations were placed on this project. First, participants were required to be believing adult attendees of GBC who are not currently serving in the church but are capable of serving. The second delimitation was that the project was limited to twenty-one weeks.

Personal limitations included recruiting students and siting training as a layperson rather than as a pastor, elder, or church staff person. In addition, sufficient students needed to be recruited so that at least twelve would attend all eight lessons. Also, this was a project conducted outside the main ministry emphasis of the church.

Conclusion

God created the church and has given His people instructions in His Word on how to function within the church in a manner that pleases and honors Him while building up the church. He has also gifted every believer to actively serve in the church. Unfortunately, many are unaware of God's purpose for man, His purpose for the church, and how believers should use the gifts He has given them to serve the body. Chapter 2 will address this problem by developing a theological framework for understanding a believer's identity and how God has gifted each believer to serve in the church for the benefit of all members.

⁸ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1016.

CHAPTER 2
THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS
FOR GIFT-BASED SERVICE

Introduction

This chapter develops the theological basis for gift-based service in the church. Four sections of Scripture are discussed, one from the Old Testament and three from the New Testament. The starting point is God's purpose for creating man. This purpose is clearly stated in Genesis 1:26. What believers do in the church should be consistent with God's purpose for man. The next verse, Mark 10:42-45, shows Christ Jesus explaining to His apostles the importance of service. Rather than being motivated by pride, believers should be motivated to serve one another. Christ came to serve the elect, and they in turn are to serve one another. Serving one another is vividly illustrated by Christ during the Last Supper. In John 13:3-16, Christ washes the disciples' feet as an illustration of how they should relate to one another. The example of dirty feet shows how service addresses real needs. The final section of Scripture, 1 Corinthians 12:1-30, explains and illustrates the importance of using Spirit-given gifts as believers serve one another in the church. God has a plan for how believers are to serve one another in the church, the resources that are available for service, and the specific tasks each believer is to perform. This chapter will demonstrate that God desires gift-based service by every believer in the church.

Genesis 1:26

Genesis 1:26 reads, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that

creeps on the earth.”¹ Genesis 1:26 defines the relationship between God and man, and the relationship between man and the earthly creation. This verse gives purpose to life and is foundational to the gospel. Consequently, it is the theological starting point of this chapter. Motivation for gift-based service in the church rests upon an accurate knowledge of God’s purpose for man.

The context for this verse is God’s creation of the universe. It is located near the end of the sixth and final day of creation. Up to this point God has spoken and His command has been accomplished. For example, on day 1 God says, “let there be light,” and there is light. In this manner God has created the heavens and the earth, land and seas, fish and birds, along with vegetation and animals. God’s last creation will be man. Prior to creating man, however, there is a pause in the creative process. As noted by Fritsch, there is no word of command as in other places in the chapter, simply a word of reflection.² In Genesis 1:26, the reader is given a rare glimpse into a conversation among the Trinity. God is sharing His purpose for creating man. This verse is one of the most important in the Bible. It answers questions that have puzzled philosophers for thousands of years. What is the origin of man? Why is man here? What is the purpose of life? How should man live? These questions and more are answered by this one verse

After creating the entire universe by the power of His word, God personally introduces His final creation. Man is to be in the image and likeness of God Himself. As God’s personal representative, man will rule over all the earth. Ruling as God’s representative implies that man will rule as God would rule, promoting His interests and following His directions. This type of ruling is possible because man will be made in the image and likeness of God. To clarify the meaning of this verse, the meaning of the words *image*, *likeness*, *rule*, and *make* will be examined. Also, several questions will be

¹ All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

² Charles T. Fritsch, *Genesis*, The Layman’s Bible Commentary (Atlanta: John Knox, 1959), 25.

asked and answered. For example, what does the image and likeness look like? When is God's purpose, as expressed in this verse, completely fulfilled? How does God make man in His image and likeness?

Many commentators consider the terms *image* (*selem*) and *likeness* (*demut*) to be essentially synonyms.³ Calvin, for instance, viewed the two words as expressing the Hebrew custom of repeating the same thing in different words for the sake of explanation.⁴ Gentry and Wellum, however, provide a useful distinction between these terms.⁵ They studied the use of these terms in the Middle East culture about the time of Moses. Although the words have a similar meaning, they have a different emphasis. *Likeness* describes man's relation to God as a son, whereas *image* describes man's relation to creation as a servant-king representative of the Creator. Kings at the time of Moses placed statues or images of themselves along the border of their kingdom so that travelers would see the image and know they were in the king's land. In like manner, God's people, made in His image, are to be reminders that this is God's creation.

Even after being driven from the Garden of Eden, and following the Flood, God continued to describe men as being in the image of God (Gen 9:6). They are still God's representatives. Representatives, however, can do their job well or poorly. Those who represent God well are called by Him and endeavor to honor and obey God in all that they do. Those who represent God poorly are more interested in honoring and serving themselves than honoring and serving God. In an evil world, God's children have the privilege of representing Him as God's image-bearers. Christ encouraged obedience to

³ See John Collins, *Genesis 1-4* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2006), 62; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 137; Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, The New American Commentary, vol 1a (Nashville: B & H, 1996), 166.

⁴ John Calvin, *Genesis, Calvin's Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 94.

⁵ Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 198.

God when He admonished His followers to so let their light shine that men would see their good works and glorify God (Matt 5:16).

The Hebrew word *make* (*asah*) is a very general term. Strong states that it means to do or make in the broadest sense, as well as to fashion, produce, bring about or prepare.⁶ Instructively, Brown, Driver, and Briggs note that this word carries the concept of using existing materials.⁷ *Make* is in distinction from the word *create*. *Create* (*bara*) conveys the notion of something that only God can do, *create* something from nothing.⁸ After something is initially created, then it can be made into something different. Collins echoes this understanding by stressing that *create* is “some kind of fresh start” while *make* focuses “on God’s activity of working.”⁹ Along the same line, Mathews contends, “*Create* consistently refers to new activity with God always as the subject. Emphasis is on the product created, not the material. By contrast, *make*, involves the use of existing material.”¹⁰ God does both the creating and the making. Initially God creates man in His image and likeness (Gen 1:27), and then, in compliance with His stated purpose, He makes man in His image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Fritsch adds that the very fact that man was created in the divine image shows the possibility of God’s becoming flesh and dwelling among us.¹¹

Knowing what God means by the word *ruling* (*radah*) is critical. Most people like the idea of ruling, but they have a skewed concept of how ruling is implemented.

⁶ James Strong, *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 111 Heb.

⁷ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 794.

⁸ W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, Jr., *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 51.

⁹ Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 67.

¹⁰ Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 128.

¹¹ Fritsch, *Genesis*, 26.

They rule, or reign, in a selfish dictatorial manner. God, however, is benevolent and rules with the welfare of His subjects in mind. The concept of ruling will be more fully developed in the succeeding passages.

What does the image of God look like? In what way is man in God's likeness? Several theologians have attempted to understand and describe how man images God. Typically, they compare and contrast personality and character traits, distinguishing between communicable and incommunicable characteristics. Unfortunately, some of the majesty and mystery of serving as God's apprentices can be lost through over analysis. Fortunately, God explained and illustrated what the image of God looks like. The Law is God's written word describing how to image God in behavior. For instance, if one wants to image God then he does not lie, steal, covet, kill etc. No one, of course, can fully accomplish the Law. The best illustration of what it means to image God is to observe the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Christ not only lived the letter of the Law but also demonstrated the Spirit of the Law. Jesus Christ is the living Word of God. That example is why believers are urged to imitate Christ, and why they are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29). Jesus Christ is the image of God that believers are being made like.

When is God's purpose for man (as expressed in Gen 1:26) fully accomplished? Are men today fully in God's image and likeness, and ruling over His creation as He would? Clearly, the answer is no. Believers know that God accomplishes everything He purposes to do (Eph 1:11). So, when will man be fully in the image and likeness of God? According to God's Word, His purpose for man will be fully accomplished in the new heavens and earth. Revelation 22:3-5 describes a time when believers are sinless and in their glorified state with spiritual bodies like Christ's. They worship God, see His face, have God's name on their forehead and are reigning under Him forever. What God proposes for man in the first chapter of the Bible is fully accomplished in the last chapter of the Bible. The first and last chapters in the Bible serve as bookends for His purpose

for man. Purpose proposed; purpose accomplished. Everything between these two chapters shows how God is accomplishing His purpose. They also show men on two roads, one leading to destruction (the wide road, Matt 7:13) and one leading to eternal life (the narrow road, Matt 7:14). God determines which road each man travels. Although God's purpose for man is fully accomplished in the new heavens and earth, it begins to take root in the life of each believer the moment God gives him the faith to believe.

How does God make man into His image and likeness? Making man in the image and likeness of God is a project for all of the Trinity, "Let Us make." All three persons of the Trinity are involved in this process. Making man fully in the image of God is what Christians now call salvation. The salvation process was progressively revealed in Scripture over thousands of years. With the completion of Scripture, believers can now identify a number of major milestones in the salvation process. Salvation, God's purpose for man, started in the mind of God before day 1 of creation. Like a good architect, God planned all of history from the creation of the universe through the creation of the new heavens and earth. Following the creation of the universe, God created man (Gen 1:27). Following God's plan, the first two people (Adam and Eve) sinned (Gen 3:1-6, Gal 3:22). After Adam and Eve's sin, God announced His plan to send a savior, the "He" and the "Seed" of Genesis 3:15. God's promise of salvation included people from all nations (Gen 12:3). Salvation was conferred based on faith and included being reckoned righteous (Gen 15:6). The promise of salvation is guaranteed by God Himself in a unilateral covenant (Gen 15:17). Jesus Christ gives Himself to rescue and redeem believers (Gal 1:4). Believers are called (John 6:44), sanctified (Titus 2:14), and eventually glorified (Rom 8:30). A condensed version of this process is shared in Romans 8:29-30:

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Simply stated, the sequence of events is foreknowledge, predestination, creation, sin, call, justification, sanctification, and glorification.¹² In the life of a believer, the foreknowledge, predestination, creation, sin, call, and justification are in the past while glorification is in the future. God unilaterally accomplishes all these steps. Man has the privilege of cooperating in one step: sanctification. Sanctification can be described in many ways: growth in holiness, growth in Christ-likeness, being a follower of Christ Jesus, or being a disciple. Sanctification occurs in the life of every believer. How does a believer cooperate with God in the sanctification process? It will be shown that man's cooperation in the sanctification process involves gift-based service. Next is a look at service.

Mark 10:42-45

Toward the end of Christ's earthly ministry, He alerted the apostles to significant coming events. He told them that He would be arrested, condemned, mocked, killed, and then rise again (Mark 10:33-34). This occurrence was the third time He had spoken of His death and resurrection (see also Mark 8:31 and 9:31). The response of James and John seems out of place. Rather than ask questions or respond with compassion, they ask for positions of authority. Perhaps they were thinking that Israel was on the verge of once again becoming a strong, independent, Jewish political system. Hendriksen believes the apostles thought a political overthrow was imminent.¹³ Since James and John were part of Christ's inner circle, also including Peter, they may have thought that positions of greater honor were their right. As noted by MacArthur, this assumption reflected the common practice among rulers of elevating close associates to places of honor on either

¹² For an expanded view of the entire salvation/sanctification process see John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1955), 87.

¹³ William Hendriksen, *Mark*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), 409.

side of them.¹⁴ Predictably, discontent immediately arose among the twelve. The attitude of James and John was mirrored by the other ten apostles.¹⁵ All the apostles appeared to want positions of power. This was not the first time the apostles had argued over who was the greatest among them. Christ corrected their seriously misunderstood concept of mission in Mark 10:42-45. Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them,

You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

The apostles clearly realized that Christ was their expected savior, but they were thinking in terms of a worldly political kingdom, not a spiritual kingdom. As the closest companions to a conquering king they expected to be appointed to positions of power. In these few verses Christ corrects their misconception of what it means to be a ruler in His kingdom. He does this by comparing and contrasting worldly rulers with rulers who are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26). The apostles were thinking in terms of Satan's earthly kingdom not God's spiritual kingdom.

As stated by Christ, worldly rulers (rulers of the Gentiles) lord it over those under them. They exercise authority over them. This authority is often exercised for the benefit of the ruler, not the ruled. The apostles lived under this system and were very familiar with worldly rule.¹⁶ They could not imagine a different way to rule. This understanding of ruling was shown earlier when the same two apostles (James and John) wanted to send fire to consume a city in Samaria that refused to accept them. Christ

¹⁴ John MacArthur, *Mark 9-16, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 2015), 106.

¹⁵ Hendriksen, *Mark*, 413.

¹⁶ William L. Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark, New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 382.

corrected them by saying, “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of” (Luke 9:55). They misunderstood their purpose.

In the kingdom of God, rulers are servants of those under their charge. As stated by Lane, “Only by service does one become great.”¹⁷ This attitude is the exact opposite of how worldly kingdoms work. This reality is one of the paradoxes of the kingdom of God: greatness through humble service.¹⁸ Christ came into the world that He had created in order to serve. Christ’s servant attitude is vividly illustrated in Philippians 2:3-11. Christ willingly gave up the glory of ruling in heaven to serve God the Father by serving those chosen by God. He did not grasp for power even though He possessed all power. Christ was a servant. He served God the Father through serving His people. In like manner, believers are to serve other believers in the church. Jesus’ servant-leadership was highlighted in the immediately following miracle (Mark 10:46-52). Upon encountering a blind beggar, Jesus asks, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The blind man asked to recover his sight. Jesus healed the man who subsequently followed Christ and the apostles. Jesus was a servant to this beggar. Representatives of God are servant-representatives. Like the apostles, most people do not automatically think of a ruler as a servant. That natural reaction is why believers need to be transformed by the renewing of their mind. Earthly rulers are servants accountable to God. They are stewards over His creation for His pleasure and glory. As stated by Hendriksen, “In the kingdom over which Christ reigns greatness is obtained by pursuing a course of action which is the exact opposite of that which is followed in the unbelieving world.”¹⁹ Christ ended this lesson on servant-leadership by pointing out His role as a servant. As disciples of Christ, all believers are becoming like Him and should imitate Him. Christ’s example should be a motivation for

¹⁷ Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark*, 382.

¹⁸ Walter W. Wessel, *Mark*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 720.

¹⁹ Hendriksen, *Mark*, 414.

all believers. As a ransom for many, Christ redeemed the elect from an eternal curse and granted them an eternal blessing. Knowing that Christ-followers are servants is helpful, but what does that service look like in daily life?

John 13:3-16

During the Lord's Supper Jesus surprises His apostles by taking a towel, putting water into a basin, and then proceeding to wash their feet. Peter in particular is embarrassed and protests. Jesus explains that He has done this as an example for them. What does this example mean? How does it relate to being a servant-ruler?

Foot washing was a common practice at the time of Christ. The roads were dry and dusty, most people wore open sandals, and feet would quickly become dirty. Upon entering a home it was customary to wash the dust from one's feet. The washing could be done by the person entering the home, a servant in the home, or the home owner himself. Failure to provide for foot washing was considered an affront.²⁰ This type of offense was demonstrated in Luke 7:44. From the context, apparently everything was prepared for the disciples to observe the Passover supper, but there was no servant and the owner was not present. Jesus Christ and His twelve disciples were the only people present. It seems that no one had washed his own feet, and no one wanted to assume the position of servant and wash the other disciples' feet. Perhaps they thought that if they washed their own feet then the others would expect them to also wash everyone else's feet. Consequently, they began the supper with dirty, smelly, unwashed feet. As discussed, the disciples were a proud group. MacArthur notes that one of the Twelve should have volunteered to wash the feet of the others. But the Lord's admonition, "The

²⁰ H. A. Kent, Jr., "Foot Washing," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 458.

greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matt 23:11) had fallen on deaf ears.²¹ The Matthew passage cited by MacArthur is similar to the Mark 10:42-45 passage discussed.

This passage informs that during the meal Christ arose and changed His clothes. He set aside His outer garments and assumed the dress of a servant. Christ then washed the apostles’ feet. Jesus’ act had several meanings. For one, He was taking the position of a servant. Jesus was Creator, Lord, and Savior, yet He was serving His disciples. This behavior reinforces and vividly illustrates the lesson of Mark 10:42-45 that Christ followers are to serve one another. Tenney states this well: “Jesus emphasized the fact that if He, whom they regarded as their leader, had stooped to serve their needs, they should do the same for one another.”²² Jesus’ act, however, was more than an admonition against pride. It shows that Christian service should address real needs, both physical and spiritual. Believers are to help each other grow in obedience to Christ as well as overcome the issues of life. There is a spiritual application of these verses. Morris states, “Jesus words point us to a washing free from sin that only Christ can give.”²³ This application reminds believers of the Great Commission: “Make disciples . . . teaching them to obey all that I commanded you” (Matt 28:20). Disciples are to serve those they are discipling just as Christ has served His disciples. All disciples are brothers and are responsible to serve one another. Morris continues, “They should have a readiness to perform the lowliest of service for one another.”²⁴ MacArthur explains, “The primary principle Jesus wanted the disciples to learn was the importance of humble, loving service.”²⁵ Disciples are being

²¹ John MacArthur, *John 12-21, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 65.

²² Merrill C. Tenney, *John*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 137.

²³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 548.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 551.

²⁵ MacArthur, *John 12-21*, 68.

conformed to the image of Christ and are to serve as Christ served by meeting the real and practical needs of other disciples. Christ illustrated and described a practical principle to follow. In verse 16, Christ again reminds the disciples that they are servants. What resources are available for serving? How shall each person serve in the church? The next section of Scripture answers these questions.

First Corinthians 12:1-30

First Corinthians 12 follows immediately after a section discussing the Lord's Supper. Christ's admonitions to serve one another and resist pride had apparently been forgotten by the Corinthians. Chapter 12 begins a three-chapter discussion on spiritual gifts. It was important to understand the place of spiritual gifts in the church during the first century, and it is just as important now. Unfortunately, in the church today spiritual gifts are either ignored, seriously misunderstood, or abused. It is important for the church to use the resources God provides. What believers do in their own power is meaningless.

Unlike pagan worshippers who are led astray with mute idols, Christ followers are led by the Holy Spirit. Pagan idols have no power and no plan. By contrast, the Holy Spirit is the power of God sent to accomplish the plan of God. The gifts were not haphazardly distributed but carefully arranged according to the perfect will of God. Paul describes how the Trinity works together within the church to make believers into the image of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit distributes gifts among the faithful. Jesus Christ provides ministries where the gifts can be put to use in service. God the Father then produces the results that He desires (1 Cor 12:4-6). As the people of God use their God-given gifts in the power of the Holy Spirit within Christ-given ministries, the results glorify God the Father and sanctify the church.

This process is redolent of Matthew 5:16 and Ephesians 2:10. When the people of God, who are God's workmanship, accomplish the works He has given them and trust entirely on His resources, then God is glorified. This activity is entirely a work of God. He calls believers, gives them a gift or motivation, leads them into a ministry, equips them

to accomplish the ministry, and then produces a result that glorifies Him. In the process, the believers grow in faith and Christ-likeness as they do what God designed them to do. Ministry in the church is service. Ministry in the church serves and glorifies God by means of believers serving one another. Most of this chapter is an encouragement to the Corinthians to use the gift that the Spirit has given them for service in the church.

Apparently the Corinthians were either ignoring or misusing their spiritual gifts. Paul informs the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit has distributed gifts to believers for the common good of the church (1 Cor 12:7, 11, 18). Using an example of the human body, Paul demonstrates that in the church (the body of Christ) each believer has a specific function and serves the whole by using their God-given gift. Mare agrees, stating, “As the organs of the human body need each other, so the members of the church need each other.”²⁶ Several gifts are identified: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. The list of gifts is not all-inclusive since other gifts are discussed elsewhere in the New Testament (Rom 12:3-8; Eph 4:7-16). The Corinthian’s were making prideful distinctions between the various gifts. Paul reminded them of the source of the gifts and the purpose of the gifts. Different gifts did not mean a different spiritual source or a lesser worth. Functional diversity did not annul spiritual unity.²⁷ Carson comments on this passage: “God establishes His brand of harmony by a lavish grant of highly diverse gifts, each contributing to the body as a whole.”²⁸

²⁶ W. Harold Mare, *1 Corinthians*, in vol. 10 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gabelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 265.

²⁷ Robert B. Hughes, *First Corinthians*, Everyman’s Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1985), 117.

²⁸ Donald A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 32.

Continuing the body example, Paul notes that just as in one body there are different members with different functions so there are different members with different functions in the body of Christ, the church. All members of the body work together for the good of the body. All of the parts of the body are needed; none of the parts are unnecessary or expendable. Fee states, “There are two essentials in the church, unity and diversity, one body, with many parts. Diversity, not uniformity, is essential for a healthy church.”²⁹ The Corinthians may have viewed the church as a secular organization where some positions are considered important and others insignificant. To counter this idea, Paul says that a foot cannot say it is not a part of the body because it is not a hand, or an ear because it is not an eye. All parts are needed, feet, hands, ears, and eyes. Just as the body could not function if it were all ear or all eye, so the church needs all parts. Some believers thought they were unneeded in the church. They undervalued the gift God had given to them. Others apparently overvalued their gift. Consequently, Paul uses the opposite analogy. Eyes cannot claim to have no need for hands, and the head cannot discount the value of feet. Again, all parts are needed and they all need to function well for the body to work well. The same holds true in the church. All the gifts given by the Holy Spirit have a function and are necessary to the proper functioning of the church. Carson explains the diversity of gifts: “God Himself is the One who apportions grace, and the diversity of gifts is grounded in His distribution of gifts.”³⁰ Every believer has a gift and a critical part to play. The church should encourage each believer to use the gift they have been given.

Some churches today need to practice the message of this chapter. Some churches completely ignore spiritual gifts, while others emphasize one gift, like tongues,

²⁹ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1987), 583.

³⁰ Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 32.

and push everyone to speak in tongues. Both extremes are unbiblical. The conclusion of Fee stands true: “The church needs both unity and diversity, but cannot have the one without the other. There must be a greater acceptance of a variety of gifts in the church, and the church must stop negating others as less important than ourselves.”³¹ Still other churches emphasize evangelism or missions to the exclusion of other gifts. Since the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He sees fit, the church does not have the authority to alter the distribution and emphasize their personal favorite gifts.

Fee believes that Paul’s writing in 1 Corinthians 12-14 is corrective, not instructional or informational.³² Although I agree that these chapters are corrective, I also affirm that they are instructional and informational. When considering spiritual gifts, no chapter of the Bible is more instructional or informational. Chapter 12 is not only corrective in that it shows the correct attitude toward and use of spiritual gifts in the church, but it is also instructional and informational. Yet, it is not exhaustive. In this chapter one sees how believers use their God-given gifts not only to help each other grow in sanctification, but also to represent and glorify God through the use of their gifts. It is well to remember that the gifts are given for the profit of all. In these verses, Paul emphasizes not only the diversity of gifts, but also the unity of purpose. Carson highlights, “No Christian is to think in individualistic terms.”³³ All of the Trinity is involved in the functioning of spiritual gifts. Apparently, Fee also believes that only some believers have a spiritual gift.³⁴ Again, I disagree. There are several illustrations of how the church works together: as a body (1 Cor 12:1-31), as a spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5), and as a building (Eph 2:19-22). In each of these illustrations every part is needed. If one is a

³¹ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 616.

³² *Ibid.*, 570.

³³ Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 49.

³⁴ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 589.

part of the body, then he or she has a function and a part to play for the benefit of the entire body. Every believer has a gift and is part of the body. This point is affirmed by Hodge: “Every believer, or every recipient of the Holy Ghost, is given a manifestation of the Spirit.”³⁵ Thomas concurs by saying, “Every single Christian, whoever he is and no matter where he lives, possesses a spiritual endowment.”³⁶

Christ commanded His followers to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind (Matt 22:37). This can be accomplished as believers use all the resources God has given them to serve, praise, worship, and honor Him. Prominent among these resources are spiritual gifts.

Summary

The verses in this chapter sketch a picture of life in the kingdom of God. Those who God has chosen to spend eternal life with Him are being made in His image and likeness so that they may rule with Him forever. To be made in God’s image and likeness means being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the model for believers. They are His disciples, being made in His image. Ruling under God involves service. This kind of ruling is diametrically opposed to the example of secular rulers. Service involves meeting the real needs of God’s people. It is accomplished by using the gift, or motivation, given by the Holy Spirit in a ministry provided by Jesus Christ that produces good works generated by God the Father. These good works give glory to God. The entire process is God’s. God chooses His servants, gives them His Spirit, makes them like Him, places them in positions of service, and then produces results that glorify Him.

³⁵ Charles Hodge, *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 243.

³⁶ Robert L. Thomas, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: An Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Chicago: Moody, 1978), 33.

How does this relate to motivation? Proper motivation rests on knowing who a believer is, what his purpose is, who he is accountable to, and what resources are available to accomplish his purpose. The chosen are adopted children of God. Their purpose is to be made in the image and likeness of God in order to rule and represent Him within His creation. God's children rule by serving. They are accountable to God alone as they use the resources He provides to meet real needs within the community of God, the church. In this life believers have an opportunity to begin learning to do what they will do for eternity in the new heavens and earth.

CHAPTER 3
THE CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY
OF GODLY MOTIVATION

Introduction

Chapter 2 discussed why motivating gift-based service is important in the church. Simply stated, it is God's design for each believer to use their spiritual gift for the profit of all. The body of Christ needs all the parts to be functioning properly. Everyone has a part to play in the church. This chapter will discuss how to motivate gift-based service. What should be the biblical content and methodology for motivating believers?

As a starting point it should be noted that everyone is motivated. This is well understood by society in general. In fact, each school of psychology is built on a theory of motivation. Schultz summarizes the motivational theory of numerous competing schools of psychology.¹ Even Christian psychologists like Crabb agree.² People do what they are motivated to do. They do what they desire. The crucial question relates to what people are motivated to do. Are they motivated to serve, and honor God, or are they serving and honoring themselves? Are they innately obedient to God or disobedient? Do they love God or love themselves?

Motivation is a theme that is woven throughout the Bible. It stays in the background, however, and can easily be overlooked. Scripture describes people motivated to obey and those motivated to disobey. Examples of obedient people are Abel, Noah,

¹ Duane Schultz, *Theories of Personality* (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1986). See Henry Murray on p. 172, Abraham Maslow on p. 300, and Julian Rotter on p. 409.

² Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr., *Effective Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 76.

Abraham, Joseph, and Daniel. Among others, some of the disobedient people are Cain, Pharaoh, King Saul, and Jeroboam. The Bible includes instances of disobedience even among those who are generally obedient. Heart desires are evident during times of both obedience and disobedience. It is instructive to compare and contrast the motivation of individuals in both instances. All human activities involve motivation. This chapter will first consider motivation as observed and described in the Bible. This section will be done with broad strokes. What are biblical models and examples of proper motivation? What should the methodology of the church be when it comes to motivation, not just for gift-based service but for any activity? Godly motivation will be compared to ungodly motivation. Believers need to recognize and avoid ungodly methods of motivation. Following this discussion, secular models of motivation will be briefly reviewed. Most current theories of motivation are based on psychological studies. In addition to psychology, this discussion will touch on motivation as practiced in business and government.

What Is Motivation?

In any discussion it is helpful to begin by defining terms. The following words are pertinent to understanding biblical motivation: motivate, desire, choose, and prove. Brief definitions will be used.

As commonly understood, to *motivate* is to provide with a motive. A motive is an inner drive, impulse, or intention. Accordingly, to *motivate* is to encourage a desire.

Desire (lust) biblically can be an inordinate desire for anything, good or bad.³ Often, however, it is a *desire* for something sinful, worldly, fleshly, or evil rather than a desire to follow and obey God.

³ G. W. Knight III, "Lust," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 717.

The Old Testament word *choose* is *bahar*. According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)* this word always involves a careful, well thought-out choice. It involves taking a keen look at, and usually expresses a choosing which has ultimate and eternal significance.⁴

The Old Testament word *prove* (test or try) is *nasa*. According to *TWOT*, proving involves the idea of testing the quality of someone or something, often through adversity or hardship. Often God is the one bringing testings and trials upon man.⁵

How do these words relate to one another? The foundation for their significance is developed in the first three chapters of Genesis. A simplified way of looking at the Bible story from a motivational perspective is as follows. God created man to be like Him so he could serve Him by representing God in His creation. Becoming like God ensures that man will care for creation in the same manner that God Himself would. God tests people to reveal their true heart motivation, or desires. Do they truly desire to serve and obey God or do they want to be independent of God? Who do they love most, God or self? Tests place people in a position where they are required to make a choice. The choice selected indicates the priority of desires in their heart. God's creation of man is revealed Genesis 1-2. He creates Adam and Eve and then tests them in chapter 3. The test relates to their motivation. Adam and Eve are forced to make a choice. Their choice reveals their heart's desire.

Throughout biblical history God intentionally tests His people to reveal their heart desires, or motivation. For instance, God tested Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-7), Israel in the wilderness (Exod 16:4), and Israel in the land of Canaan (Deut 13:3; Judg 2:22). Tests are common and should be expected. Eventually God will judge everyone by their deeds (1 Cor 3:13; Rev 3:10).

⁴ R. Laird Harris et al., eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 1:100.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:581.

What is motivation? As discussed, motivation is encouraging a desire to do something, or providing someone with a motive. What happened in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-6)? Adam and Eve were tested to reveal their motivation. Moral tests reveal the desire of the heart.

Why Is Motivation Important?

This question can best be answered by considering the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. What happened in the Garden of Eden? God tested the resolve of the first people, Adam and Eve, by giving them one restriction. They were not to eat of one tree in the garden but could freely eat of all the other trees. God warned them that if they ate of that tree they would die. God gave a command and a consequence for disobedience. Adam and Eve fully complied with this restriction until the day that Satan motivated them to eat of the forbidden tree. He told Eve that if she ate of the tree, she would not die but that she would become like God, knowing good and evil. This is the first recorded instance of mankind receiving conflicting counsel. Eve was faced with a decision. She considered the choice and came up with three reasons to eat of the tree. Eve's decision was not a spur of the moment choice. Her deliberation is evident in Genesis 3:6. Adam also ate. He too ate deliberately. Since they chose to listen to Satan, God removed them from His garden and placed them in the kingdom of Satan. Adam and Eve, and all their descendants, were now sinners in a sinful world. That was God's plan (Gen 3:22; Gal 3:22).

The drama that transpired in the Garden of Eden was all about motivation. The simple test revealed if their desire was to obey God or obey Satan. Adam and Eve were not forced to eat the fruit of the tree. They desired to eat the fruit. Every human since the Garden has faced a similar choice. Do people obey God or do they obey Satan? The choice, of course, is never presented that clearly or in those terms. Common choices are more like the following examples. Does the recovering alcoholic join his friends for just one drink or does he risk offending them? When completing income tax returns does one

declare all income or only that which is traceable? Does one join fellow workers or friends to hear an off-color joke or walk away, risking offending them?

Satan motivated Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit in a subtle manner. The text of Genesis 3 says that the serpent was crafty. Immediately it is known that Satan is not straightforward but is cunning and sly. He is not to be trusted. Next, he misstates God's warning, drawing Eve's attention to the forbidden tree. Satan then flatly denies God's warning not to eat the fruit and instead suggests a benefit for eating the fruit. According to Hamilton, "Satan gives Eve the impression that God is spiteful, mean, obsessively jealous, and self-protective; Satan deals in a mixture of misquotation, denial, and slander."⁶ At this point Eve considers the tree closely but uncritically. To summarize, Satan's tactics were to oppose the truth, attack God's character, and appeal to Eve's personal desires. He opposed the truth by distorting and denying God's Word. Satan is a liar (John 8:44). He implied that God was withholding something good from Adam and Eve. Satan suggested that God did not want them to be like Him. Lastly, Satan flatly denied the consequence of disobedience (Adam and Eve will not die) and instead suggested a benefit of disobedience (Adam and Eve will be like God). Mathews comments, "The divine injunction in the mouth of the serpent was refashioned for its own interests."⁷ Satan motivated disobedience by appealing to, and arousing, a heart desire. He used external motivation (falsehood and manipulation) to influence internal desires. He appealed to fleshly desires.

God motivated Adam and Eve in a different manner. God told the truth, set clear boundaries, and defined the real consequences. God let the truth speak for itself. He did not try to persuade Adam or Eve to a particular choice. God allowed them free

⁶ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 137.

⁷ Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1a (Nashville: B & H, 1996), 189.

choice in order to reveal the leaning of their heart. He was looking for internal motivation. Adam and Eve were earthly. They did not have the Holy Spirit. Satan's appeal resonated with their earthly heart.

Motivation is critical, and a person's motivation determines the direction of his life.

How Is Motivation Illustrated in the Bible?

The purpose of this chapter is to understand motivation. In Eden, a simple test required a choice that revealed a motive or a desire. Similar scenarios play out throughout Scripture. Some of these scenarios will be considered. Two Old Testament books introduce this discussion, followed by a brief review of motivated events in the life of several individuals. Finally, satanic motivation will be discussed. The goal in these illustrations is to identify the tactics Satan uses to induce disobedience and the strategy God uses to encourage obedience. Believers need discernment.

Motivation Illustrated in Old Testament Books

As mentioned, a major biblical theme relates to motivation. The world is a battlefield between God's truth and Satan's lies. God motivates obedience that leads to eternal life, while Satan motivates disobedience that leads to eternal death. Every book of the Bible involves motivation. This principle is especially evident in the wisdom literature and the New Testament letters. For instance, the book of Proverbs is intended to motivate readers to godly obedience by comparing wisdom and folly. More will be said about Job and Ecclesiastes next. As previously discussed, Genesis begins with a test of Adam and Eve's motivation. Who are they motivated to believe and obey? When entering the land of Canaan, Israel is given a choice between blessing for obedience or curses for disobedience.

The New Testament letters are motivational in nature. They were written to correct problems in the early church and to encourage obedient living. Each book that

Paul wrote was intended to motivate the readers to growth in Christ-likeness. God makes man in His image through changing man's heart, the inner man. The specific issues differed between the books, but the goal remained the same. In general, Paul identified a problem, described why it was wrong, and then shared a solution that honored God. Their structure is something like the following. In view of who God is, who you are, what God has done in the past, what God is doing in the present, and what God will do in the future, believers should live in an obedient manner. Since believers are part of God's family there should be a family resemblance. Motivation is a strong undercurrent in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Job and Ecclesiastes will now be discussed in more detail.

Job. Many theologians believe the book of Job deals primarily with the problem of pain and suffering in the life of the godly. Archer states that Job undertakes to answer the question, "Why do the righteous suffer?"⁸ Certainly this is a major theme in the book of Job. There is, however, another, more fundamental, question that prompted the testing of Job: what motivated Job to fear God and turn away from evil? Why does Job have a strong and consistent faith in God? In Job 1, God asked Satan to consider His servant Job. Satan pointed immediately to motivation by saying in essence that Job only serves God because of the possessions God has given him. Satan accuses God of buying Job's loyalty. This accusation led to the first test of Job in which he lost all his possessions and all his children. To Satan's displeasure, Job maintained his integrity and blessed the Lord. Obviously, Job was not primarily motivated by possessions. Sometime later, in chapter 2, God again asked Satan to consider his servant Job. Satan, still searching for Job's motivation, contends that if Job loses his health he will curse God. Another test follows in which Job is covered with boils from head to foot. Once more, Job maintains his integrity and honors God. Clearly, good health was not what motivated Job to serve

⁸ Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 428.

God. Job was internally motivated to love God. Tests of Job's motivation led to his misfortunes.

In both tests Satan was attempting to motivate Job to disobey God. Satan's tools were external circumstances: the wind, hostile neighbors, and ill health. Job's faith in God was not affected by external circumstances. He did, however, question why he had experienced such extreme suffering. Job was internally motivated to worship God. External motivation, directed at fleshly desires, failed to affect him. Joseph, Daniel, and Shadrach were also internally motivated. Each of these men faced one or more difficult tests that required heart-revealing choices.

Ecclesiastes. In his *Old Testament Introduction* Archer writes, "The purpose of Ecclesiastes was to convince men of the uselessness of any worldview that does not rise above the horizon of man himself."⁹ While accepting Archer's contention, it is suggested that the entire book also deals with motivation. There is no need to argue worldviews. The book of Ecclesiastes illustrates and answers the following questions. What motivates men to do what they do? What are the desires of their heart? What pursuits in life are truly worthwhile? Are they motivated by worldly, temporal things or do they have a godly, eternal perspective? As demonstrated by Solomon, the things that are futile and disappointing are all earthly, self-centered, and temporal. There is no lasting satisfaction in pursuing fame, fortune, power, or pleasure. Arguably, Solomon was the wisest, richest, and most powerful man of his time. He could pursue any task without external constraint. Accordingly, he tested every earthly desire to the extreme. No one could say that he failed to find satisfaction because he stopped too soon. Who built more, planted more, accumulated more, or had more wives than Solomon? No one did. At the end of Ecclesiastes, Solomon reveals the only worthwhile motivation for mankind (Eccl 12:13-14). He says that as a wise man he taught his people, arranging

⁹ Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 444.

delightful words of truth to act as goads. He was attempting to persuade his readers. He wanted to motivate them to action. What is the only worthy motivation in this life? According to Solomon, the answer is to fear God and keep His commandments. Why? Fear of God and obedience to His commandments is right because it applies to everyone and God will judge everything. Fearing God and keeping His commandments requires a person to focus on God and to keep an eternal view in mind. This focus makes it easier to avoid pursuing short-term, self-centered, and earthly goals. God created man to fear Him and keep His commands so they could serve Him for eternity. Do personal priorities reveal a love of God or a love of self?

Motivation in the Life of Individuals

The Bible is filled with examples of people making choices between obedience and disobedience. Three people will be considered in this section: Cain, Jonah, and King David. These three are selected because God counseled two of them directly and one indirectly, through a fellow believer. God's counseling methodology is highlighted in these examples. How did God attempt to motivate these men? What was the content of His message and what was His methodology? The story of each man is well known and will not be covered in detail.

Cain. Genesis 4 relates that Cain became very angry when he and his offering were rejected by God. When it was clear that Cain was angry, God immediately counseled him. God asked two questions. "Why are you angry?" and "Why has your countenance fallen?" (Gen 4:6). Since Cain did not answer, God continued His counsel by giving instruction, "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?" This instruction was immediately followed by a warning: "And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you" (Gen 4:7). The Lord's admonition forms the end of His counsel, "But you must master it." Collins points to a universal principle: "That one must 'rule over' sin and its temptation becomes the remedy all mankind must resort to

(finding God’s help to do so, of course).”¹⁰ Obviously, God’s counsel was intended to motivate Cain to stop being angry and to make a proper offering the next time. Hamilton states, “The emphasis here is on Cain as one who has a free choice.”¹¹

Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve. He knew God, he knew what God expected, and he knew why his parents had been expelled from Eden. In fact, he probably knew more details than are shared in the Bible. He knew all of Bible history and all that God had revealed up to that time. He made well-informed decisions. What was God’s methodology with Cain? God acted immediately, asking two questions that required Cain to consider his heart motives, his desires. Why was he angry? What did he desire? Why had he not presented an acceptable offering? God asked Cain to look at his motives. Collins notes that God is looking at Cain’s heart: “The condition of Cain’s heart is indeed the problem.”¹² God also told Cain how to correct the problem, warned him of a dangerous consequence if he did not correct the problem, and admonished him to act quickly and aggressively. Mathews agrees, “The Lord instructed Cain that though sin ‘desires’ him he can still ‘master’ it.”¹³ God’s motivational counsel was immediate, direct, clear, and short. All the components of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 were present: teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Unfortunately, Cain did not take God’s counsel to heart. He killed his brother, was punished, and became the first human murderer, as well as the poster-boy of an angry unbeliever (1 John 3:12; Jude 11).

Jonah. Jonah was also directly counseled by God. Unlike Cain, Jonah was a believer. In fact, he was a prophet of God. Even so, he was slow to obey God’s direct command and was disciplined. Even after taking God’s Word to Nineveh, Jonah remained

¹⁰ Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 219.

¹¹ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, 228.

¹² Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 200.

¹³ Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 271.

angry. God counseled him immediately. As with Cain, God started with a question, “Do you have good reason to be angry?” God asked Jonah to look at his heart desire. What made him angry? Why did he not want to obey God? Jonah remained angry. God then gave Jonah another lesson using a plant that grew quickly, shading Jonah. The plant then died quickly, exposing him to the sun and a hot wind. Jonah became angry about the plant and God again asked a heart motive question, “Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?” God then explained the meaning of the lesson of the plant and why He was concerned with the people of Nineveh. Once again, God’s counsel was immediate, direct, clear, and short. The story ends at this point. It is not directly stated if Jonah repents after God’s last counsel. Most likely, however, the book of Jonah itself is evidence of Jonah’s repentance. After all Jonah was a believer. God disciplined Jonah. There was no punishment.

King David. King David was a believer. Like believers today, David was given the Spirit. David was given the Spirit when he was anointed by Samuel (1 Sam 16:13). Unlike other Old Testament believers, he retained the Spirit from that time forward. This point is noted by Youngblood: “Anointing with oil thus symbolized anointing with the Holy Spirit, in David’s case the divine accession was permanent.”¹⁴ Klein agrees: “With David the Spirit seems to be about a direct result of the anointing, and it lasted permanently.”¹⁵ Unfortunately, at times his behavior swung from very obedient to very disobedient. Studying these swings sheds light on the principles of good and bad motivation.

David’s obedience and reverence for God shone brightly when he confronted Goliath (1 Sam 17:32-51), as he consulted the Lord while running from King Saul (1 Sam

¹⁴ Ronald F. Youngblood, *1 and 2 Samuel*, in vol. 3 of *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank Gaebelien (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 686.

¹⁵ Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 10 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 162.

23:2, 4, 10-12), and when he spared King Saul's life, in opposition to the advice of his friends (1 Sam 24:4-15, 26:7-16). In each of these events David was keenly aware of God's sovereignty, he trusted entirely in God, expected God to act justly in His time, realized that he was representing God, sought to honor God, respected God's will, and wanted to follow God's will. His focus was on God, not on himself or what he personally wanted. In fact, he wanted what God wanted. What was the desire of his heart? David's desire was to honor and obey God. During these times David loved God. After all, he was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14). David was internally motivated to obey God, even when others endeavored to motivate him to sin.

Some of the low points in David's life are when he intended to kill Nabal, along with all his men (1 Sam 25:2-22), his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah (2 Sam 11:1-27), and when he took a census of Israel (2 Sam 24:1-9). During these times David was thinking exclusively of himself and what he wanted. His plans were the most important thing, not God's plans. David disregarded, even despised, the Word of the Lord at these times. He pursued his rights.

Nabal offended David so he planned to kill him along with all his men. Later, when his kingdom was established and he should have been with the army, he instead relaxed in the palace. While walking on the palace roof he saw Bathsheba bathing. Bathsheba was attractive, so he sent for her and had sexual relations. When she became pregnant and Uriah would not cooperate with David's cover up, he arranged Uriah's death. During a prideful time, David wondered how large a kingdom he ruled so he called for a census, even though God had forbidden taking one (Num 1:49). In all these occasions David is self-centered, pursuing the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life, ignoring the Word of God, and seeking worldly, short-term, desires. God is absent from his heart in all these sins. His desires when disobedient are all fleshly, sinful, and self-centered. At these times David loved himself, not God.

After each of these events, David eventually confessed and repented. What motivated him to repent? With regard to Nabal, Abigail reminded David that he had forgotten God and he had forgotten the anointing and the responsibility that God had given him. She also showed him the likely consequence if he persisted in sin. David responded immediately with repentance, humility, and thankfulness. He blessed both God and Abigail. Davis notes the hand of God in this story: “Yahweh in His timely providence restrains His chosen king from his own impulsive folly and wrong.”¹⁶ She was successful in curbing his sinful anger. God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David regarding his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. Nathan’s story aroused David’s righteous anger. Upon realizing that the story was about him, David confessed and repented. God forgave David, but the consequences of his sin followed his family the rest of his life and beyond. After taking the census, David’s conscience bothered him. He confessed, repented, and asked forgiveness. David was forgiven but needed to select one of three punishments. He selected a punishment that relied entirely on God’s mercy and grace. A total of 70,000 people died of pestilence, however, due to his sin.

The turning point in each case was remembering God and His Word. Abigail gently confronted David prior to him committing any sin, and his anger relented. Nathan confronted David after his high-handed sins and he came to his senses. David’s repentance and his warning to others are contained in Psalms 32 and 51. David’s conscience reproved him following the census and God spoke to David through the prophet Gad. Gad presented David with a choice of punishments and ordered David to build an altar and present an offering. David obediently complied.

David was a believer yet experienced extreme swings between obedience and at times disobedience. The events of his life are both a warning and an encouragement to believers even today. The warning is that any believer can be drawn into sin. It is

¹⁶ Dale Ralph Davis, *I Samuel*, Focus on the Bible Commentary Series (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2000), 257.

necessary to be alert to danger and fully use every spiritual resource God has provided. The encouragement is that even if believers sin they can be restored to a life of productive service. As shown, fellow believers were instruments in God's hands to motivate David to confession, repentance, and acceptance of the consequences. They helped him remember God and his personal responsibility toward God and others. Life is lived before God, in dependence on God, trusting in His word, and with reference to God. To the degree that people leave God out of their life, especially when undergoing tests or trials, and in the midst of decisions, they lose contact with reality and live in a fantasy world. Christ followers live in a world created by God. They represent Him and understand life from the perspective of His Word. Godly motivation is in stark contrast to satanic motivation.

Satanic Motivation

It is always beneficial to understand the tactics of one's enemy. How does Satan motivate people to disobey? What is the defense against his tactics? Several verses will be briefly reviewed to answer these questions.

The book of 1 Peter warns believers, "Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith" (5:8-9a). This admonition is echoed in James: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (4:7-8a). Speaking of Satan, Paul tells believers, "We are not ignorant of his schemes" (2 Cor 2:11b). This warning is further clarified in Ephesians 6:11-12:

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

These verses raise several questions. How does a believer draw near to God? How does one resist the devil? Finally, if one is not to be ignorant, what are the devil's schemes? Following the counsel of these verses requires motivation. Motivated hearers are doers.

Some of Satan's schemes were revealed as he personally tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan also works through false prophets, false brethren, and false teachers. Counsel from a number of New Testament verses will be summarized to provide an overview of how Satan works through these people, all of which are represented in the church.¹⁷ Christ's chief opponents were the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who were leaders in the Jewish religion at that time. Most of them remained unbelievers. Unfortunately, in the same way there are unbelievers in the church today, and some in leadership positions.

The false teachers, prophets, and brethren in the church have several goals. They want to mislead true believers, turn them from the truth, and bring them into bondage to sin. They entice the unstable, cause divisions, introduce heresy, and deny Jesus Christ. Peter describes them as overlooking the Genesis creation account and the worldwide flood of Noah's time (2 Pet 3:5-6). Forgetting God as Creator and Judge leads to heresy. Believers need to remember.

The schemes of the false teachers and prophets are to secretly sneak into the church in the disguise of true believers. Once in the church they oppose the truth, spread falsehood, false visions, and false dreams. They also turn the grace of God into licentiousness, are sensual, and indulge the flesh (lust of the flesh). They are described as greedy and worldly minded (lust of the eyes). In addition, they are arrogant, boastful, self-willed, mockers, and devoid of the Spirit (pride of life). As well, they reject authority and revile angelic majesties. As noted, these schemes fall into three general categories: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. John warned that believers are not to love the things in these worldly categories (1 John 2:15-16). These are the same tactics Satan used in Eden with Adam and Eve and also in the wilderness testing of Jesus Christ. False teachers are clearly motivated to destroy the church, which

¹⁷ Jer 14:14, 23:32; Zech 10:2; Matt 7:15, 24:11, 24:23-24; Mark 13:22; Acts 13:6; 2 Cor 11:13; Gal 2:4; 2 Pet 2:1-3, 2:10-19, 3:3-4; Jude 4, 8, 10-16, 18-19.

is the body of Jesus Christ. Satan, his demons, and his followers use the same tactics in the world today that have been used since Eden.

Based on the above description it would seem easy to identify false individuals in the church. It should be remembered, however, that they are in disguise, are fluent with falsehood, and work secretly. How then does the church identify and guard against falsehood? The answer is also given in the writings of John, Peter, and Jude.¹⁸ Since God has warned His church that these people are in their midst they must be alert and on guard. Believers must be motivated to diligently grow as disciples, Christ-followers. They must keep focused on God and His purpose, growing in holy conduct and godliness. In addition, they should look for the coming of the day of God, be diligent to pursue peace, and be spotless and blameless. Being on guard they will not be carried away by error but instead will be growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As the Bereans did when listening to Paul, believers today must also test what they hear and see by comparing it with the Word of God. They must diligently build themselves up in faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, keep in the love of God, and wait for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, a motivated Christ-follower can avoid falling prey to false individuals by being an active disciple who is growing in sanctification and learning to obey all that Christ commanded. A Christ follower is being led by the Spirit of God and is relying on the Word of God while serving in the midst of the people of God. More will be said later about how to grow in faith and the fear of the Lord.

Reading verses about doing battle against spiritual forces of wickedness draws some people into mysticism. There is nothing mystical about this battle. Gurnall describes how to use each piece of spiritual armor mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-17. Resisting Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44), requires knowing the truth. Several ways Gurnall describes use of the truth are as follows. Maintain faith in God's sovereignty "in trials and

¹⁸ 2 Pet 3:11-12, 14, 17-18; 1 John 4:1; Jude 20-21.

temptations believers must strengthen their faith in God’s almighty power.”¹⁹ Develop the ability to discern truth from error, “Truth has an evil neighbor, heresy—believers must walk the bounds of truth to gain discernment.”²⁰ Know the truth well, “Believers must know the truth—Satan is resisted by exercising faith in the truth.”²¹ Knowing and obeying God’s Word is not only the essence of being a disciple of Jesus Christ, but is also the means of spiritual warfare. Christ resisted the temptations of the devil by exercising faith in God’s Word. The examples of faith in Hebrews 11 all exercised faith in God’s Word.

Satan himself tempted Adam and Eve in Eden. This temptation was not a mystical event. They faced the chief of the spiritual forces of wickedness, but it was in a real-world choice. Satan and his demons are using the same time-worn tactics today. Believers are in a battle with spiritual forces of wickedness because Satan is the enemy of God. The front lines of this battle are the everyday events of life. Paul urges the believers in Rome to present their bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, because it is their spiritual service of worship (Rom 12:1-2). In other words, what they do physically is a spiritual event. Does their physical behavior evidence worship of God or worship of self? Nothing is neutral. Spiritual and physical cannot be separated. Man was created both physical and spiritual. Everything man does physically has a spiritual dimension. God speaks to the heart of man, the spiritual side. Satan appeals to fleshly desires. God, of course, recognizes the various expressions of motivation in mankind.

What Is the Value of Secular Motivation Models for the Church?

Unfortunately, the above question is seldom asked. Secular models of

¹⁹ William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989), 25.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 231.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 292.

motivation, whether from psychology, business, or government often appear successful. It would seem to be a good thing to use them to accomplish the work of the church. Secular motivational models are commonly called propaganda when used by governments, public relations within business, and brain-washing if done by cults.

The goal of secular models is never sanctification or growth in Christ-likeness. Their goal is to persuade people to buy a certain product, vote for a particular candidate, be happy, or support a specific cause. Their view of man is also far from biblical. All are founded on an evolutionary origin of man. Consequently, God is missing from secular models. Man is considered an evolved animal possessing various desires. By appealing to certain desires, results can be obtained that are statistically repeatable. Secular organizations are masters at observing, testing, and classifying behavior in culture. They study unredeemed man and develop methods to manipulate his behavior. The methods appeal to the flesh, not the spirit. As demonstrated by the book of Ecclesiastes, the flesh is never content. It always seeks more, so is susceptible to temptation. The spirit, however, can experience contentment in the midst of difficult circumstances (Phil 4:11). The contentment results from pleasing the Lord through perseverance in obedience.

Psychological Theories

One of the perennial questions in psychology relates to, “Why do you do the things you do?” Every school of psychology has a theory of human motivation. The Bible has a consistent view of God, man, man’s problem, and its solution. By contrast, the psychologies each have a different view of man, his problem, and its solution. They all agree, however, that there is no God and that man is an evolved animal. Their goal is to help people cope, experience happiness, accomplish their goals, or achieve their highest potential. Highest potential is defined as being successful using one’s innate abilities. Modern psychology began in the late nineteenth century with Wilhelm Wundt²² in

²² B. R. Hergenhahn and Tracy B. Henley, *An Introduction to the History of Psychology*

Germany and William James in the United States.²³ Since then, a succession of competing concepts have developed, each with a different view of man's problem and its solution. In the twentieth century, Skinner viewed man as an animal who could respond to reward and punishment, and be trained much like a dog.²⁴ Maslow thought man responded to a hierarchy of needs, and through effort could rise to his highest potential.²⁵ Others view man's problem as low self-esteem, poor parenting, or illogical reasoning. Most schools fall into either a biological camp or an environmental camp (nature vs. nurture). All people are influenced by both their environment and their inherited DNA. Biblically, biology and environment affect people, but they are not determinative. Adam and Eve had the best biology and environment, yet they wanted more and they sinned. Moses was called the humblest of men. Today, psychologists would likely think he had low self-esteem. People with high self-esteem, like Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, behaved very badly. Believers like Daniel and Shadrach chose obedience over life. They were not focused on basic needs. Psychology has nothing to offer the church. Introducing psychology into the church encourages the flesh, not the spirit. Reliance on psychology by the church conveys a message that God's Word is insufficient for man's spiritual problems. This message is highlighted when church members who are experiencing spiritual problems are referred to psychologists.

Business Motivational Models

Businesses are involved with motivation on several fronts. Due to working in a highly competitive global environment, businesses are required to motivate customers

(Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2014), 248.

²³ Hergenhahn and Henley, *An Introduction to the History of Psychology*, 323.

²⁴ B. F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom & Dignity* (New York: Bantam, 1975), 192.

²⁵ A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): 370.

to buy their product or service, motivate suppliers to sell at a favorable cost, and motivate employees to work effectively and efficiently.

Motivating customers. One of the modern founders of “public relations,” once called “propaganda,” is Edward Bernays. He helped develop the widespread and effective use of propaganda for use in business and government. According to Bernays, “The job of the public relations man . . . is to create circumstances which will swing emotional currents so as to make for purchaser demand.”²⁶ In other words, Bernays appealed to fleshly desires to sell products and change public opinion. He used the same tactics as Satan, but for different purposes.

Motivating suppliers and competitors. Motivating suppliers to sell at a favorable cost and competitors to cooperate in common areas is called negotiating. All negotiations are merely the art of motivating. Over time, companies moved from a win-lose philosophy to a win-win strategy. The goal of win-lose is to get as much as possible regardless of the impact on the other party. This strategy usually generated an adversarial relationship and low satisfaction over the long-term. A win-win strategy seeks to generate a gain for each side and results in better relationships and stable long-term agreements.

Motivating employees. Businesses commonly follow the latest trends in psychology for managing and motivating employees. There has always been much overlap in methods but a typical trend could be as follows. Perhaps a company used Skinner’s approach. Skinner believed Pavlov’s work with dogs could be applied to people.²⁷ He saw man as a product of his environment, but also able to change his environment.²⁸ Therefore, managers can motivate employees by changing their work

²⁶ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (Brooklyn: Ig Publishing, 2005), 77.

²⁷ Skinner, *Beyond Freedom & Dignity*, 192

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 175-76.

environment. Accordingly, businesses developed appropriate rewards and punishment to manage employees. Promotions, raises, and popular locations were the usual rewards, while demotions, canceled raises, and moves to unpopular locations were punishments. With time, Maslow's needs hierarchy replaced Skinner. Maslow believed man was a perpetually wanting animal, with his needs arranged in ascending hierarchies.²⁹ He saw behavior organized by unsatisfied needs.³⁰ Managers with this understanding endeavored to match rewards with the employee's perceived need. As a result, managers got to know their direct reports much better. McGregor believed work was natural, people exercised self-control to achieve objectives they were committed to, commitment was a function of rewards, and the average person is creative and seeks responsibility.³¹ Because people have different commitment levels, more control is necessary with less committed individuals and less control with more committed individuals.³² With the advent of McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, managers divided their employees into those needing constant direction and those who seemed to be self-starters. Herzberg believed that factors that motivate are distinct from factors that lead to job dissatisfaction. Increasing motivating factors is far more important than reducing dissatisfiers.³³ Companies leaning toward Herzberg's work focused on increasing job satisfiers rather than decreasing job dissatisfiers. Of particular importance as satisfiers were achievement and recognition. Managers celebrated accomplishments and became cheerleaders. Some companies adopted the One-Minute Manager style, a combination of Skinner and Herzberg's

²⁹ Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," 370.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 375.

³¹ Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), 47-48.

³² *Ibid.*, 56.

³³ Fredrick Herzberg, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?" *Harvard Business Review* 46, no. 1 (January-February 1968): 57.

concepts. According to the One-Minute Manager, goals should be clear and tersely stated. Results should be immediately evaluated; praise for success, and reprimand for failure. All communication needs to be truthful.³⁴ An advantage of this program is that it gave managers more time. Ideally, they only spent one minute setting goals for the employee. Depending on how the employee performed, they would then spend either one minute praising or one minute reprimanding the employee. In practice, most managers did not literally spend one minute with employees, but they did significantly reduce the time spent directing and correcting. Personality theories were popular for a time. All employees took surveys to determine if they were “Intuiters,” “Thinkers,” “Sensors,” or “Feelers.” A large variety of surveys proliferated, each having different names for the personality types. Some used dog breed names. Most personality tests are variations of the Myers-Briggs Personality Test.³⁵ The point was that understanding an employee’s personality would help the manager communicate on the same wave length, thus increasing compliance with directions.³⁶ All secular motivational methods view man mechanically and endeavor to push the right buttons to control his behavior. Secular motivation appeals to the flesh.

Governmental Motivation

According to Bernays, “Political campaigns today are all sideshows, all honors, all bombast, glitter, and speeches.”³⁷ In other words, there is not much truth or real content. He wrote this in 1928, but his observations are still appropriate, especially during election years. Bernays helped the Wilson administration motivate the public to enter

³⁴ Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson, *The One-Minute Manager* (New York: Berkley Books, 1984), 101.

³⁵ The Myers and Briggs Foundation, accessed February 7, 2019, <https://www.myersbriggs.org>.

³⁶ PsychCentral, “Personality Test,” accessed November 1, 2018, <https://psychcentral.com/personality-test/start.php>.

³⁷ Bernays, *Propaganda*, 111.

World War I. No motivational tactic used by politicians is worthy to be used in the church to make disciples of Jesus Christ. It is interesting that Edward Bernays, nephew of Sigmund Freud, launched the modern study and practice of public relations. Public relations, like psychology, has nothing to offer the church. It uses Satan's tactics to motivate fleshly desires.

Psychology in the Church

Not only has psychology been adopted by the business community and government, but it has also been eagerly embraced by many in the church. A number of Christians with training in psychology have become popular authors and conference speakers. Two examples of popular books that are warmly welcomed within the church are discussed below.

Why You Do the Things You Do by Tim Clinton and Gary Sibcy promotes Attachment Theory and has been taught in my home church. Tim Clinton earned an Ed.D. in counseling and Gary Sibcy has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. Both teach at Liberty University, are licensed in the state of Virginia, and have co-authored several books. In addition, Clinton is president of the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC). Through the AACC, with nearly 50,000 members, Clinton and other psychologists are able to influence a great many Christians.³⁸ According to the front and back covers, this is a transformational book that uses groundbreaking research to demonstrate the secret to healthy relationships.

The authors view relationships through the lens of subjective feelings and emotions. Since many people in today's culture are dissatisfied with some of their close relationships, this book has great appeal. Most people, Christian or not, would like to know the secret to healthy relationships. The framework of this book rests upon a foundation

³⁸ The American Association of Christian Counselors, "Letter From The President," accessed September 26, 2018, www.aacc.net/about.

developed by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, beginning with observations made at an English tuberculosis sanitarium for children.³⁹ They carefully observed the reactions of children to separation from their mothers and also how mothers cared for and responded to their children. They then correlated the mother's care with the child's response to separation.

Using the research of Bowlby and Ainsworth, the authors developed a relationship-style classification. A person's relationship style is assigned based on answers to four questions: (1) am I worthy of being loved? (2) am I able to do what I need to do to get the love I need? (3) are other people reliable and trustworthy? and (4) are people accessible and willing to respond to me when I need them?⁴⁰ Oddly, these questions were not asked of the children in the study. They are simply an interpretation based on the observations of Clinton and Sibcy. These four questions are the core of the book. Without these questions there would be no book. The questions are all self-centered. None have a biblical basis. Scattered through the book are other man-centered statements: "God gave us people to be there for us . . . to satisfy our longing for love." "Is God there for you?" "Can you trust Him?"⁴¹ The objective is to build relationships "that help you . . . fill you . . . inspire you . . . and strengthen you."⁴² "Make peace with yourself, forgive yourself, and learn to care about yourself."⁴³ Part of the appeal of the book is that it is all about you, your feelings, your goals, and your emotions.

³⁹ Tim Clinton and Gary Sibcy, *Why You Do the Things You Do* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 16-20, 24-27.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 7, 12.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 233.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 236-37.

While observing infant behavior, the authors implied that they knew what the infants were thinking and believing. Some examples are as follows. Behavior of infants suggested that they believed they were worthy. Three-month olds learn their felt needs are important; they are valuable and worthy.⁴⁴ These conclusions are necessary for their theory to work. This is especially important since the initial work on attachment theory was done on children, and the development of certain core beliefs during infancy is a central pillar in their structure.⁴⁵

Biblically, if a person wants good relationships with others then they should first concentrate on knowing and obeying God. The basis for good relationships with others is to have a good relationship with the Creator of the universe through joyful obedience to His Word. This is the secret to healthy relationships. According to Proverbs 16:7, “When a man’s ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.” The Bible says nothing about the relationship styles discussed in this book. Relationship problems are behavior problems, and behavior problems flow from the heart. The solution is to change the heart, and only God can change hearts. The arguments and major points of *Why You Do the Things You Do* were not derived from Scripture. This book is a product of secular psychology. Scripture is used selectively, and sparingly, to support previously held opinions. General descriptions fit many people and capture one’s attention. The descriptions for each relationship style are merely a listing of the lies people believe that guide their ungodly behavior. The four style questions are all man-centered. This is not a discipling book. It does not glorify God or His Word. It is worldly wisdom that glorifies man and appeals to the flesh.

Another popular book is *The 5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman. This author is also a popular writer and speaker. According to the back cover, this book has

⁴⁴ Clinton and Sibcy, *Why You Do the Things You Do*, 25, 200.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 24-27.

sold over ten million copies. Chapman has a B.A. and M.A. in anthropology and an M.R.E. and Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is also an associate pastor in North Carolina.

Chapman's working foundation consists of several statements that he believes are generally agreed upon by psychologists. Foremost is that the primary human emotional need is to feel loved.⁴⁶ Corollary statements are that the deepest human need is to feel appreciated, that life is driven by the desire for success, and that many people spend a lifetime in search of significance, self-worth, and security.⁴⁷ Chapman views these statements as absolutes. They drive his approach to relationships.

The major problem that Chapman has identified in unhappy marriages is ineffective communication. The author believes that spouses often speak different "languages." That is, they speak different "love languages." He defines a love language as the preferred way a person perceives emotional love. Five love languages are identified: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. He believes that every person has a primary language and if their spouse does not speak this language then they feel unloved. Chapman calls this condition an "empty emotional love tank."⁴⁸ He states that adults with full love tanks reach their highest potential, but those with empty tanks never reach their potential.⁴⁹ Likewise, children with full love tanks grow up normal, while those with empty love tanks struggle emotionally.⁵⁰

How did Chapman discover the five love languages as the key to a happy marriage? Chapman was trained to ask questions and listen and they were discovered by

⁴⁶ Gary Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages* (Chicago: Northfield, 2015), 19, 22, 33, 166, 179.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 47, 141-42.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 20, 23.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 175.

observation, as well as trial and error, during his counseling sessions.⁵¹ His education was in anthropology and psychology, and his experience has been as a secular counselor. Chapman's source of truth is his education and experience. Chapman's book makes no claim to being biblically based. Unfortunately, however, it is sprinkled with biblical allusions and it has been embraced by the Christian community.

Chapman's major premise in the five love languages is not a biblical concept. He made up this concept as well as the terms "love language" and "love tank." What Chapman has recognized in unhappy marriages are some of the desires that cause conflicts in human relationships (Jas 4:1-4). The author's five love languages are a secular variation of the worldly lusts mentioned in 1 John 2:15-16: "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life." In fact, the love languages could correlate as follows: flesh (touch), eyes (gifts), pride (words, time, and service). Chapman observes aspects of sinful human nature but does not call it sin. On the contrary, he declares worldly desires to be legitimate needs. Although desires for love, acceptance, and success are not sinful in themselves, if they become controlling desires, causing conflicts and surpassing the desire to love, serve, and obey God, then they have become sin.

As mentioned, the focus of this book is on each person's desire, not God's purpose and His desire for mankind. God is irrelevant in Chapman's counsel. Many of the examples in this book highlight the self-centered desire of people. This is vividly illustrated in the story of Mark and Andrea, where Andrea states she wants Mark to focus on her, give her time, and do things with her.⁵² Rather than help people identify the sinful heart desires that separate them from God and others, Chapman helps people fulfill their desires. Godly heart change is entirely missing. This is a do-it-yourself self-improvement manual.

⁵¹ Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages*, 94.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 48-50.

Chapman treats love as an emotion rather than an attitude, action, or behavior, although he does occasionally say that love is a choice. The focus on love, emotion, and feelings shows that the goal of his psychology is not discipling. His goal is making people feel happy. He does this by relabeling desire as a need and then showing how to fulfill that need. Ironically, Chapman asks two questions.⁵³ Can you love the unlovely? Can anyone do this? The biblical answer is a resounding yes. God loved the unlovely (rebellious sinners) and He calls believers to do the same. On the same page he muses that perhaps the only hope for a certain counselee's marriage was in her faith. Faith in God, of course, is the only hope for anyone's marriage. It is not obvious to Chapman, however, that faith in God and His counsel is the best hope for every marriage.

The major concepts and counsel offered in this book are not based on Scripture, they are based on human ideas. This is not a Christian book. There is no gospel. Only four Scripture citations are included. This book does not promote trust in God and it provides no motivation to grow in Christ-likeness. This book is popular around the world because it legitimizes and encourages the pursuit of personal desires. Chapman's counsel is the opposite of Christ's counsel in Luke 9:23-24. Chapman helps his readers pursue self, not deny self in order to follow Christ.

Identifying False Teaching in the Church

False teaching has existed since the Garden of Eden. In the Old Testament, Israel periodically absorbed the false beliefs of surrounding cultures into Judaism. As a result, their faith waned, God was dishonored, and the nation suffered. Many New Testament writers warned of the danger of false teaching. It is no surprise that false teaching is prevalent in the world. After all, Satan is the prince of this world (John 12:3). To identify and avoid false teaching, the church needs to be on guard, be alert, be

⁵³ Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages*, 151.

grounded in God's Word, and contend earnestly for the faith (Acts 20:28-32; Jude 3). Believers need godly discernment to identify and contend with false teaching.

Throughout Scripture believers are warned not to add or to subtract from God's Word (Deut 4:2). Such actions, as well as direct attacks, are relatively easy to identify. It is common to think false teaching simply refers to beliefs of false religions. Consequently, most churches are careful not to adopt teaching from other religions like Islam or Hinduism. False teaching, however, includes anything contrary to the Word of God, not just the beliefs of false religions. In Eden God said "do not eat, you will die," while Satan said "eat, you will not die." Satan was the first false teacher. Evolution, although not called a religion, is false teaching. None the less, many people in the church have accepted evolution.⁵⁴ They mistakenly think that evolution is science, not religion.⁵⁵ Today, false teaching often parades as science, or social science, and is unwittingly adopted by the church. The church lacks discernment.

According to John 8:44, Satan is the father of lies. Therefore, he is the father of all false teaching. Satan is described as crafty, consequently, not all false teaching is a direct attack on the clear teaching of Scripture. To identify false teaching it may be helpful to compare new ideas or teaching with God's purposes. For instance, does secular teaching adopted by the church support or oppose God's purpose for man (Gen 1:26), God's purpose for the church (Matt 28:18-20), or Christ's requirements for discipleship (Luke 9:23-24). Asking and answering the following questions should bring clarity. A negative answer to any of these questions indicates a false teaching.

1. Does the teaching acknowledge God as Creator, Sovereign, Lord, and Savior?
2. Does the teaching encourage believers to greater trust and reliance on Jesus Christ?

⁵⁴ Jennifer Vander Molen, "Why Some Christian Schools Are Teaching Evolution," The Colossian Forum, October 18, 2017, accessed November 1, 2018. <https://colossianforum.org/2017/10/18/why-some-christian-schools-are-teaching-evolution/>.

⁵⁵ Marvin Olasky, "Most Evangelical Colleges Teach Evolution," *World*, February 4, 2014, accessed November 1, 2018, https://world.wng.org/2014/02/most_evangelical_colleges_teach_evolution.

3. Does the teaching help a believer become more Christ-like?
4. Does the teaching help a believer grow in obedience to all of Christ's commands?
5. Is the teaching based on Scripture?
6. Will the teaching help a believer deny his personal desires in order to follow Christ?
7. Does the teaching help believers grow as servants of God and others?

If believers are to serve the Lord in the power of His Spirit, then they must know the truth. Only the truth sets men free from the lies of Satan. The church must make disciples of Jesus Christ, teaching them to obey all that He commanded. Knowing and obeying Scripture is imperative. Gift-based service is a product of knowing the truth.

Comparing Biblical Motivation with Satanic Motivation

It may be helpful to itemize the major differences between the content and methodology of biblical motivation and satanic or secular motivation. Secular motivation is classified with satanic motivation because they both deal with worldly desires. Neither shares the same goal as biblical motivation, growth in Christ likeness. Biblical motivation appeals to the spirit of man. A comparison of biblical and satanic motivation is shown in table 1.⁵⁶

Table 1. Biblical and satanic motivation compared

Category	Biblical	Satanic
Goal	Holiness	Happiness
Basis	Truth	Lies
View	Long-Term	Short-Term
Focus	God	Self
Intent	Honest	Crafty
Leader	Holy Spirit	Flesh
Resources	Spirit/Word/Church	Self
Orientation	Objective	Subjective

Paul and Peter were acutely aware of satanic methods of motivation. They detested these techniques and warned believers about them. Paul expressly states that he

⁵⁶ Personal tabulation.

did not preach “in cleverness of speech” (1 Cor 1:18), “in persuasive words of wisdom” (1 Cor 2:4), “in words taught by human wisdom” (1 Cor 2:13), “not in fleshly wisdom” (2 Cor 1:12), or use the “wisdom of the world” (1 Cor 1:21). In agreement, Peter says that he “did not follow cleverly devised tales” (2 Pet 1:16). What are these cleverly devised tales and fleshly wisdom? Paul and Peter are referring to the same type of worldly wisdom used by Satan, false teachers, psychologists, advertisers, and public relations specialists.

How Is Gift-Based Service Motivated?

A number of examples of motivation have been examined, both biblical and secular. It is obvious that only God-ordained and God-honoring methods should be used in the church. The Bible contains the content and methodology for godly motivation. Scripture is sufficient and contains all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). It should also be obvious that only believers can be motivated for gift-based service. Unbelievers do not have the Holy Spirit, do not have a spiritual gift, and do not respond to Scripture (1 Cor 2:12-15). How then are believers motivated?

Believers have three primary, God-given, resources: the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the people of God. Children do not automatically know how to read, write, and do math, but they have the capability to learn these things. They need to be taught. Spiritual children of God also need to be taught and they have the capability to learn and practice spiritual truth. That need is why Hebrew fathers were admonished to teach God’s Word to their children in the context of everyday life (Deut 6:6-9). It is also why Jewish families were to observe the annual feasts in Jerusalem and kings were required to write their own copy of the Bible and read it regularly (Deut 17:18-20). God’s people needed to remember God and practice His ways. As shown in the previous examples, when believers were obeying God, even in the face of difficult circumstances, they acted from faith and a fear of the Lord. They believed God’s Word, trusted in Him, and walked in

obedience to His Word. Obedience rests on knowing and remembering God and His Word.

How then does a believer grow in faith and in the fear of the Lord? Scripture reveals that salvation is by grace through faith (Eph 2:8). God graciously gives believers the faith to believe Him as they hear the Word of God (Rom 10:17; Gal 3:2; 2 Tim 3:15). Believers also grow in sanctification through the Word of God (John 17:17). In other words, believers come to faith through hearing or reading the Word, and they grow in faith through hearing or reading the Word. New believers, as well as old believers, need to be taught the Word continually. It is necessary for believers to understand who God is, what man's problem is, and what God has done to call and save the elect.

Hearing and being taught the Word is only a beginning. Many unbelievers have been taught the Word and even memorized the Word. The Pharisees and Sadducees, who opposed Jesus and His teaching, knew the Word of God, but they did not practice or obey the Word. Jesus Christ said that many will say "Lord, Lord" on the last day, but He will say "I never knew you." True believers not only hear, but also do the Word (Matt 7:24-27; Jas 1:22). Action is required. God's faithful followers acted in faith, even when it was difficult. All the obedient people in Scripture had a godly fear of the Lord. How does one get a fear of the Lord? Proverbs 2:1-6 explains how a believer gains a fear of the Lord, knowledge of God, and wisdom. Like faith, fear of the Lord is something that can be encouraged and nurtured. It too is based on God's Word. According to Proverbs, God's commandments must be treasured, meditated on, prayed over, and applied. Attention to and diligence in pursuing and obeying the Word result in a fear of the Lord, knowledge of God, and wisdom. All these things come from God as His Spirit works through His Word.

Believers respond to God's Word, but not all at the same rate. When confronted, David was quick to confess, repent, and ask forgiveness. At times Moses, Gideon, and Jonah were slow to respond to God's direction. Jonah even needed severe discipline before

he began to respond to God’s clear command. Consequently, biblical counselors should not expect immediate or full compliance with the clear Word of God. Patience is needed.

Once a believer is growing in faith and the fear of the Lord, they can be taught God’s plan for His chosen. This plan should include God’s purpose for man both now and in eternity future, the purpose of the church, and the part each believer plays. This plan should also include the one another commands, teaching on spiritual gifts, and how to respond to tests and trials. People respond differently, and their responses need to be addressed individually. As stated in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, “We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” Different issues require different motivations.

Methodology of Biblical Motivation

Sanctification, growth in holiness, and maturity in Christ-likeness does not happen instantly, or automatically. It is the result of a diligently pursued process. Behavior must change from disobedience to obedience. The process of sanctification is described in many ways. Sanctification is briefly described in table 2.⁵⁷

Table 2. Sanctification described

From Unbelief	To Belief
Put-off old man	Put-on new man
Flee from sin	Pursue righteousness
Turn from sin	Turn to obedience
Turn from self	Turn to God
Save one’s life	Lose one’s life
Pursue self	Deny self
Practice folly	Practice wisdom

A suggested order for teaching the basics of faith is shown below. This list starts by considering the major characters in the Bible story: God, man, and Satan. They are introduced as they appear in Genesis. The introduction of major characters is followed by

⁵⁷ Personal tabulation.

considering man's problem, God's solution, and how the believer uses God's resources.

1. God (Creator, character, purpose, behavior, strategy)
2. Man (created, purpose, responsibility)
3. Satan (created, character, purpose, behavior, tactics)
4. Man's problem (sin, weak flesh, Satan and world tempt)
5. God's solution (salvation, sanctification process)
6. Believer's resources (Holy Spirit, Word of God, people of God-the church)
7. How to use the resources (personal: spiritual disciplines, pray, read, memorize, worthy walk – church: active participation, use gift, practice one another's)

Believers can understand Scripture and properly respond to God's counsel.

Pagan rites, however, are conducted to manipulate pagan gods into doing something. By contrast, Christian ceremonies are practiced to help believers remember the true God, live as His representative, and serve Him. Discipleship trains believers to understand their job and do their job as servants of God. Godly methods of motivation appeal to the Spirit.

Conclusion

Biblically, motivation is always evaluated with respect to God. God created man for Himself, to be like Him and serve Him. God's question for man is, is he motivated to do what God created him to do? Is man motivated to love God and others? What are man's primary desires? The question is asked in the form of a test. Tests can come in many forms. They may be a trial, a temptation, or even something that appears good. Shadrach experienced a trial when asked to worship an idol constructed by King Nebuchadnezzar, and Joseph experienced a temptation when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him. Both had a fear of the Lord and obeyed God.

God created man to be like Him, so he could rule over God's creation as God's representative. To accomplish this purpose man needs to be dependent on God, be obedient to God, and be accountable to God. In other words, man is responsible to God. What transpired in the Garden of Eden was an abdication of responsibility. Adam and

Eve did not want to be dependent, obedient, or accountable. They desired independence. By disobeying God, they exercised their right of freewill. The Ten Commandments are written in a negative manner: one shall not steal, one shall not kill, etc. As a result, they stress responsibility. If written in a positive manner, they would have emphasized rights. Servants, as dependent individuals, have responsibilities. Rulers, being independent, have rights. Christ came to do His Father's will. He was not independent of the Father. He did not exercise His rights independently. Believers are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. His goal was to obediently do His Father's will. In like manner, believers should also desire to obey God (make disciples, teaching them to obey). Obedience rests on a foundation of responsibility. Disobedience springs from rights. Culture appeals to the flesh, not the spirit. The United States Declaration of Independence is based on man's inalienable rights. Most men are far more interested in their rights than in their responsibility. Believers must remember their God, and their responsibility.

Secular and satanic motivation appeals to the flesh. It appeals to a desire for personal rights or personal accomplishment. This appeal explains the success of advertising and public relations. Godly motivation appeals to the spirit. Only believers, who have the Holy Spirit, can respond to godly motivation. Believers have a real choice. They can respond to either fleshly or spiritual appeals. The Bible warns believers of the dangers of either quenching or grieving the Spirit. Godly obedience is motivated through practicing the spiritual disciplines, active participation in church, and consistent service using spiritual gifts. Believers are learners their entire life. They need constant motivation to remember and obey. Like the blessed man in Psalm 1, they delight in God's Word and meditate on it day and night. The alternative is listening to the counsel of the wicked.

CHAPTER 4
DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

This chapter describes the objective, philosophy, design, and methodology for development of the lessons. Eight lessons were specifically designed to biblically motivate believers to actively serve in their local congregation using the spiritual gift given to them by the Holy Spirit. Prior to developing the lessons, it will be beneficial to briefly highlight the three prior chapters. Chapter 1 identified the problem, which was a small percentage of the typical church who were actively using their spiritual gift.

Chapter 2 highlighted God's purpose for man: making man in God's image so he can represent God by ruling over creation. In the new heaven and earth those made fully in the image of God will rule over creation by serving, praising, and enjoying God forever. Sanctification is the process God uses in this life for preparing His people for an eternity of serving, praising, and glorifying God. The image, of course, looks like Jesus Christ. God's people are being made in the image of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God. Therefore, those in the image of Jesus Christ are in the image and likeness of God. As stated in the Great Commission, believers are disciples of Jesus Christ and are being taught to obey all that Christ commanded. While on earth, Jesus demonstrated and taught that ruling is actually serving. Among other things, Jesus came to earth to seek and to save as well as serve God the Father and to call others to service. Christ followers are being made in the image of Jesus Christ through the church. It is in the church that believers grow in Christ-likeness and progressively learn to love God and others. The Holy Spirit has gifted each believer so that together they can represent Christ in the world and help each other grow in Christ-likeness.

Chapter 3 described both biblical motivation and secular motivation. Motivation is simply a process for generating a desire. Desire can be either godly or wicked. It was demonstrated that secular motivation appeals to fleshly desires while biblical motivation appeals to godly spiritual desires. Biblical motivation is only effective with believers, who have been given the Holy Spirit. Unbelievers, who have no faith, can neither rightly understand nor properly respond to God's Word. The only effective motivation for unbelievers is secular motivation, which appeals to fleshly desires. Therefore, only believers can be motivated to gift-based service.

Believers have three primary resources for motivating godly desires, the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the people of God. In the book of Deuteronomy, Jewish fathers were admonished to train their children to understand and obey God's Word (Deut 6:6-9). In like manner, the church is charged with training believers to understand and obey God's Word (Matt 28:18-20). Jesus illustrated this process during the three years He trained the apostles. In all these instances, discipling involves relating God's Word to daily life. Jewish fathers were to relate Scripture to daily life in the morning, in the evening, outside, and indoors. God's Word was to be remembered and obeyed. Scripture was even written on their doorposts. Christ also trained the apostles indoors, outside, in the morning and in the evening. He reminded them of God's Word and corrected their misunderstandings and misapplications of Scripture. The church is to do the same. Christ followers must be trained in the fundamentals of the faith and taught to obey all that Christ commanded.

Those who excel in any endeavor, whether athletics, music, business, art, or the military, must thoroughly understand their subject, correct their mistakes, master the fundamentals, focus on their goal, use all the resources available, and practice diligently. Christians must do the same. Gift-based service in the church is God's design. Not all Christ followers know this. Not all have been taught or disciplined. Gift-based service is not automatic. The apostle Paul taught and encouraged believers to actively use their gifts

(Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-31; Eph 4:7-16; Phlm 6). Leaders in the church must teach, model, remind, and encourage all believers to use their spiritual gift for the profit of all the church.

The discipleship process is summarized in 2 Timothy 3:15-17: teach, reprove, correct, and train in righteousness. Believers must be taught the basics, bad habits must be reprovved (put-off), correct godly habits must be adopted (put-on), and the new habits must be practiced until they become automatic. This process is like learning to ride a bicycle or drive a car. Discipleship is facilitated when all believers use the spiritual gift they have been given. Spiritual gifts are for the sanctification of the church and the glory of God.

Project Objective

Only God can rightly motivate people to follow Him. He does this through speaking the truth to His people, in the power of His Holy Spirit. God never uses hype and He never over promises. God appeals to the spirit of man. By contrast, Satan and unbelievers motivate by appealing to fleshly desires. Man is both flesh and spirit. Satan appeals to the flesh, while God appeals to the spirit. Consequently, motivating gift-based service in the church requires using God-given resources, the Word of God and the Spirit of God, among the people of God to accomplish the purposes of God.

Teaching Philosophy

The following philosophy formed the framework for developing the eight lessons. All of the lessons had to promote a biblical world view. God is recognized as Creator, Sovereign, and Judge. Man is shown to be directly and personally created by God for the purpose of becoming like God and representing Him in creation. All creation, and man especially, exists for the glory and praise of God. The Bible is God's communication to man and is the only resource used in the lessons. The Bible is necessary and sufficient for all of man's spiritual needs. God makes disciples of Christ when the

people of God use the Word of God in the power of the Spirit of God. The lessons adhere to the following affirmations and denials.

1. Affirm that knowing God and His Word is the foundation for Christian education and discipling.
Deny that secular models of education that exclude God hold value for Christians.
2. Affirm that God's Word speaks to all areas of life, especially discipling and education.
Deny that there is any area of life independent of God, or that is neutral.
3. Affirm that true Christian education and discipling connects God's Word to all areas of life.
Deny that education and discipling can be called Christian if they ignore God's Word.
4. Affirm that God's Word is consistent with God's creation.
Deny that secular evolutionary theories are consistent with the created universe.
5. Affirm that secular sociology and psychology are worldviews in competition with the Bible.
Deny that secular sociology and psychology have any value for Christians.

Primary Lesson Audience

For this project, the primary audience for the lessons are Christ-followers who are not active in the church. Most likely, inactive attendees are either new believers or believers who have never been taught the fundamentals.

Lesson Design

As mentioned in chapter 1, eight lessons were taught. The lessons provided an overview of Scripture that included the basics of the Christian faith. Believers must clearly know their purpose and how to accomplish that purpose. The Christian basics included God, man, Satan, man's God-given purpose, the challenges to accomplishing that purpose, and the resources God has given His people to overcome the challenges. Each lesson was ninety minutes long.

The lessons started where God started, in Genesis 1. God is a teacher. The lessons followed His chronology. God begins His communication with man by answering the questions that have puzzled secular philosophers for thousands of years. The Bible opens by stating that there is a God and He has created the universe and all that is in the

universe. In addition, God personally created mankind, gave him a real purpose, and blessed him. All mankind, starting with Adam and Eve in Eden, are tested to demonstrate if their allegiance is to God or to Satan. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God to pursue personal goals. Their allegiance was to Satan. They followed Satan's counsel rather than God's. Consequently, they were driven from God's garden and placed in Satan's kingdom. Adam and Eve's disobedience to God introduced evil and death into the world (Rom 5:12). Evil is simply disobedience to God.

Topics were introduced in the order God introduces them: God, man, Satan, testing, etc. The objective was to introduce a biblical worldview. God's people are to be like Him and share His perspective on the world. Many ungodly worldviews compete with God's Word. The world religions are obvious examples of competing worldviews. Often, however, competing worldviews carry deceptive titles and parade as either scientific theories or political systems. Examples include the theory of evolution, communism, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. Each of these systems contain a view of God, man, how man should live, what man's problem is, and how to solve the problem. The worldview of these systems is in opposition to God's Word. Among other things, none recognize God as Creator and Judge and none recognize disobedience to God (sin) as the problem. They are anti-God.

America's founders, like people today, were greatly influenced by competing worldviews. In their day, Christianity was being challenged by Deism and the Enlightenment (the Age of Reason). As demonstrated in Greg Frazier's book *The Religious Beliefs of America's Founders*, the founders' worldview was an amalgamation of Christianity, Deism, and reason.¹ Believers need to clearly understand the biblical worldview to avoid being taken captive by worldly deception (Col 2:8).

¹ Gregg L. Frazer, *The Religious Beliefs of America's Founders* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012), 14.

More important than understanding a biblical worldview, however, is to know who one serves and who one follows. Christ's common invitation was "follow Me" (Matt 19:21; Mark 2:14; Luke 18:22; John 21:19). Believers are Christ followers. Obedient God-honoring behavior is the best indicator of actual faith. As stated in James 2:18b, "Show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." Christ followers need both right understanding and right behavior. Believers are not saved by their behavior (works), but their behavior demonstrates their faith. All men are servants, either of God or of Satan (Rom 6:19). Christ said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27), which is why His command in the Great Commission is to "make disciples (of Jesus Christ) . . . teaching them to obey all that I (Jesus Christ) commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20). Discipling is teaching to obey. Faith and obedience are two sides of the same coin (John 3:36).

Methodology

A common theme for the lessons is God accomplishing His purpose for man. This is a major emphasis of Scripture and is a unifying theme in these lessons. Students are invited to explore a simple message that unifies both Old and New Testaments. Each lesson contains a facilitator's outline and a student handout. The student handout includes a lesson summary and homework for the following week. The facilitator's outline for each lesson uses a question and answer format. Christ often used questions with both disciples and adversaries. Questions help identify beliefs, motivations, and priorities, which are heart issues. Questions also force people to analyze the consistency, morality, and logic of their personal beliefs. God's Spirit works with God's words to change the hearts of God's people. Only God can change a man's heart. As mentioned previously, the Bible was the only textbook. The lessons were written in clear, non-technical, biblical terms.

Thoughtful discussion of all questions were encouraged. The lessons are designed to promote biblical discussion that connects Scripture with real life decisions.

The discussion format allows the lesson facilitator an opportunity to demonstrate practical hermeneutics. By paying attention to the grammatical-historical context of all passages and interpreting Scripture with Scripture, the facilitator teaches proper interpretation.

Each student handout includes helpful homework. Homework allows students to expand their understanding and application of the biblical principles discussed each week. As a result, the learning process continues between lessons. Thinking about the meaning of related Bible passages and how the principles can be applied promotes biblical meditation (Ps 1:2; Josh 1:8).

Facilitators were encouraged to listen well and follow up on signs of spiritual growth. Pursuing spiritual growth takes precedence over fully completing each of the lessons. After each lesson the students were given a double-sided, one-page handout showing homework and a summary of the lesson. The facilitator had to keep discussion focused on relating God's Word with life. Facilitators should avoid getting sidetracked.

At the start of lesson 1, the students were given a brief class overview, describing the lesson objectives, the topic of each weekly lesson, and the teaching format used.² To help students identify their spiritual gift and apply each lesson, an additional handout that described eighteen activities was distributed with lesson 1.³ The activities involved the student in either speaking, art, writing, music, or personal service. Students only needed to select one activity each week. The same activity could be selected each week. The activities the students selected were intended to help them identify their gift and point them to a profitable area of service in the church.

Lesson Overview

After the expert panel was selected they were provided with the first chapter of the thesis project, and the curriculum rubric. As each lesson was completed it was sent to

² See appendix 3.

³ See appendix 3.

the expert panel for their evaluation. The following is a brief overview of each lesson. All eight lessons are attached in appendix 3.

Lesson 1: God—Glorious Creator

The Bible addresses questions that have puzzled philosophers for thousands of years. For example, what is the origin of the universe? The Bible answers this question in the very first verse and provides more detail on earth's creation in the rest of the first chapter. The Bible begins with God introducing Himself. He is the first and the most important character in the Bible story.

The purpose of this lesson was to acknowledge God as Creator of the universe, recognize God's right to rule over and judge His creation, identify a proper response to the Sovereign Creator God, and to understand the Bible as God's authoritative message to mankind.

Lesson 2: Man—God's Apprentice

After introducing Himself in Genesis 1:1 and then briefly summarizing the creation of the universe, God introduces man as the second character in the Bible story. In one short chapter God clearly explains the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. Philosophers have pondered these two primary questions for thousands of years. God has given mankind all he needs to know in the Scriptures. God communicates clearly, directly, and with few words.

The purpose of this lesson was to show that man is created directly and personally by God, given real purpose and hope, is a servant of God, is dependent on God and His Word, and is expected to trust and obey God.

Lesson 3: Satan—Ruler of Evil

The first two chapters of Scripture introduce God and man, the two main characters in the Bible. They also paint a beautiful and attractive picture of a new world. The great and glorious God creates a splendidly diverse, complex, unified, and fantastically

fruitful universe. As a culminating act, He personally creates man as a creature in His own image and likeness. Man is given the honored position of ruling over earth as God's representative. He is an apprentice of the Creator God. Two perfect people, Adam and Eve, are placed in a perfect environment that provides everything they physically need. More importantly, God Himself walks and talks with them daily, providing all the spiritual counsel they need. The story is perfect until chapter 3. Genesis 3 introduces the final major character in the biblical story: Satan. God has already explained the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. In this chapter God answers the question, "Why is there evil in the world?"

The purpose of this lesson was to show that Satan is opposed to God, God's word, and God's people. Satan is also shown as a master of deception, but one who is subject to God's sovereignty. As a defeated foe, Satan is successfully resisted by relying on the resources God provides. Following the millennium, Satan spends eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Lesson 4: Testing—Who Will You Serve?

In three short but clearly-written chapters God relates epic events that answer man's fundamental questions and explain his current condition. The glorious God creates a universe which He declares to be "very good." Two humans, as perfect as people have ever been, are personally and directly created by God and placed in a perfect environment that easily provides all that they need. They are God's representatives on earth and are given only one restriction. The restriction seems to be of little inconvenience and is apparently obeyed. This changes when Satan draws Eve's attention to the forbidden fruit and questions God's character. Satan presents Eve with a choice. She can follow God's counsel or Satan's counsel. Eve deliberates and chooses to follow Satan's counsel. Adam follows her lead. By following Satan's counsel, Adam and Eve demonstrate that their allegiance is to Satan and his kingdom rather than to God's kingdom. God then removes them from Eden and places them in a cursed creation where life is difficult, and Satan is

prince. Although Adam, Eve, and all their descendants are now in the kingdom of Satan, God still offers their descendants a choice and invites people from all nations into the kingdom of God.

The purpose of this lesson was to show that God tests each person with trials and/or temptations. Testing reveals choice. Choice is shown in deeds, and judgment is based on deeds.

Lesson 5: Ruling—What Does Godly Ruling Look Like?

By the end of Genesis 4, the biblical view of life is coming into sharper focus. God is the Creator of a glorious universe that was designed to reflect and honor Him. Man was created personally by God to represent God on earth. God intended man to be made in the image of Jesus Christ and to rule over creation as God would rule. Satan, however, in opposition to God, is attempting to induce man to disobey. He does this through deception, temptation, trials, distraction, and apathy. Man has a choice of two roads. Obedience to God is the narrow road and leads to eternal life. Disobedience, however, leaves man on the wide road leading to eternal destruction. There are two primary questions for disciples of Jesus Christ: what does it look like to imitate Christ, and what does it mean to rule as God would rule? Fortunately, God has shown how Christ lived and how He defines ruling. God has given His disciples everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). The answer to all the issues of life are found in God's Word.

The purpose of this lesson was to illustrate godly serving, show how Christ defined ruling, and identify the resources God has provided for serving.

Lesson 6: Spirit of God—Power for Serving

As succinctly stated in Genesis 1:26, God's purpose for man is to make him into the image and likeness of God so he can rule over God's creation. Two questions

follow from this purpose: what does the image look like and how does God define ruling? The image, of course, is Jesus Christ Himself. Christ showed that ruling in God's kingdom is actually serving. All of the Trinity is involved in the process of making man in the image of Jesus Christ. Christ came to do the will of God the Father. While on earth, Jesus Christ illustrated both the image and how to serve. When God the Son left the earth, He sent God the Holy Spirit to lead and empower His followers. While ministering on earth, Jesus was only in one place at a time. The Holy Spirit, however, is in every believer around the world. This lesson considered the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christ follower. The Holy Spirit enables Christ followers to excel as servants. The Holy Spirit is instrumental in the life of each believer and the life of the church.

This lesson showed that the Holy Spirit gives believers motivation to serve, ability to serve, understanding of Scripture, and ability to obey Scripture.

Lesson 7: Word of God— Counsel for Serving

Five hundred years ago the reformers worked diligently to restore Scripture to its rightful place in the church. At that time many leaders in the church believed their word was of equal value to Scripture. The primary battle at that time was fought over the sufficiency of Scripture, *sola Scriptura*. The Bible is still under attack by those who doubt the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life. Many today, even in the church, prefer the word of man over the Word of God.

The Bible is a unique book.⁴ Although written over a 1600-year time interval by over 40 different authors, it is amazingly consistent.⁵ Unlike other old books (i.e., the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Homer, and Julius Caesar) thousands of old copies exist, many

⁴ Lawrence O. Richards, *Richard's Complete Bible Handbook* (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 13.

⁵ Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (San Bernadino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972), 18.

dating to within several decades of when the book was originally written.⁶ In addition, archaeological discoveries continue to confirm biblical accounts of kings, nations, and battles that have long since faded from human history.⁷ *Sola Scriptura* is the foundation of the other four *Solas* of the reformation. Without the Scriptures man would know nothing of Christ, God's grace, faith, or that man's purpose is to bring glory to God.

The purpose of this lesson was to show that God's Word is sufficient for life and godliness. Nothing else is needed. God's Word and God's Spirit are the primary resources for making God's people into disciples of Jesus Christ. The Word of God is truth, it directs, gives wisdom, sanctifies, protects, and prepares God's people to serve Him well. Man cannot improve on God's Word. Man never has a better idea than God.

Lesson 8: People of God— Context for Serving

Since Pentecost, God has been accomplishing His purpose of making man in His image and likeness within the church. Believers in the church enjoy benefits unavailable to Old Testament saints. With the close of the apostolic age the full counsel of God was completed. The Scriptures contain all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). In His Word, God explains all of human history from the creation of the original heaven and earth to the glorification of the saints in the new heaven and earth. Scripture also explains how man should live, what his problem is, and how to effectively address the problem. Man has a heart problem and only God can address the heart. Whereas the Holy Spirit selectively fell on God's people for short periods of time in the Old Testament, in the New Testament the Holy Spirit resides permanently in each believer. The Holy

⁶ J. Daniel Hays and J. Scott Duval, *The Baker Illustrated Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 1023; Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1968), 246-48; Josh McDowell, *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life, 1981), 17-22.

⁷ Josh McDowell and Don Steward, *Answers to Tough Questions Skeptics Ask about the Christian Faith* (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life, 1980), 23-24; Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 90-91.

Spirit enables Christ followers to understand, believe, remember, and obey Scripture. Christ followers are also called upon to use their God-given spiritual gifts in ministry to each other. Together, the church promotes spiritual growth of all believers, and glorifies God.

The purpose of this lesson was to demonstrate that the church is composed of all those chosen by God from before the foundation of the world. Christ is head of the church. The church is where His disciples are trained to become like Him. Discipling occurs in the church through the use of Spiritual gifts. God's people grow through trusting God's Word and following God's Spirit. Each Christ follower has been given a spiritual gift and has a part to play in the church. Failure to use that gift stunts personal growth and adversely affects the entire church. Believer should joyfully take their part in the church and trust in God as they use their gift for His praise, honor, and glory.

Conclusion

The lessons were designed to give new and untrained believers an overview of Scripture. In addition, they highlight God's purpose for His people, show the obstacles to accomplishing their purpose, and identify the resources God has provided for fulfilling their purpose in the church. Every believer has a part to play in Christ's church. God is a teacher. God's people must be taught how to learn from His Word and apply His lessons.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE EFFECT OF THE LESSONS

Introduction

Implementing this project was at once both encouraging and surprising. It was encouraging to observe believers pondering biblical concepts and growing in their understanding of Scripture and also in their faith in God's Word. The surprising part involved recruiting. Recruiting lesson participants presented several hurdles. It was unexpectedly difficult to recruit 12 volunteers. One would think that recruiting 12 volunteers in a church with about 4,000 attendees would be easy. Such was not the case. Several avenues were pursued: personal recruiting, soliciting pastoral help, contacting a number of Adult Bible Fellowship's, and talking with friends. Pocket-sized cards were made with course information and distributed as needed. The cards showed the class purpose, meeting times, and location.

The pastors were already overloaded and reluctant to get involved. Fortunately, I was successful in personally recruiting 6 participants. Talking with ABF's generated 2 more participants. Many people in the ABF's, however, were already active in the church. Friends generated most of the volunteers. They used the course information cards to recruit an additional 11 participants.

As soon as 5 people had volunteered, the first group began lessons. Weeks later, another group of 8 started. The following week, a group of 6 started. Each group met in a different location and on a different evening during the week. Only the first group met at the church. Finding open rooms at the church during the week was another difficulty. The church building is in use most evenings. As a result of having staggered starting dates, it took fifteen weeks to teach the lessons to all three groups. During the

teaching process, 3 people dropped out of the lessons early, 1 missed several lessons in the middle, and 2 were unable to complete the last two weeks. Those who dropped out or missed classes did so for understandable reasons. Consequently, the original 19 participants fell to 13 by the completion of the teaching phase.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The project's purpose, as discussed in chapter 1, was to motivate gift-based service in the church. Church activity should be a natural product of the believer's spiritual gift. After all, the Holy Spirit gave gifts to promote growth in Christ-likeness as believers minister to one another within the church. Practice of the one another commands within the church also glorifies God. The intent of the project was to focus on new believers and those who are inactive in the church. Due to recruiting difficulty, however, only about 80 percent of the participants were new believers or uninvolved in the church. As discussed later, this change in the proposed program provided several helpful insights. The project still proved to be a good learning experience in motivating gift-based service.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The first goal was to enlist 12 adult attendees to participate in the project. Nineteen were enlisted and 13 completed the lessons. Each participant was intended to be a regular attender of GBC, but someone who was not actively serving in the church. All the participants were regular attenders, but due to recruiting difficulty, 4 of the 19 were already serving in some capacity. This goal was only partly successful. The required number of regular attendees was successfully met, but not all the participants were inactive in the church.

The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum that addressed a believer's identity, giftedness, and service. Eight lessons were developed and an expert panel composed of four church elders reviewed the lessons using the Curriculum

Evaluation Rubric.¹ The lessons received 95 to 100 percent on the Evaluation Rubric. The elders provided useful feedback and some minor changes were made. This goal was successfully met.

The third goal was to increase the knowledge, motivation, and gift-based service of the participants by teaching the curriculum. A survey was administered both before and following teaching the eight lessons.² A t-test indicated that the lessons were successful ($t = 3.64, p = 0.003$). The survey results are shown below in table 3.

Table 3. Survey results

Person	Before	After
1	93	96
2	89	99
3	75	86
4	70	85
5	99	99
6	92	96
7	86	93
8	98	100
9	100	100
10	60	57
11	77	95
12	78	87
13	69	74

Of the 13 participants who completed the lessons, 9 were not actively serving. Five of the 9 began some serving ministry, thus meeting the 50 percent goal for inactive attendees. Two became active in a teaching ministry, 2 in service, and 1 in evangelism. Another was motivated to read Scripture more often but is not yet involved in ministry. Unexpectedly, some change was also seen in those who were actively serving. One changed his ministry from teaching to serving after realizing his primary gift. Another,

¹ See appendix 2 for the evaluation rubric.

² See appendix 1 for the survey.

who was active in administration, began an organized Bible reading plan and is considering starting a teaching ministry. This goal was successfully met.

The fourth goal was to review and revise the curriculum. Although the lessons were successful, areas of improvement were identified during the teaching process. The revisions are discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter. The lessons were revised as deemed necessary and sent to the expert panel for final review. Again, the revised lessons received a 95 to 100 percent grade and did not require any changes.

Strengths of the Project

Strengths of this project included a new perspective, the discussion format, biblical chronology, use of Scripture only, and mainly home-based lessons. The lessons provided a slightly different perspective on Bible study than most church-based studies. The focus was on God accomplishing His purpose for man as stated in Genesis 1:26. This emphasis established a unifying theme for understanding all of Scripture. Throughout Scripture, God is shown as actively implementing His purpose of progressively sanctifying man into His image so that, ultimately, redeemed and glorified mankind can praise, honor, serve, and glorify God for eternity in the new heaven and earth. The lesson format utilized a question and answer format, much like a catechism. Unlike a catechism, however, preset answers were not required. Instead, the format promoted thoughtful consideration of Scripture, and promoted thinking of life from a biblical perspective. A biblical chronology was followed in an effort to present a practical and easily understood framework for life. Each lesson actively involved all participants in thoughtful, biblical, discussion. Only Scripture was used. No other texts or resources were involved. Connecting the Old Testament with the New Testament showed that all the Bible is God's Word, thus demonstrating that the Bible is a unified whole. The entire Bible is needed. No part is irrelevant. Practical homework was included with each lesson. The homework enabled the participants to build on the biblical insights gained during lesson discussions. The lessons related Scripture to real life. The four elders were very supportive. Although each

of the three teaching groups enjoyed good biblical discussion, the two home-based groups seemed to be more relaxed and developed better rapport. Homes seem to be more welcoming and comfortable than the church classrooms. Since much of life occurs in homes, they are an ideal place for relating Scripture to daily life. Covering spiritual gifts from a balanced biblical perspective was highly beneficial. An overview of the fourteen lessons were subsequently presented to a men's Bible study. Several dozen mature believers regularly attend this study. Many of these men were intrigued by the teaching on gifts—they had never heard a lesson on gifts. Some asked how to find and use their specific gift.

Weaknesses of the Project

After several weeks of teaching, it became apparent that each of the original eight lessons contained more information than could adequately be covered in an hour and a half meeting. Consequently, the revised lessons are shorter. Most of the revised lessons cover half as much material. In addition, the order of the material was changed slightly to improve the flow of topics.

Due to the length of the original lessons, it was difficult to follow up on insights gained while doing homework. The shorter lessons allow more time for discussing homework, and developing effective applications, which is particularly important since application of Scripture is the primary objective. New biblical insights provide an opportunity to develop practical applications.

Initially, the difficulty of finding room for lessons at the church seemed like a weakness, but meeting in homes proved to be a better option. In the future, lessons will be located in homes unless the class size is too large to be accommodated.

What I Would Do Differently

As mentioned, I would teach more, but shorter, lessons and improve the flow between lessons.³ In addition, smaller groups seem to have better rapport than larger groups. As mentioned, homes provide an atmosphere that is more conducive to discussion than most church rooms. Church rooms often seem less warm or welcome. Consequently, teaching small groups in homes is ideal. Having two teachers rather than one would also be beneficial. Multiple teachers would provide a training opportunity for new teachers, as well as enhance the discussions. Two teachers can also facilitate the class better. One may pick up on something the other failed to observe or provide an appropriate answer to a question. Something I would do differently than originally intended (but was actually done) is to involve all types of believers in the class. This would include new members, old members, those who are actively involved, and those who are inactive in the church. All participants will benefit. New and previously undisciplined members will gain biblical understanding, realize their God-given purpose, and identify their gift. Long-term active believers and leaders will be reminded of the fundamentals and have an opportunity to help disciple newer believers. All participants learn from each other, develop new relationships, and practice working as a team. Mixed groups studying God's Word are historically common. Ezra spoke to both men and women of various ages (Neh 8:1-8). Paul also addressed a mixed group in Troas (Acts 20:7-12). The revised lessons also now include several suggestions for promoting discussion and reflection. The added discussion techniques were adopted from *The Discussion Book* by Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill.⁴ Feedback resulted in several minor adjustments in the lessons. Finally, at the end of each lesson the participants would be provided with the facilitator's notes. This would enable the participants to easily share the material with others. In the

³ See appendix 4 for revised lessons.

⁴ Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill, *The Discussion Book: 50 Great Ways to Get People Talking* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016).

revised curriculum, the facilitator's notes are only two pages long, including homework. Shorter notes would make it easier to find material and refresh memory. In this manner students can become teachers and ongoing discipling is promoted.

Theological Reflections

Characteristics of the lessons that seemed to work well are outlined in this section. The adoption of a biblical chronology made the lessons easily understood and accepted. The biblical flow started with God in Genesis 1:1, and then progressed from man to Satan and testing. Starting where God starts in the Bible and introducing characters and topics in the order that God does provides a logical flow. It also answers life's most important questions. Is there a God? How was the universe created? What is man's purpose? What is the source of evil? God intended man to know his environment and his God-given purpose. God is a teacher, and believers are expected to learn from God and to imitate God. Showing the connection between God's purpose for man, God's purpose for the church, and God's process for accomplishing His purpose, ties the Bible together from Genesis to Revelation. Exclusively using biblical terms also encourages participants to think biblically. The use of terms from man-made disciplines like psychology is confusing and implies that the Bible is insufficient. The Bible provides a framework for understanding all of life. Using terms not found in Scripture suggests that some areas of life are not addressed by the Bible.

Each lesson contains activities for digging deeper, better known as homework. Homework helps believers apply the lessons to life and keeps them focused through the week. Since knowing is for doing, homework helps believers think through and practice godly living. Christ's goal in teaching was to change the behavior of His followers through changing their heart. Good interaction during the lessons helps connect people with both Scripture and other believers. Christ used practical examples from everyday life. God's Word is intended to help believers live as God's representatives in an evil world. Bible study participants have an opportunity to use their gift, encourage others, and benefit from

the gifts of others. Group interaction and feedback is an important part of discipleship. Teaching the lessons provided a dynamic laboratory for discovering and encouraging spiritual growth. All participants were learning to understand and obey Christ's commands. Centering the lessons on God accomplishing His purpose for man provided a fresh perspective that enabled participants to gain new insights regarding personal sanctification, their purpose, their gift, and the purpose of the church.

Personal Reflections

The D.Ed.Min. education classes provided information that was helpful in revising the lessons. They laid a foundation for future implementation of the purpose of this project: to motivate gift-based service. In particular, the "Fundamentals of Education" provided helpful suggestions for effective small-group teaching. The *Discussion Book* was introduced in this class.

The project evolved over time. The initial goal was to exegete Genesis 1:26 to highlight the importance of purpose in life (thinking properly as a result of knowing one's purpose). Selection of a project title helped focus the lessons on practical activity (behavior resulting from proper thinking). The help of Michael Wilder in thinking through the project title was much appreciated. As a result of several thoughtful discussions, the title became more focused and practical than as first proposed. Merely encouraging church members to become active was not the sole aim. Consequently, the goal changed from merely exegeting Genesis 1:26 to motivating gift-based service as the fruit of, and process for, growing as a disciple of Christ. This title change represented a shift from theory to practice and was very beneficial.

The education classes introduced practical activities for teaching right thinking and godly behavior. To further refine the lessons I am teaching them to an ABF composed of about seventy senior citizens. They are providing feedback on the lessons provided in appendix 4. Most importantly, this project highlighted the fact that only God can motivate

His people. God motivates through His Word and His Spirit, in the context of His church. Godly motivation is internal. God changes hearts. All secular motivation is external.

Next Steps

The “Fundamentals of Education” class highlighted the value of teams. Rather than generate future lessons by myself, I would like to help organize teams to develop lessons. Small groups of like-minded individuals can develop curriculum, team teach, and team counsel. Teachers, however, need to be knowledgeable believers who are growing, have a biblical worldview, and are actively serving in the church. One can only teach what one knows.

A logical lesson progression for discipling new believers could start with a biblical overview (the fourteen lessons in appendix 4). A subsequent lesson can cover Bible translations, demonstrating the difference between word-for-word Bible translations, dynamic equivalents, and paraphrases. Believers need discernment when selecting a good study Bible. Following this, a class covering the basic principles of interpretation could prepare believers to proceed through a study of major books of the Bible. As believers grow in Bible knowledge, they can simultaneously be involved in three areas: use of their gift (helping other believers), growth in personal sanctification (put-off/put-on), and learning how to interact with culture in a godly way (witnessing by behavior to unbelievers). In other words, those with a similar gift would help one another learn to use their gift effectively in the church, the use of gifts would help fellow believers grow in sanctification, and all would learn how to represent and glorify Christ in a hostile world, similar to Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

Conclusion

In any endeavor, paying attention to the fundamentals is critical. This project directed my attention to the importance of knowing and applying biblical fundamentals in discipling. The church is charged with making disciples of Jesus Christ who are

progressively learning how to obey Him. Not all believers know the fundamentals or how to apply the fundamentals to daily life. Biblically, every believer is an active member of the church. No believer should be sitting on the bench waiting to play. Every believer is in the game and has a critical part to play.

The biblical fundamentals important to gift-based service are as follows. God is the Sovereign Creator. God is truth and His Word is truth. God accomplishes all His purposes and He works through His Word. The Bible shows God actively accomplishing His purpose for man. God's stated purpose is to make man in His image and likeness so he can rule over God's creation. Believers are being made in the image of Jesus Christ. Ruling is actually serving. Believers are learning to serve as Jesus Christ served. In this age, the process God uses to make man in His image is called sanctification, and it is accomplished in the church. As believers trust in God and use their spiritual gift to serve one another then all the church profits, and God is glorified.

So, how are believers motivated to gift-based service? They need to be taught the fundamentals. Christ-followers need to know that the Holy Spirit gifts each believer for service. Every believer has an active role in the church. Use of the gifts promotes sanctification and glorifies God. Sanctification in the church is how God is accomplishing His purpose for believers. God's purpose for man is clearly stated in Genesis 1:26, and fully completed in the new heaven and earth at the glorification. Revelation 22:3-5 describes the complete fulfillment of Genesis 1:26. Clearly teaching the fundamentals starting with Genesis 1 through 4, describing God's process and resources, and ending with Revelation 22 will allow God to motivate His people through His Word and His Spirit.

Unfortunately, not all churches teach the proper place of gifts. Few churches that I have attended seek to connect God's purpose for man and God's purpose for the church with God's process, God's resources, and the ultimate fulfillment of His purpose.

The titles of popular secular books suggest that secular leaders also realize the importance of fundamentals and a cohesive worldview. In 1986, Robert Fulghum

published *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Kindergarten is where people learn the fundamentals, especially regarding how to get along with others. Some of the things that Fulghum learned in kindergarten are to share everything, play fair, do not hit people, and do not take things that are not yours.⁵ Perhaps without realizing it, kindergarten starts with the second greatest commandment: love your neighbor as yourself. In reality, all one really needs to know can be learned in the Bible. Another well-known secular thinker, Stephen Hawking, spent his life pursuing *A Theory of Everything*, but failed. Hawking's purpose, as stated in the introduction to his Cambridge lectures in the 1990s, was to understand the history of the universe from the big bang to black holes.⁶ By contrast, God gives a history of the universe from creation to present in the first verse of the Bible. Secular scholars look for an explanation of everything without God, which is impossible. Only the Creator can rightly explain the creation. The Bible is an introductory course in the theory of everything. Leading believers through Scripture introduces them to the God of everything and provides them with all they really need to know. This exciting adventure begins with an overview of Scripture. God's Word relates to real life. In reality, secular theories of man and his problems are mythology and distract believers from biblical essentials.

Treating all church members as essential members of a team is critical. Believers must understand their purpose, see their gifts as important, and understand how to use the resources God has provided. All believers, not just the leaders, are to study and obey Scripture. The military provides a good discipleship analogy for the church. In the military all positions and ranks are needed. As new soldiers are recruited, they are immediately trained. Training continues throughout their career as they advance through

⁵ Robert Fulghum, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten: Uncommon Thoughts on Common Things* (New York: Villard Books, 1990), 6.

⁶ Stephen Hawking, *A Theory of Everything: The Origin and Fate of the Universe* (Beverly Hills: Phoenix Books, 2005), iv.

various specialties and ranks. With time, trainees become trainers. Everyone relies on and benefits from everyone else.

So, how does a church motivate gift-based service? Biblically, the answer is to make disciples of Jesus Christ using God's resources. Church leaders need to promote gift-based service by precept and example. Motivating gift-based service starts with introducing believers to their new King, new purpose, new resources, and new team. When believers understand who God is, God's purpose for their lives, the purpose of the church, and the resources God has provided to accomplish His purpose, then they are motivated to use those resources. Purpose motivates action. They are motivated by grace through faith. Simply stated, when the people of God use the Word of God and the gifts of God in the power of the Spirit of God, then God is glorified and His people grow in Christ-likeness.

APPENDIX 1

PRE- AND POST-SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The following appendix contains the survey that was administered to the project participants before the first lesson of the curriculum and following the last lesson. The purpose of the survey was to gather data that would facilitate measurement of the effectiveness of the curriculum in increasing knowledge and motivation that results in greater participation in the church through use of spiritual gifts.

IDENTITY, GIFT AND SERVICE SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the understanding and motivation of the participant. This research is being conducted by Rod Martin for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Directions: Answer the following yes or no questions by circling the appropriate answer.

Part 1

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you consider yourself a Christian? | Yes | No |
| 2. Are spiritual gifts an important part of the church? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you have a spiritual gift? | Yes | No |
| 4. If yes, do you know your gift? | Yes | No |
| 5. Have you ever served in the church? | Yes | No |
| 6. Are you currently serving in the church? | Yes | No |
| 7. Is serving in the church important? | Yes | No |
| 8. Are you a member of this church? | Yes | No |
| 9. Do you consider membership important? | Yes | No |
| 10. Are you considering membership? | Yes | No |

Directions: Provide your answers to the statements using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, DS = disagree somewhat, AS = agree somewhat, A = agree, SA = strongly agree; please circle the appropriate answer.

Part 2

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 11. Believers are god’s representatives on earth. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 12. God is making believers to be like Christ. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 13. Believers have access to all that is needed to grow in Christ-likeness. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 14. Christ modeled how to be a servant. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 15. All Christ-followers are expected to be servants in the church. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 16. I find joy in serving other believers. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 17. God has given me at least one spiritual gift. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 18. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up the church. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 19. I desire to use my spiritual gift to serve the church. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 20. Mankind evolved from the animals. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 21. Mankind was specially created directly by God. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 22. Believers have been specially chosen by God. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 23. Believers are to imitate God. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 24. Believers are God’s representatives on earth. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 25. Believers are designed to be dependent on God. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 26. Believers need God’s counsel daily. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

27.	Believers are part of God's household.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
28.	A believers major goal is to please and honor God.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
29.	Believers find their identity in Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
30.	Faith in Christ affects all of life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
31.	Believers are called to suffer for Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
32.	Only some believers have spiritual gifts.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
33.	The use of spiritual gifts builds up the church.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
34.	God has planned for good deeds to be done by each believer.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
35.	God directs each believer through His Spirit.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
36.	Some spiritual gifts are more important than others.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
37.	Spiritual gifts were only for the early church.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
38.	Spiritual gifts are not needed today.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
39.	Serving in the church is optional.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
40.	Christ was a servant.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
41.	Believers are servants.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
42.	Believers serve through using their spiritual gifts.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

APPENDIX 2
CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

The evaluation rubric was used by the expert panel to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum for accomplishing the desired purpose of motivating members to use their spiritual gift(s) to serve fellow believers within the church.

Gift-Based Service Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
Lesson One Evaluation					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The lesson is clearly relevant to the issue of identity, spiritual gifts, and serving.					
The material is faithful to the Bible's teaching on identity, spiritual gifts, and serving.					
The material is theologically sound.					
The aim of the lesson is clearly stated.					
The points of the lesson clearly support the aim.					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clearly presented.					

APPENDIX 3
ORIGINAL EIGHT LESSONS

This appendix contains the original eight lessons as described in chapter 4. As described in this chapter, each lesson contains a facilitator's guide and a student handout. The student handout consists of a summary of the lesson and homework for the next week. On week one the students will be given the survey shown in appendix 1. After the survey the students will be given a lesson overview and an activity matrix. The final lesson will be followed with the survey in appendix 1.

LESSON OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide an overview of Scripture
- Show God's purpose for mankind
- Highlight the need for testing and choice
- Describe the use of God's resources for discipleship
- Encourage the use of spiritual gifts

WEEKLY LESSONS:

	Introductions, lesson overview, and activity matrix Initial Survey
Lesson 1	God - Glorious Creator
Lesson 2	Man – God's Apprentice
Lesson 3	Satan – Ruler of Rebellion
Lesson 4	Testing – Who will you serve?
Lesson 5	Serving – What does godly serving look like?
Lesson 6	Spirit of God – Power for serving
Lesson 7	Word of God – Counsel for serving
Lesson 8	People of God – Context for serving Final Survey

TEXTBOOK:

- Bible (preferably NASB or ESV)

CLASS FORMAT:

- Question
- Bible verses
- Discussion
- Application
- Handout with lesson summary at end of class

ACTIVITY MATRIX

Pick at least one of the following activities for each lesson. The same activity can be selected for more than one lesson.

1. Teach what you have learned to at least one other person.
2. Did the Scripture in this lesson answer any questions you may have had? Do you know someone with similar questions who you can help?
3. Did this lesson give you renewed hope or direction? Can you pass it along?
4. What did you find something that was encouraging in this lesson? Can you encourage someone else?
5. Did this lesson give you a better understanding of Scripture? Can you help another person?
6. Did this lesson correct your thinking in any area? Do you know someone who could also benefit?
7. Do you need to change your habits, or behavior? How will you change? What is your plan?
8. Would you like to write a psalm or poem about some part of this lesson?
9. Pray the memory verse back to God. How can you apply this memory verse?
10. Can all or part of this lesson be conveyed by a picture?
11. How could this lesson be shown in a sculpture or carving?
12. Write a song conveying God's message in this lesson.
13. How is God asking you to think or behave differently?
14. What are two practical steps you can take to start practicing what you learned in this lesson?
15. In what ways is Scripture now more practical to daily life?
16. Has this lesson raised more questions? How can you find the answers?
17. Read at least two chapters in Proverbs. Meditate on these chapters. Ask yourself how you need to think differently, speak differently, or act differently to obey the godly principles in these chapters. Develop two steps you can take to implement these principles.
18. Read at least two chapters in the Psalms. How did the psalmist view God and His word? Do you have a similar view? Why or why not?

EIGHT LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Glorious Creator

INTRODUCTION: The Bible addresses questions that have puzzled philosophers for thousands of years. For example, what is the origin of the universe? The Bible answers this question in the very first verse, and provides more detail on earth's creation in the rest of the first chapter. The Bible begins with God introducing Himself. He is the first and most important character in the Bible story.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this lesson is as follows:

- Acknowledge God as Creator of the universe.
- Recognize God's right to rule over and judge His creation.
- Identify a proper response to the Creator God.
- Understand the Bible as God's authoritative message to mankind.

Q – Who knows Genesis 1:1? (Ask a volunteer to recite or read this verse.)

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Q – Who is the focal point of this verse?

- God.

Q – What do we know about the God who created the heavens and earth?

- God is the preeminent Creator, powerful, and intelligent.

Q – Who is the most important person in the universe?

Verses: Deut 8:3; Ps 24:1; Rom 11:36; Rev 4:11

Answers:

- God is the most important person in the universe.
- God created the universe, He owns it all, and He sustains life.
- Man is dependent on God for everything.

Q – Who specifically created the universe (which person of the Trinity)?

Verses: John 1:1-3, 14:1-3; Col 1:15-17; Rev 22:21

Note: The Trinity works together on all things, but one person played a more active part.

Answers:

- Jesus Christ is the active Creator (of both the current and the new heaven and earth).
- The Bible begins and ends with Jesus Christ.

Q – What else does chapter 1 of Genesis demonstrate about the character of God?

- God is orderly, extremely creative, and has a plan.
- God is good and defines what it means to be good.
- God is a teacher and He wishes to communicate with man.
- God names & defines: day, night, sun, moon, heavens, etc.

Q – Why does the Bible exist?

Verses: Deut 29:29; Ps 19:7-11; 119:11, 105; John 17:17; **John 20:31**; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; 2 Tim 3:14-17; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:20-21

Answers:

- God wants to communicate with man.
- In the very first verse of the Bible, God introduces Himself and tells man what He has done, thus answering a fundamental question (What is the origin of the universe?).
- These verses demonstrate that man is dependent on God for information about the universe.
- Man needs God's word to know how to live.
- God's word is all we need.

Q – Have you ever created something (art, game, invention, construction, etc.)?

Q – Who knows the most about what you created?

- You, the creator.

Q – Who has the right to determine the purpose of your creation?

- You, the creator.

Q – Who has the right to determine the purpose of everything in the universe?

- God, the Creator.

Q – What is the purpose of everything in the universe?

Verses: Ps 8:1, 19:1, 103:19-22; 1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17; Rev 4:8-11

Answer:

- The purpose of everything in the universe is to glorify, praise, serve, and honor God.

Q – Who has the right to judge everything in the universe?

- God, the Creator.

Q – Why is it important to remember that God is both Creator and Judge?

Verses: Job 38:1-11; Eccl 12:13-14; Isa 45:9; Jer 18:6; Acts 17:22-34; 2 Pet 3:3-7; Rev 20:11-15

Answers:

- Since God is Creator, His purpose is preeminent, not ours.
- Man has no right to question God. God questions man.
- Since God is Creator, His justice prevails, not ours.
- Since God is Creator He is to be obeyed.
- False teachers err because they forget that God is Creator and Judge.
- God will eventually judge everyone.

Q – What should be man's response to the Creator of the universe?

Verses: Deut 6:1-5, 10:20-21, 11:26-28, 26:18-19; Ps 33; Rev 15:1-4

Answer:

- Mankind should serve, praise, obey, and honor God.
- Obedience is blessed, and disobedience is cursed.

SUMMARY:

God:

- Creator (Gen 1:1; Job 38:1-11; Ps 8:1, 19:1, 33:1-22; John 1:1-3, 14:1-3; Rom 11:36; 1 Cor 10:31; Col 1:15-17, 3:17; Rev 4:8-11, 22:21)
 - Jesus Christ is the active creator of heaven and earth.
 - God is the most important person in the universe.
 - God alone is to be praised, honored, and obeyed.
 - The Bible begins and ends with Jesus Christ
 - The universe exists by God's will to glorify Him
- Sovereign Ruler (Deut 6:1-5, 8:3, 10:20-21, 11:26-28, 26:18-19; Ps 24:1, 103:19-22)
 - God alone determines right and wrong.
 - God sets the rules for life & His purpose prevails.
 - Man is totally dependent on God.
 - Obedience is blessed, but disobedience is cursed.
- Judge (Eccl 12:13-14; Isa 45:9; Jer 18:6; 2 Pet 3:3-7; Rev 15:1-4, 20:11-15)
 - Everyone will be tested and everyone will be judged.
 - Deeds show kingdom allegiance and determine man's eternity.
 - Response to trials and temptations show what is in a person's heart.

The Bible: (Deut 29:29; Ps 19:7-11, 119:11&105; John 17:17, 20:31; Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:14-17; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

- The Bible is written by God for man.
 - God desires to communicate with man.
 - Only God can rightly explain creation to man. It belongs to Him.
 - Man is not independent; he is dependent on God for everything.
 - Man needs God's counsel in order to live as God designed.
 - God simplifies life.
- The Bible provides man with: identity, purpose, hope, and directions for life.
- God and His word are all that is needed for life and godliness.

Notes:

- In any endeavor it is critical to know and master the fundamentals.
- The Bible communicates the fundamentals of life (truth, faith & servanthood).

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER: (pick at least two)

- Memorize Gen 1:1
- Read Isa 6:1-7; Rev 1:9-18 and answer the following questions: Why were Isaiah and John frightened? Would you respond differently?
- If you remembered God as Creator would this change what you do and say?
- If you remembered God as Judge would this change what you do and say?
- Read Prov 3:5-6. What does it mean to acknowledge God? What keeps you from recognizing and acknowledging God in your daily activities?
- What steps can you take to thank and praise God for His daily care and provision?
- How do you see God working in your life? Do you need to thank and praise Him?

- How does the Lord's Prayer reflect God as Creator, Sovereign, and Judge (Matt 6:7-13)?
- Why does God begin the Ten Commandments with a statement about Himself (Exod 20:1-2)?
- How is God's character seen in the 10 Commandments (Exod 20:3-17)?
- Why is it important to know God's character?
- In reading Scripture look for what it says about the character of God. How should this influence your life?
- Read Exod 6:1-3, 15:1-18, 22:13-14. What do these verses say about God's character? How is this reassuring?
- Read Acts 17:22-34. Why does Paul describe God as Creator and Judge?

Lesson 2 – God’s Apprentice

INTRODUCTION: After introducing Himself in Genesis 1:1, and then briefly summarizing the creation of the universe, God introduces the second character in the Bible story, man. In one short chapter God clearly explains the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. These are the two primary questions that philosophers have pondered for thousands of years. God has given mankind all he needs to know in the Scriptures. God communicates clearly, directly, and with few words.

PURPOSE: To show that man is:

- Created directly & personally by God.
- Given real purpose and hope by God.
- A servant of God & dependent on God and His word.
- Expected to trust and obey God.

Man – God’s Apprentice:

Q – What was God’s last creative act in Genesis chapter one?

Verse: Gen 1:26-27

Answer:

- God created man.

Q – How does the creation of man differ from prior creative acts? (Gen 1:26-27 plus)

Verse: Gen 2:7

Answers:

- God counsels within Himself prior to the creation of man.
- Man is created directly and personally by God.
- God explains man’s purpose.

Q – What is God’s purpose for man? (Gen 1:26 plus)

Verses: Lev 11:44-45; Deut 6:4-6; Mic 6:8; Matt 5:48, 22:35-40; Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:14-16; Rev 1:6

Answers:

- To be made in God’s image and likeness (perfect, holy, blameless).
- To rule over and care for God’s creation.
- To humbly obey and honor God.
- To love God & neighbor.

Notes:

- Man needs to be made in God’s image and likeness in order to rule over creation as God would rule.
- Man is God’s apprentice. He is created to represent and serve God.

Q – What does the image of God look like?

Verse: Rom 8:29

Answer:

- Man in the image of God is conformed to Jesus Christ and reflects Christ.

Q – Who makes man in the image and likeness of God? (Gen 1:26 above plus)
Verses: Isa 64:8; Ezek 36:25-27; John 1:12-13; **Rom 8:28-30**; 2 Cor 5:21; **Eph 1:3-5, 2:8-10**; Phil 2:12-13; Col 1:13-14

Answer:

- God makes man in the image and likeness of God.

Q – How is man made in the image and likeness of God? (Above verses plus)
Verse: 2 Cor 3:18

Answer:

- God foreknows, predestines, creates, calls, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies man.

Notes:

- All of the Trinity is involved in this process.
- Review attached Salvation Diagram showing each Person's part.
- God designed all of earth's history prior to day one of creation.

Q – What does man do to grow in the image of God?

Verses: Luke 9:23-24; Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:22-24; Phil 2:12-13; Col 3:8-10; 1 Pet 1:14-16

Answers:

- Believers grow in the image of God as they follow and obey Jesus Christ.
- Obedience is a choice, and God gives the ability to choose and do His will.
- Choosing to obey God shows allegiance to His kingdom.

Q – When is man fully in the image of God?

Verse: Rev 22:3-5

Answers:

- Man is fully in the image and likeness of God at the glorification in the new heavens and earth.
- In the new heavens and earth the redeemed are sinless, have Christ's name on their forehead, and are serving Him by reigning over His creation forever.
- Everything contained in God's purpose for man (Gen 1:26) is completely fulfilled in the new heavens and earth.

Q – How does Gen 1:26 correlate with evangelism and the Great Commission?

- God's purpose is to make believers into the image of Jesus Christ. Christ's evangelistic call was "Follow Me." To follow Christ is to be His disciple and become like Him. If you are becoming like Christ then you are being made in the image and likeness of God. Evangelism is simply a call to fulfill God's purpose for those He has chosen to serve Him. The only command in the Great Commission is to "make disciples." Disciples of Christ are those who follow Him and are taught to obey all that He commanded. What the church calls evangelism and the Great Commission are simply statements expressing God's purpose of making the elect into the image of Jesus Christ. Once they are finally in the

image of Jesus Christ then they can serve Him by ruling over His creation as He desires. God's will is their will. As stated in both the Old Testament and the New Testament "I will be your God and you will be My people." This happens in the new heavens and earth.

SUMMARY:

Man's Creation: (Gen 1:26-27, 2:7)

- Last creative act in creation week.
- Follows God's counsel within the Trinity.
- Created directly and personally by God.

Man's Purpose: (Gen 1:26; Deut 6:4-6; Eccl 12:13-14; Mic 6:8; Matt 5:48 & 22:35-40; Eph 1:4; Rev 1:6)

- To be made in God's image and likeness.
- To rule over and care for God's creation.
- To humbly obey and honor God.

Image Characteristics: (Rom 8:29)

- Like Jesus Christ.

Process of Making Man in God's Image & Likeness: (Isa 64:8; Ezek 36:25-27; John 1:12-13; Rom 8:28-30; 2 Cor 3:18 & 5:21; Eph 1:3-5, 2:8-10; Phil 2:12-13; Col 1:13-14)

- Accomplished by God.
- All of the Trinity is involved.
- Foreknow, predestine, create, call, justify, sanctify, glorify.
- Completed in the new heaven and earth.

Man's Part in the Sanctification Process: (Luke 9:23-24; Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:22-24; Phil 2:12-13; Col 3:8-10; 1 Pet 1:14-16)

- Choose to obey.
- Trust in God's Word and God's Spirit.
- Turn from worldly pursuits, habits, and temptations.
- Turn toward godly pursuits and habits.

Complete Fulfillment of God's Purpose: (Rev 22:3-5)

- In the new heavens & earth.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER: (pick a least two)

- Memorize Gen 1:26.
- How critical is it to know who made you?
- What is the importance of knowing your maker's expectations?
- Read Phil 1:6, 2:12-13; 2 Pet 1:3-11. How do God and the believer work together in the discipling/sanctification process?
- What is the significance of purpose in life?
- In what ways does knowing God's purpose for your life impact your goals?
- How do your personal life goals support God's goal for you as a Christ follower?
- Read Gen 2:15-3:24 and Rev 4:9-11, 7:9-12, 15:1-4, 19:1-8. How does Adam and Eve's behavior toward God compare with that of angels and saints in heaven?
- Read 1 Cor 15:42-53. How do these verses provide hope, but also send a warning?

Lesson 3 – Satan the Rebel

INTRODUCTION: The first two chapters of Scripture introduce God and man, the two main characters in the Bible. They also paint a beautiful and attractive picture of a new world. The great and glorious God creates a splendidly diverse, complex, unified and fantastically fruitful universe. As a culminating act He personally creates a creature in His own image and likeness, man. Man is given the honored position of ruling over earth as God's representative. He is an apprentice of the Creator God. Two perfect people, Adam and Eve, are placed in a perfect environment that provides everything they physically need. More importantly, God Himself walks and talks with them daily, providing all the spiritual counsel they need. What could possibly go wrong? Chapter three of Genesis introduces the final major character in the biblical story, Satan. God has already explained the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. He now answers the question, "Why is there evil in the world?"

PURPOSE: To show that Satan is:

- Opposed to God, God's Word, and God's people.
- Subject to God's sovereignty.
- A master of deception, temptation, lies, trials, and every kind of evil.
- A defeated foe who spends eternity in the Lake of Fire.
- Resisted by relying on the resources God provides.

Q – What is an obstacle to fulfilling God's purpose for man?

Verse: Gen 3:1-6

Answer:

- Disobedience to God.

Q – Who promotes disobedience in the Bible? (Gen 3:1-5 plus the following)

Verses: John 12:31; Eph 2:1-2

Answer:

- Satan, the prince of this world.

Q – What are some of Satan's names?

- Ruler of this world (John 12:31, 16:11)
- Prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2)
- The god of this world (2 Cor 4:4)
- Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons (Matt 12:24; Luke 11:15)
- Old serpent (Rev 12:9)
- Dragon, great dragon, great red dragon (Rev 12:3, 12:7, 12:9)
- The evil one (John 17:15; 1 John 5:18)
- Destroyer, angel of the abyss, Abaddon, Apollyon (Rev 9:11)
- Tempter (Matt 4:3; 1 Thess 3:5)
- Accuser of our brethren (Rev 12:10)
- Deceiver (Rev 12:9, 20:3)
- The spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2)

Q – What do these names reveal about Satan?

- Satan is powerful (prince of the power of the air, god of this age, ruler of demons).
- Satan rules over the unbelieving world (the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience).
- Satan is evil (evil one, destroyer, accuser)
- Satan cannot be trusted (tempter, deceiver)

Q – What is Satan’s purpose? (Gen 3:1-5 plus the following)

Verses: Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Zech 3:1; Matt 4:1-11; Mark 4:14-19; Luke 13:16, 22:31-32; John 8:44; Acts 5:3; 2 Tim 2:24-26; Rev 2:10, 12:10

Answers:

- Satan opposes God, His word, and His people.
- Satan wants to thwart God’s plans.
- Satan wants to be worshipped as god.

Q – What is Satan’s strategy? (Above verses)

Answers:

- Satan tempts, deceives, tests, persecutes, distracts, and accuses.
- He appeals to fleshly, worldly, desires.

Q – How is Satan limited by God? (Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Luke 22:31-32 plus the following)

Verses: Rev 20:1-3; Rev 20:7

Answers:

- Satan needs God’s permission for all that he does.
- Satan is subject to God’s sovereignty.
- Satan serves God’s purposes.

Q – What is Satan’s end?

Verse: Rev 20:7-10

Answer:

- Satan will be tormented in the lake of fire forever.

Q – Why did Eve give in to temptation?

Verses: Gen 3:6; Mark 7:20-23; Jas 1:13-15, 4:1-4; 1 John 2:15-16

Answers:

- Eve was captured by fleshly heart desires.
- Eve thought she had a better plan than her creator God.
- Eve wanted to be in control.
- Eve desired created things of the world more than the Creator.
- Eve’s thoughts were focused on herself, not God.

Note: circumstances are not our problem

Q - What is spiritual warfare? (Some instances where Satan works on earth)

- Satan tempting Adam & Eve (Gen 3:1-6).
- Satan taking Job's wealth and children (Job 1:6-19).
- Satan covering Job with boils (Job 2:1-8).
- Satan tempting Jesus Christ (Matt 4:1-11).
- Satan tempting Peter to oppose God's word (Matt 16:23). (Note: by human standards Peter was compassionate, but he opposed God's word.)
- Satan bound woman for 18 years (Luke 13:16).
- Satan sifting Peter's faith (Luke 22:31-32).
- Satan tempting Ananias to lie (Acts 5:3).
- Satan disguising himself as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14).
- Satan giving Paul a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12:7).
- Satan hindering Paul's travels (1 Thess 2:18).
- Satan prowls, seeking someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8).

Answers:

- Spiritual warfare exists any time people are lured to disobey God, whether by trial or temptation.
- Believers are participants in spiritual warfare daily.
- Spiritual warfare occurs in the routine events of life.
- Note: should not be confused with mystical Hollywood portrayals.

Q – How did Jesus Christ resist Satan?

Selected Verses:

Matt 4:1-11	Jesus Christ remembered and obeyed Scripture when tempted.
Luke 22:31-32	Jesus Christ prayed to His heavenly Father.
Luke 22:42	Jesus Christ prayed to His heavenly Father & trusted in His will.
1 Pet 2:20-23	Jesus Christ trusted God when enduring trials.

Answers:

- Jesus Christ remembers and obeys Scripture.
- Jesus Christ prays often.
- Jesus Christ trusts in God the Father.

Q – How can believers resist Satan?

Verses: Gen 39:7-9, 50:18-21; Job 1:20-22, 2:9-10; **Ps 119:11**; **Dan 3:16-18**; Gal 5:16-25; **Eph 6:10-18**; Jas 4:7-8; 1 John 3:7-10

Answers: (believers can imitate Jesus Christ)

- Demonstrate trust in God, His word, and His Spirit.
- Meet trial and temptation with the resources God provides.
- Look to God for guidance in all of life, both big and little decisions.
- Be Spirit led.
- Practice truthfulness, righteousness, peacefulness, love, faith, and prayer.
- View life from God's perspective.
- Focus on God and His word, not on circumstances.

Notes:

- Satan enters Scripture in the 3rd chapter of Genesis and exits in the 3rd chapter from last in Revelation. He plays a part only until all the elect have been tested, proved, and saved.
- Everything started in the first three chapters of Genesis is completed in the last three chapters of Revelation. Creation is made perfect, man is made fully in the image of God and is serving Him faithfully, Satan is disposed, and all creation is praising, honoring, and glorifying God.

SUMMARY:

Man's Basic Problem: (Gen 3:1-6)

- Disobedience to God.

Who promotes disobedience in the Bible? (Gen 3:1-5; John 12:31; Eph 2:1-2)

- Satan, the prince of this world.

Satan:

- Names (Matt 4:3, 12:24; Luke 11:15; John 12:31, 16:11, 17:15; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:18; 1 Thess 3:5; Rev 9:11, 12:3, 7, 9-10, 20:3)
 - Abaddon, accuser of the brethren, angel of the abyss, Apollyon, Beelzebub.
 - Deceiver, destroyer, devil, dragon, evil one, god of this world, great dragon great.
 - Red dragon, old serpent, prince of demons, prince of the power of the air.
 - Ruler of this world, spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience, tempter.
- Purpose (Gen 3:1-5; Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Zech 3:1; Matt 4:1-11; Mark 4:14-19; Luke 13:16, 22:31-32; John 8:44; Acts 5:3; 2 Tim 2:24-26; Rev 2:10, 12:10)
 - Oppose God, His word, and His people.
 - Thwart all of God's plans.
 - Be worshipped as god.
- Strategy (same verses as purpose)
 - Satan tempts, deceives, tests, persecutes, distracts, and accuses.
 - He appeals to fleshly, worldly, desires.
- Limited by God (Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Luke 22:31-32; Rev 20:1-3, 7)
 - Satan needs God's permission for all that he does.
 - Satan is subject to God's sovereignty.
 - Satan serves God's purposes.

- Spends eternity in the Lake of Fire

Temptation: (Gen 3:6; Mark 7:20-23; Jas 1:13-15, 4:1-4; 1 John 2:15-16)

- Begins with heart desires
- Mankind can be captured by fleshly heart desires.
- Man is tempted to think he has a better plan than the creator God.
- Man wants to be in control.
- Men tend to desire created things of the world more than the Creator.
- Our thoughts are usually focused on ourselves rather than God and His will.

Spiritual Warfare: (Gen 3:1-6; Job 1:6-19, 2:1-8; Matt 4:1-11, 16:23; Luke 13:16, 22:31-32; Acts 5:3; 2 Cor 11:14, 12:7; 1 Thess 2:18; 1 Pet 5:8)

- Exists any time people are lured to disobey God, regardless of circumstances.
- Believers are participants in spiritual warfare daily.
- Spiritual warfare occurs in the routine events of life.
- Should not be confused with mystical Hollywood portrayals.

Spiritual Warfare Resources: (Gen 39:7-9, 50:18-21; Job 1:20-21, 2:9-10; Ps 119:11; Dan 3:16-18; Matt 4:1-11; Luke 22:31-32, 42; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 6:10-18; Jas 4:7-8; 1 Pet 2:20-23; 1 John 3:7-10)

- Demonstrate trust in God, His word, and His Spirit.
- Look to God for guidance in all of life, both big and little decisions.
- Be Spirit led.
- Practice truthfulness, righteousness, peacefulness, love, faith, and prayer.
- See life from God's perspective.
- Focus on God & His word, not circumstances.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER: (pick at least two)

- Memorize Rom 12:1-2
- Read Matt 13:36-39. In what ways does Satan mislead mankind?
- Read Jas 4:7. How can you put this verse into practice? What would it look like to resist the devil? What things do you need to submit to God?
- Read Eph 6:13-18) What are two practical steps you can take to put on God's Spiritual armor?
- How can you replace looking at circumstances with a focus on God and His word?

Lesson 4 – Testing Reveals Allegiance

INTRODUCTION: In three short but clearly-written chapters God relates epic events that answer man’s fundamental questions and explain his current condition. The glorious God creates a universe which He declares to be “very good.” Two humans, as perfect as people have ever been, are personally and directly created by God and placed in a perfect environment that easily provides all that they need. They are God’s representatives on earth and are given only one restriction. The restriction seems to be of little inconvenience and is apparently obeyed until Satan draws Eve’s attention to the restriction and questions God’s character. Satan presents Eve with a choice. Will she obey God and follow His counsel or will she follow Satan’s counsel. By following Satan’s counsel, Adam and Eve demonstrate that their allegiance is to Satan’s kingdom rather than to God’s kingdom. God then removes them from Eden and places them in a cursed creation where life is difficult and Satan is prince. Although Adam, Eve, and all their descendants are now in the kingdom of Satan, God still offers a choice and invites people to the kingdom of God.

PURPOSE: (Who will you serve? Where is your allegiance?)

- God tests each person with trials and/or temptations (therefore, expect testing).
- Testing reveals choice (Who do you serve, God or Satan?).
- Choice is shown in deeds, and judgment is based on deeds.

Q – What was the impact of Eve’s decision to follow Satan’s counsel?

Verses: Gen 3:16-19, 3:22; Rom 8:19-23; Gal 3:22; Eph 2:1-2

Answer:

- Life became harder for Adam, Eve, and all their descendants.
- All creation was cursed.
- Family conflict began.
- Mankind gained the knowledge of good and evil.
- All mankind became sinners in the kingdom of Satan.

Q – How does a teacher know if their students have learned the material?

- Testing.

Q – How do you know if a medical doctor, attorney, or engineer are competent to practice?

- Comprehensive examinations.

Q – What was the point of testing Eve? (Gen 3:1-6)

Answer:

- Eve’s test demonstrated kingdom allegiance. Who would Adam & Eve serve? Did they want to serve God or did they want to be in control?

Q – How is a believer’s faith demonstrated?

Verses: Gen 39:7-9; Job 1:20-22, 2:9-10; Dan 3:16-18; Acts 4:18-20

Answer:

- Testing (God’s people in all ages have a choice similar to Adam & Eve’s)

Q – How common is testing?

Verses: Exod 16:4, 20:20; Deut 8:2; Judg 2:20-22; 2 Chr 32:30-31; Jer 9:7, 17:10; Dan 11:33-35; Zech 13:8-9

Answer:

- Testing is universal, in all ages and in all cultures.
- God searches the heart, mind, and forces choices that produce deeds.

Q – What are the benefits of testing?

Verses: Dan 11:35; Matt 5:11-12, 7:16-20; Luke 9:23-24, 21:12-13, 21:16-19; Acts 5:40-42; Phil 1:29-30; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-9, 2:20b-21, 4:12-13, 5:8-11; Jude 24-25

Answers: (testing has the following benefits).

- Refining, purifying, and purging.
- Identifying true belief from false belief.
- Honoring God, opportunity for testimony.
- Obtaining eternal life, blessing, and joy.
- Producing endurance, proof of faith, and strength of faith.

Notes:

- Like Adam & Eve, all mankind is tested by God.
- Choice reveals allegiance.
- There are only two roads in life, allegiance to God or allegiance to Satan.

Q – How does Scripture describe the two roads in life?

Verses: Josh 24:15; Ps 1:1-6, 81:11-15; Prov 14:12; Jer 20:12; Matt 7:13-14; Rom 6:22, 8:10-14; Gal 5:16-25; Phil 2:14-15; 1 John 2:15-17

Answer:

- Narrow/wide, blessed/cursed, smooth/crooked, obedient/disobedient, spirit/flesh, slave of God/slave of sin, light/dark.

Notes:

- Adam & Eve were perfect people living in a perfect environment, yet they sinned. Circumstances are not the source of man's problems. More education, greater self-esteem, and better jobs are not the answer to man's problems. The answer is to obey God and live as He designed.
- Believers serve God and others. Unbelievers serve self.
- Deeds: show the path a person is traveling, glorify God, are the basis of judgment, were created before time by God, are produced by the Spirit, and result from using gifts given by the Spirit.
- Who do you serve (Josh 24:15)? Are you a slave of sin or of righteousness?
- There are only two kingdoms, God's and Satan's. Everyone starts in Satan's kingdom.
- Man's choice depends on his heart (Prov 4:23).

SUMMARY:

What was the impact of Eve's decision? (Gen 3:16-19, 3:22; Ro 8:19-23; Gal 3:22; Eph 2:1-2)

- A harder life for Adam, Eve, and all their descendants.
- Conflict in the family.
- All creation was cursed.
- Mankind gained the knowledge of good and evil.
- All mankind became sinners in the kingdom of Satan.

How is genuine faith in God demonstrated? (Gen 39:7-9; Job 1:20-22, 2:9-10; Dan 3:16-18; Acts 4:18-20)

- Through testing (quality control in the church)

How common is testing? (Exod 16:4, 20:20; Deut 8:2; Judg 2:20-22; 2 Chr 32:30-31; Jer 9:7, 17:10; Dan 11:33-35; Zech 13:8-9)

- Testing is universal (in all ages and in all cultures)
- God searches the heart, mind, and forces choices that produce deeds.

What are the benefits of testing? (Dan 11:35; Matt 5:11-12, 7:16-20; Luke 9:23-24, 21:12-13, 16-19; Acts 5:40-42; Phil 1:29-30; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-9, 2:20b-21, 4:12-13, 5:8-11; Jude 24-25)

- Purifying, refining, and purging.
- Identifying true belief from false belief.
- Honoring God and providing opportunity for testimony.
- Obtaining blessing, joy, and eternal life.
- Producing endurance, proof of faith, and strength in faith.

How does Scripture describe the two roads in life? (Josh 24:15; Ps 1:1-6, 81:11-15; Prov 14:12; Jer 20:12; Matt 7:13-14; Rom 6:22, 8:10-14; Gal 5:16-25; Phil 2:14-15; 1 John 2:15-17)

- Narrow/wide, blessed/cursed, smooth/crooked, obedient/disobedient.
- Spirit/flesh, slave of God/slave of sin, light/dark.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Luke 9:23-24.
- What do you listen to (radio), watch (TV), or read (books, mags, blogs)? Log your data intake for 1 week. Is it wise or foolish intake?
- Stop news for 1 week. What is the result?
- What is the focus of the 10 Commandments? What is important to God? Is this your focus?
- What did Eve emphasize in Gen 3:6? What was important to her?
- Read Proverbs chapter 9. How are the two roads in life described? Which woman is truthful?
- Read Revelation chapters 2 & 3. What does "overcoming" entail? What does God commend? What does God dislike?
- Read Gal 5:16-25. What steps can you take to be Spirit led?

- Read Gal 6:7-8. How are you sowing? What are you reaping?
- Read Ps 1. What are the choices described? What are the consequences of each choice?

Lesson 5 – Serving Illustrated

INTRODUCTION: By the end of chapter four in Genesis the biblical view of life is becoming clearer. God is the Creator of a glorious universe which was designed to reflect and honor Him. Man was created personally by God to represent God on earth, be made in the image of Jesus Christ, and rule over creation as God would rule. Satan, however, in opposition to God, is attempting to induce man to disobey. He does this through deception, temptation, trials, distraction, and apathy. Man has a choice of two roads. Obedience to God is the narrow road, and leads to eternal life. Disobedience, however, leaves man on the wide road leading to eternal destruction. There are two primary questions for disciples of Jesus Christ. What does it look like to imitate Christ, and what does it mean to rule as God would rule? Fortunately, God has shown how Christ lived and how He defines ruling. God has given His disciples everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). The answer to all the issues of life are found in God's word.

PURPOSE: (What does serving look like?)

- To illustrate godly serving (Christ is the exemplary model).
- To show how Christ defined ruling (serving).
- To identify the resources God has provided for serving (Spirit, word, church).

Q – What were Jesus Christ's primary goals when on earth?

Verses: Mark 14:36; Luke 22:41-42; John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38-40, 7:16-18, 12:46, 17:6-10, 18:37

Answers: (Jesus Christ's goals were to:)

- Do His Father's will.
- Teach what God the Father taught Him.
- Serve and glorify God the Father.
- Witness to the truth.

Q – What are the primary goals of a disciple of Christ?

Verses: Matt 7:21, 7:24, 12:50, 16:24-25, 28:18-20; Mark 3:35; Luke 9:23-24, 11:2; John 12:26, 14:15, 14:23, 15:4-5; Jas 1:22

Answers: (The primary goals of Christ followers is:)

- Do the will of God.
- Imitate and serve Jesus Christ.
- Deny self, follow Christ, and abide in Christ.
- Obey Jesus Christ's commands, and teach what Jesus taught.

Q – How does Jesus Christ define ruling?

Verses: Mark 10:35-45; John 13:3-17

Answers:

- Jesus clearly compared and contrasted the difference between ruling in the kingdom of God and secular ruling. Rulers in the kingdom of God rule by serving. The greatest is a servant and the first is a slave to the others. This does not come naturally, as shown by the desires of His disciples.
- One of the primary points that Jesus conveyed on the night prior to His crucifixion was that His disciples are to serve one another. Last thoughts prior to

dying are especially meaningful. Jesus illustrated this command by washing the disciple's feet, a lowly task in any culture. Disciples are to serve God by serving one another.

Q – What was God's expectation of Israel?

Verses: Exod 8:1, **20:3-6**; Num 18:7; Deut 10:12-13, 13:4; Josh 24:14-15; 1 Sam 12:24; **1 Chr 28:9**; Ps 72:11, **100:2**

Answers: (God expected Israel to:)

- To serve Him, love Him, and keep His commandments with joy and gladness.
- The tribe of Levi was called to serve God and the other tribes.

Q – What is God's expectation of the church?

Verses: Luke 4:8; John 12:26; Rom 7:6; **Col 3:23-24**; 1 Thess 1:9-10; **Rev 7:15**

Answer:

- Disciples of Jesus Christ are servants of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Q – What resources has Jesus Christ given His disciples for godly service?

Verses: John 14:15, **16-17**, 21, **15:4-5**, 7-8, **12**, 17, 16:7, **17:17**, 20:31

Answers:

- Jesus Christ gave His disciples the Holy Spirit.
- Sanctification comes through God's word (read, meditate, and obey).
- Believers are to love one another in the church.
- Christ followers must abide in Christ.

Note:

Christ followers have the Spirit of God, the word of God, and the people of God. These are the only resources a disciple of Christ needs. These resources have been sufficient throughout the long history of the church. Satan, however, attacks the sufficiency, and effectiveness, of all God's resources. The last three lessons will provide an overview of each resource.

SUMMARY:

What were Jesus Christ's primary goals when on earth? (Matt 14:36; Luke 22:41-42; John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38-40, 7:16-18, 12:46, 17:6-10, 18:37)

- Do God's will.
- Serve God the Father.
- Witness to the truth.

What are the primary goals of a disciple of Christ? (Matt 7:21, 7:24, 12:50, 16:24-25, 28:18-20; Mark 3:35; Luke 9:23-24, 11:2; John 12:26, 14:15, 14:23, 15:4-5; Jas 1:22)

- Do the will of God.
- Imitate and serve Jesus Christ.
- Deny self, follow Christ, and abide in Christ.
- Obey Jesus Christ's commands.

How does Jesus Christ define ruling? (Mark 10:35-45; John 13:3-17)

- Ruling in the Kingdom of God is serving.
- The greatest is a servant, the first I a slave to all.
- Disciples are to serve one another.

What was God's expectation of Israel? (Exod 8:1, 20:3-5; Num 18:7; Deut 10:12-13, 13:4; Josh 24:14-15; 1 Sam 12:24; 1 Chr 28:9; Ps 72:11, 100:2)

- To serve Him, love Him, and keep His commandments with joy and gladness.
- The tribe of Levi was called to serve God and the other tribes (like disciples).

What is God's expectation of the Church? (Luke 4:8; John 12:26; Rom 7:6; Col 3:23-24; 1 Thess 1:9-10; Rev 7:15)

- Disciples of Jesus Christ are servants of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

What resources has Jesus Christ given His disciples for godly service? (John 14:15, 14:16-17, 14:21, 15:4-5, 15:7-8, 15:12, 15:17, 16:7, 17:17, 20:31)

- Jesus Christ gave His disciples the Holy Spirit.
- Sanctification comes through God's word (read, meditate, and obey).
- Believers are to love one another in the church.
- Christ followers must abide in Christ.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Luke 9:23-24
- Read Phil 2:1-11. In what ways is this passage encouraging and motivating?
- Read Heb 11:1-29. What did these examples of faith do? Did they innovate? How do they relate to this lesson?
- Read Matt 18:4, 23:10-12. What is the relationship between humility and leadership?
- Read Isa 57:15. How does this verse relate to the lesson?
- Read Jas 4:6 & 10. What is the relationship between pride, humility, and service?
- Read 1 Pet 5:5-6. Why does God oppose pride and promote humility?
- Why does culture have a totally different definition of ruling than the Creator of the universe?
- How does knowing that Jesus Christ was a servant change your understanding of God?

- How will viewing yourself as a servant impact work, family, and church?
- What are several practical steps you can take to be a servant at work, home, and church?
- What prevents you from being a servant in all areas of life?
- Consider the following questions to identify barriers to being a servant:
 - What is your main goal in life?
 - What makes you the happiest?
 - What is the most important thing to you?
 - What do you think about regularly?
 - What is your favorite hobby or activity?

Lesson 6 – Spiritual Power for Serving

INTRODUCTION:

As clearly stated in Genesis 1:26, God's purpose for man is to make him into the image and likeness of God so he can rule over God's creation. Two questions follow from this purpose. What does the image look like, and how does God define ruling? The image is Jesus Christ Himself, while ruling is serving. All of the Trinity is involved in the process of making man in the image of Jesus Christ. Christ came to do the will of God the Father. While on earth Jesus Christ illustrated both the image and how to serve. When God the Son left the earth He sent God the Holy Spirit to lead and empower His followers. While ministering on earth, Jesus was only in one place at a time. The Holy Spirit, however, is in every believer around the world. This lesson will consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christ follower. The Holy Spirit enables Christ followers to excel as servants.

PURPOSE: (To show how the Holy Spirit empowers believers).

- The Spirit gives believers motivation and ability to serve (each has a part to play).
- The Spirit gives believers understanding of Scripture (knowledge to serve).
- The Spirit gives believers the ability to obey.

Q – What was Christ's gift to His followers after His ascension and glorification?

Verses: Luke 24:49; John 7:38-39, 14:15-17, 15:26, 16:7; Acts 1:4-5

Answer:

- Christ promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is with, and empowers, every Christ follower.

Q – What is the relationship between believers and the Holy Spirit?

Verses: Isa 44:3b; John 14:15-17; 1 Cor 6:19-20; Gal 4:6; 1 John 3:24, 4:13

Answers:

- Holy Spirit abides in, and lives in, each Christ follower.
- The Holy Spirit will be with each Christ follower forever.

Q – How important is having the Holy Spirit?

Verses: John 3:5-6, 14:15-17; Acts 8:14-17, 11:15-17, 19:1-6; Rom 8:9-11; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Jude 19

Answer: (having the Holy Spirit is a unique mark of true believers)

- All believers have the Holy Spirit.
- Unbelievers do not have the Holy Spirit. They have the spirit of the world.

Q – How does the Holy Spirit minister through believers?

Verse: John 16:13-14

Answers 1:

- The Holy Spirit helps Christ followers to believe and understand God's truth.
- The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ.

Verse: Rom 8:26

Answer 2:

- The Holy Spirit helps believers pray effectively.

Verses: Rom 5:1-5, 15:13

Answer 3:

- The Holy Spirit gives true and lasting love and hope to believers.

Verses: 2 Cor 5:5, Eph 1:13-14

Answer 4:

- The Holy Spirit is a pledge given to seal believers for eternal redemption.

Verses: Acts 8:29, 10:19-20, 13:2, 16:6-8; 2 Pet 1:20-21

Answers 5: (The Holy Spirit directed His people through time)

- The Holy Spirit moved prophets to speak the word of God.
- The Holy Spirit directed believers into certain areas and away from others.
- The Holy Spirit sent evangelists to those He had chosen for salvation.

Verses: Rom 8:13-17; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 3:2-3; Eph 4:23; 2 Thess 2:13; Titus 3:5-7

Answers 6:

- The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews Christ followers.
- The Holy Spirit helps sanctify believers.
- The Holy Spirit is instrumental in transforming believers into the image of Jesus Christ.

Verses: Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 5:18; Phil 2:12-13

Answers 7:

- The Holy Spirit helps believers obey God.
- Believers can either be led by the Spirit or led by the flesh.

Verses: Acts 20:28; Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:4-30, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Pet 4:10-11

Answers 8: (The Holy Spirit equips the church for service)

- The Holy Spirit gives shepherds to the church (pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.)
- The Holy Spirit gives gifts, or motivations, to believers.
- Gifts are given for service, protection, to build up the church, and to witness to Jesus Christ.
- A variety of gifts are needed for a healthy church.
- The church should not stress any gifts over others.

Q – How can believers offend the Holy Spirit?

Verses: Eph 4:29-30; 1 Thess 5:19

Answers:

- Believers can grieve the Holy Spirit by what they say
- Believers can quench the Holy Spirit by what they do

Q – How important is it to use your spiritual gift?

Verse: Matt 25:14-28

Answer:

- God expects His people to use the gifts He has given them for service.
- Not using gifts may be a sign of unbelief.

CONCLUSION:

The Holy Spirit is instrumental in the life of each believer and the life of the church. Unfortunately, modern Christian culture often forgets the Holy Spirit. In addition, spiritual gifts are either ignored or skewed. According to Scripture the Holy Spirit is to be followed and His gifts are to be fully used within the church. Every believer has a gift. All gifts are needed within the church. The ultimate goal of gifts, and the church, is the glory of God. Recognizing and heeding the ministry of the Holy Spirit will strengthen the church, sanctify believers, and glorify Christ.

Next we will consider another resource for serving Christ, the word of God.

SUMMMARY:

What was Christ's gift to His followers after His ascension and glorification? (Luke 24:49; John 7:38-39, 14:15-17, 15:26, 16:7; Acts 1:4-5)

- Christ promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is with, and empowers, every Christ follower.

What is the relationship between believers and the Holy Spirit? (Isa 44:3b; John 14:15-17; 1 Cor 6:19-20; Gal 4:6; 1 John 3:24, 4:13)

- The Holy Spirit abides in, and lives in, each Christ follower.
- The Holy Spirit will be with each Christ follower forever.

How important is having the Holy Spirit? (John 3:5-6, 14:15-17; Acts 8:14-17, 11:15-17, 19:1-6; Rom 8:9-11; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Jude 19)

- All believers have the Holy Spirit. Only believers have the Holy Spirit.
- Unbelievers do not have the Holy Spirit. They have the spirit of the world.

How does the Holy Spirit minister through believers?

(John 16:13-14)

- The Holy Spirit helps Christ followers to believe and understand God's truth.
- The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ.

(Rom 8:26)

- The Holy Spirit helps believers pray effectively.

(Rom 5:5, 15:13)

- The Holy Spirit gives true and lasting love and hope to believers.

(2 Cor 5:5; Eph 1:13-14)

- The Holy Spirit is a pledge given to seal believers for eternal redemption.

(Acts 8:29, 10:19-20, 13:2, 16:6-8; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

- The Holy Spirit moved prophets to speak the word of God.
- The Holy Spirit directed believers into certain areas and away from others.
- The Holy Spirit sent evangelists to those He had chosen for salvation.

(Rom 8:13-17; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 3:2-3; Eph 4:23; 2 Thess 2:13; Titus 3:5-7)

- The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews Christ followers.
- The Holy Spirit helps sanctify believers.
- The Holy Spirit is instrumental in transforming believers into the image of Jesus Christ.

(Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 5:18; Phil 2:12-13)

- The Holy Spirit helps believers obey God.
- Believers can either be led by the Spirit or led by the flesh.

(Acts 20:28; Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:4-30, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Pet 4:10-11)

- The Holy Spirit gives shepherds to the church (pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.)
- The Holy Spirit gives gifts or motivation for service to believers.
- Gifts are given for service, protection, to build up the church, and to witness to Jesus Christ.
- A variety of gifts are needed for a healthy church.
- The church should not stress any gifts over others.

How can believers offend the Holy Spirit? (Eph 4:29-30; 1 Thess 5:19)

- Believers can grieve the Holy Spirit by what they say.
- Believers can quench the Holy Spirit by what they do.

How important is it to use your spiritual gift? (Matt 25:1-11, 15-28)

- God expects His people to use the gifts He has given for service.
- Not using gifts may be a sign of unbelief.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: 1 Cor 12:7
- Read Acts 4:36-5:11. How had Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit? Can believers today do the same?
- Read Acts 19:11-17. Why were the sons of Sceva not able to do what Paul did?
- Has this lesson led you to think differently about the Holy Spirit? If so, how?
- How is the Holy Spirit leading you? How has the Spirit led you in the past?
- How has this lesson affected your confidence to serve in the church?
- In what ways has this lesson affected your desire to obey all that Christ commanded?
- Do you understand what your spiritual gift may be?
- If you are unsure about your gift, what can you do to discover it?
- How are you motivated to serve?
- How does realizing that the Holy Spirit lives within you motivate you to be an actively growing and serving disciple?
- Does understanding the ministry of the Holy Spirit help clarify some previously mystifying passages of Scripture?

Lesson 7 – Instructions for Serving

INTRODUCTION:

Five hundred years ago the reformers worked diligently to restore Scripture to its rightful place in the church. Leaders in the church (Popes, cardinals, bishops, etc.) believed their word was of equal value to Scripture. The primary battle at that time was fought over the sufficiency of Scripture, Sola Scriptura. The Bible is still under attack by those who doubt the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life. Many today, even in the church, prefer the word of man over the word of God.

The Bible is a unique book. Although written over a 1600 year time interval by over 40 different authors, it is amazingly consistent. Unlike other old books (writings of Plato, Aristotle, Homer, and Julius Caesar) thousands of old copies exist, many dating to within several decades of when the book was originally written. In addition, archaeological discoveries continue to confirm Biblical accounts of kings, nations, and battles that have long since faded from human history. Sola Scriptura is the foundation of the other four Solas. Without the Scriptures man would know nothing of Christ, God's grace, faith, or that man's purpose is to bring glory to God.

PURPOSE:

Word of God: Instructions for serving

- God's word is sufficient for life and godliness. Nothing else is needed.
- God's word, and God's Spirit, are the primary resources for making God's people into disciples of Jesus Christ.
- The word of God is truth, it directs, gives wisdom, sanctifies, protects, and it prepares God's people to serve Him well.

Q – What is God's purpose for giving man the Scriptures?

Verses: Gen 1:26; **Deut 29:29**; Ps 19:7-11; Ps 119: 11&105; John 17:17&20:31; Rom 15:4; **2 Tim 3:16-17**; Heb 1:1-2; **2 Pet 1:2-3**, 1:20-21

Answer:

Lesson one showed that the Bible is God's communication to man. It introduces God, man, and Satan. Only through God's word can man understand his environment and history. The Scriptures give purpose, hope, and direction to man. It demonstrates that man is dependent on God. The Bible is the only truth man has and it is all that is needed to lead a life pleasing to God. The Bible transforms hearts so believers can honor God by serving Him and walking in a manner worthy of His calling.

Note: Although the word is potentially available to all people, it is only effective for God's people (Matt 13:1-23; 1 Cor 2:12-16).

Q – How did God convey His word?

Verses: **Gen 1:28**, 2:18-23, 3:9-19, 4:6-7, 6:13-22; 1 Sam 10:6; 2 Chr 15:1; **Jer 1:1-2**; Ezek 1:1-3; Jonah 1:1; Matt 5:1-7:29, 10:5-42, 13:1-51; **Heb 1:1-2**; 2 Pet 1:20-21

Answer:

God conveyed His word directly, through angels and prophets, and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q – What are God's claims regarding His word?

Verses: Deut 8:3; 2 Chr 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-4, 5:13; **Ps 19:7-11**; Jer 25:8-11, 29:10-14; Dan 9:1-2; **Matt 5:18**, 24:35; **John 5:24**, 6:68, **8:31-32**, 8:51, 17:17; Acts 6:7, 12:24, 19:18-20; Rom 10:17; Gal 3:16; 2 Tim 3:15; **Heb 4:12**

Answers:

- Because the word is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, enduring, and true it restores, makes wise, rejoices, enlightens, warns, and rewards.
- The word is active and living, and able to transform human hearts.
- The word is unchangeable, true, reveals truth, eternal, and effective.

Q – What are God’s warnings regarding His word?

Verses: Deut 4:2, 12:32, 13:1-4; Prov 30:6; Matt 15:9, 22:29, 24:11; Mark 7:6-13; 2 Cor 2:17; Eph 5:6; Col 2:6-10; 2 Pet 2:1-3; Rev 22:18-19

Answers:

- Do not add to His word, subtract from His word, or listen to those who change His word.
- People who change the word do not understand either the word or the power of God.

Q – What are the results of obedience to God’s word?

Verses: Gen 22:18; Deut 28:1-14; 2 Kgs 18:17-19:37; 2 Chr 20:20-30; Ezra 7:9-10; Prov 3:5-6; Jer 29:10-11; Dan 3:28-30; Luke 11:28; John 15:5-7, 17:17; Acts 20:31-32; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; Phil 2:14-16; Col 1:9-10

Answers:

Obedience to God’s word results in blessing, growth in Christ-likeness, effective service, real hope, encouragement, as well as building up and giving eternal life.

Q – What are the consequences of disobedience to God’s word?

Verses: Lev 10:1-2; Num 20:9-12; Deut 28:15-68; Josh 7:19-26; 1 Sam 15:1-26; 2 Sam 6:6-7; 2 Kgs 17:13-23; Ezra 5:11-12; Prov 13:15, 21; Heb 12:4-13

Answers:

Disobedience to God’s word brings a curse, adversity, woes, discipline, separation from God, and ultimately death.

Q – How does God’s word impact the lives of believers?

Verses: Ezra 7:9-10; Ps 119:11, 105; Rom 8:12-15; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 2 Tim 3:14-15

Answers:

Scripture helps believers see life clearly, avoid sin, grow in wisdom and faith, obtain real purpose, overcome sinful habits, have hope, and enjoy encouragement in right living.

Q – What can hinder sanctification?

Verses: Gen 3:1-6; 1 Sam 15:10-11, 22-23; 2 Kgs 17:13-18

Answers:

- Disobedience to God’s word (Scripture). Wanting to be in charge (not a servant).
- Thinking it is possible to improve on God’s word (I have a better idea).
- Absorbing the surrounding culture (wanting to fit in).

CONCLUSION:

Scripture is man's primary connection with God. God's word answers the fundamental questions of life. Who made the universe? What is God like? What is the origin of man? What is man's purpose? Why is there evil in the world? How should man live? How does man overcome the problems of life? What is the history of the earth? What does the future hold? How does man discern between good and bad, wise and foolish? Without Scripture there would be no answers to these questions.

Without the Bible we would only have a superficial knowledge of God, and know nothing of His grace and mercy. No one knows man better than God. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Savior, and Sanctifier. Scripture is the only truth man has. God is making Christ followers into His image using God's word & God's Spirit. Man's word and the spirit of the flesh are opposed to God and His purposes. God is making disciples of Jesus Christ. Knowing and obeying God's word is essential for believers. God's word is sufficient for God's purposes because God is sufficient. Man cannot improve on God's word.

SUMMARY:

What is God's purpose for giving man the Scriptures?

(Gen 1:26; Deut 29:29; Ps 19:7-11, 119:11&105; John 17:17&20:31; Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:2-3&20-21)

- God communicates with man – He is making Christ followers in His image.
- The Bible enables man to understand the universe, God, God's plan for history, God's purpose for man, man's problem, the answer to man's problem, and resources for living in a manner that glorifies God.
- Only Christ followers can truly understand and obey God's word.

How did God convey His word?

(Gen 1:28, 2:18-23, 3:9-19, 4:6-7, 6:13-22; 1 Sam 10:6; 2 Chr 15:1; Jer 1:1-2; Ezek 1:1-3; Jonah 1:1; Matt 5:1-7:29, 10:5-42, 13:1-51; Heb 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

God conveyed His word directly, through angels and prophets, and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

What are God's claims regarding His word?

(Deut 8:3; 2 Chr 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-4, 5:13; Ps 19:7-11; Jer 25:8-11, 29:10-14; Dan 9:1-2; Matt 5:18, 24:35; John 5:24, 6:68, 8:31-32, 8:51, 17:17; Acts 6:7, 12:24, 19:18-20; Rom 10:17; Gal 3:16; 2 Tim 3:15; Heb 4:12)

- Because the word is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, enduring, and true it restores, makes wise, rejoices, enlightens, warns, and rewards.
- The word is active and living, and able to transform human hearts.
- The word is unchangeable, true, reveals truth, eternal, and effective.

What are God's warnings regarding His word?

(Deut 4:2, 12:32, 13:1-4; Prov 30:6; Matt 15:9, 22:29, 24:11; Mark 7:6-13; 2 Cor 2:17; Eph 5:6; Col 2:6-10; 2 Pet 2:1-3; Rev 22:18-19)

- Do not add to His word, subtract from His word, or listen to those who change His word.
- People who change the word do not understand either the word or the power of God.

What are the results of obedience to God's word?

(Gen 22:18; Deut 28:1-14; 2 Kgs 18:17-19:37; 2 Chr 20:20-30; Ezra 7:9-10; Prov 3:5-6; Jer 29:10-11; Dan 3:28-30; Luke 11:28; John 15:5-7, 17:17; Acts 20:31-32; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; Phil 2:14-16; Col 1:9-10)

Obedience to God's word results in blessing, growth in Christ-likeness, effective service, real hope, encouragement, as well as building up and giving eternal life.

What are the consequences of disobedience to God's word?

(Lev 10:1-2; Num 20:9-12; Deut 28:15-68; Josh 7:19-26; 1 Sam 15:1-26; 2 Sam 6:6-7; 2 Kgs 17:13-23; Ezra 5:11-12; Prov 13:15&21; Heb 12:4-13)

Disobedience to God's word brings a curse, adversity, woes, discipline, separation from God, and ultimately death.

How does God's word impact the lives of believers?

(Ezra 7:9-10; Ps 119:11&105; Rom 8:12-15; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 2 Tim 3:14-15)

Scripture helps believers see life clearly, avoid sin, grow in wisdom and faith, obtain real purpose, overcome sinful habits, have hope, and enjoy encouragement in right living.

What can hinder sanctification?

(Gen 3:1-6; 1 Sam 15:10-11&22-23; 2 Kgs 17:13-18)

- Disobedience to God's word (Scripture). Wanting to be in charge (not a servant).
- Thinking it is possible to improve on God's word (I have a better idea).
- Absorbing the surrounding culture (wanting to fit in).

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Ps 119:105
- Read Hebrews chapter 11. What did the people mentioned in this chapter have faith in? What was their view of Scripture? How did God's word influence their life?
- Read Josh 1:8 and Ps 1:1-2. What is meditation and how do you do it?
- Read Prov 3:5-6. What would it look like for you to trust and acknowledge God in all your ways?
- Read John 8:31-32. How do you continue in Jesus' word? How does the truth make you free?
- Read Jude 3. What is "the faith" and how do you contend earnestly for it?
- What is the difference between a religion and a worldview?
- How is the Bible under attack from science and social sciences?
- How is the Bible under attack from political rulers?
- Is the Bible under attack in your work or neighborhood? How would God have you respond?

Lesson 8 – Context for Serving

INTRODUCTION:

Since Pentecost, God has been accomplishing His purpose of making man in His image and likeness within the church. Believers in the church age enjoy benefits unavailable to Old Testament saints. With the close of the apostolic age the full counsel of God was completed. The Scriptures contain all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). In His word God explains all of human history, from the creation of the original heaven and earth to the glorification of the saints in the new heaven and earth. Scripture also explains how man should live, what his problem is, and how to effectively address the problem. Man has a heart problem and only God can address the heart. Whereas the Holy Spirit selectively fell on God's people for short periods of time in the Old Testament, in the New Testament the Holy Spirit resides permanently in each believer. The Holy Spirit enables Christ followers to understand, believe, remember, and obey Scripture. Christ followers are also called upon to use their God-given spiritual gifts in ministry to each other. Together, the church promotes spiritual growth of all, and glorifies God.

PURPOSE:

People of God: Context for serving

- The church is all those chosen by God from before the foundation of the world.
- Christ is head of the church, where people are trained to become like Him.
- Discipling occurs in the church through the use of Spiritual gifts.
- God's people grow through trusting God's word, and following God's Spirit.

Q – What is the church?

Verses: 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Tim 3:14-15; 1 Pet 2:4-5; Rev 1:6

Answers:

- The church is the household of God, those called and sanctified.
- The church is the pillar and support of the truth.
- The church is the body of Christ, a holy priesthood.
- All believers everywhere comprise the church.

Q – What is the mission of the church?

Verses: Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-42

Answers:

- The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Pentecost was the beginning of this mission.

Q – Who is the head of the church?

Verses: Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:17-18

Answer:

- Jesus Christ is the head of the church.
- Christ is making His followers become like Him in their thinking and behavior.

Q – How does this mission correlate with God's purpose for man?

Verses: Gen 1:26; Rom 8:29a; Matt 28:18-20

Answers:

- Disciples of Christ are baptized in the name of each of the Trinity. Let Us make man in Our image.
- God's purpose for man is to make him in the image and likeness of God.
- Disciples of Christ are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Let Us make man in Our image. They are apprentices of Christ.
- The church is the institution God created to make man in the image and likeness of God.
- As apprentices of Christ they are learning to obey God and rule as Christ ruled.
- The Great Commission is how man cooperates with God in making man in the image of God. The church is the organization where the sanctification process occurs.

Q – What are some warnings for the church?

Verses: Col 2:8-10; Jas 4:7-8; 2 Pet 2:1-3, 3:17-18; 1 John 4:1; Jude 3-4, 17-21

Answers:

- Don't be taken captive by philosophy or tradition of men. Follow Christ.
- Be on guard; don't be carried away by error.
- Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- Build yourself up in your faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, keep in the love of God, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q – How are believers commanded to relate to one another?

Verses: John 13:34-35; Rom 12:10, 15:14; Eph 4:32; Col 3:9, 3:16

Additional one another's:

1 Cor 4:6	Not arrogant against	1 Cor 12:25	Care for
Gal 5:26	Not challenging, not envying	Gal 5:15	Don't devour
Gal 6:1-2	Bear burdens	Col 3:12-13	Bear with
Eph 4:1-2	Show tolerance	1 Thess 4:18	Comfort
Eph 5:21	Be subject to	1 Thess 5:11	Encourage
Jas 5:9	Don't complain against	John 15:12	Love
Jas 5:16	Confess sins to	Rom 14:13	Don't judge
1 Pet 4:9-10	Be hospitable to, serve	Rom 14:19	Build up
1 Pet 5:5	Be humble toward	Rom 15:7	Accept

Answers:

- Believers are to love, respect, and help each other, relying on Christ and His word.
- Believers are in the same family, the kingdom of God. Behave as family.
- Practice the one another's as a witness to the world.

Q – What are the resources for accomplishing the mission of the church?

Verses: John 14:23-26, 17:17; 1 Cor 12:4-7, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16, 6:11, 6:13-18; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Titus 2:11-14; Heb 4:12, 10:24-25; 1 Pet 2:1-3

Answers:

- The word of God (teach, growth, knowledge, wisdom, protection, heart transformation)

- The Spirit of God (gifts, understanding, motivation, faith, prayer, edification)
- The people of God (encouragement, help, equipping, building up)

Q – What are Christ’s expectations for the church? (Revelation chapters 2 & 3)

Answers:

- Things that Christ likes:
 - Deeds, toil, service, and love
 - Perseverance and endurance
 - Cannot tolerate evil men, tests false teachers, hates false teaching
 - Keeps God’s word, holds fast Christ’s name, keeps faith
- Things that Christ hates:
 - Incomplete deeds and lukewarm deeds
 - Tolerates false teachers and tolerates false teaching
 - Pride, sin, spiritual deadness

Summary of counsel to the seven churches:

Pleasing Activity (discipling)

Spirit led
 Spiritually alive
 Righteous
 Discerning
 Active Love
 Humble
 Obedient

Displeasing Activity (no discipling)

Flesh led
 Spiritually dead
 Sinful
 Naïve (tolerant of evil)
 Loveless
 Proud
 Disobedient

Christ is head of the organization that is making His followers like Himself. Christ followers are His disciples, His apprentices. The Trinity works together to make disciples. Among other things, the Father foreknows, predestines, calls, justifies, and glorifies; the Son, justifies, and sanctifies; and the Holy Spirit justifies, seals, and sanctifies. Disciples are called to trust and obey. Direction for all of life comes from God, His Son and His Spirit. Christ followers are not at liberty to change anything. God is making humble, obedient, servants, who will praise, honor, and glorify Him for eternity in the new heaven and earth.

Conclusion:

The church is God’s organization for making man in His image. In accomplishing this mission, the church relies exclusively on God’s word and the Holy Spirit. Only God and His resources can make man in the image of God (Let Us make...). Man, however, must cooperate with God and trust in His resources. Christ emphasized these points in His word to the seven churches. God is jealous of His word, and His church. Salvation is God’s plan. Man cannot improve on God’s plan. Satan continually attacks God, God’s word, and God’s people. Each generation of Christ followers must affirm their trust in God and His word. As discussed in lesson four, believers are tested in situations that require difficult choices. Choice reveals belief, service, and kingdom alliance. Often God places His people in impossible situations so it will be clear that God produced the results, not man.

Key Verses to Remember: Prov 3:5-6; Eccl 12:13-14; Jude 24-25

Believers are slaves of righteousness (Ro 6:18). As slaves, they look to their Master for everything. Their Master provides all they need for life and He gives them

meaningful work. As stated above in Jude, only God can make His people stand, blameless, with great joy. SDG.

Commitment:

God established the church as the organization to accomplish His purpose of making His chosen into the image of Jesus Christ. Each Christ follower has been given a spiritual gift and has a part to play in the church. Failure to use that gift stunts personal growth and adversely affects the entire church. Each believer should joyfully take their part in the church and trust in God as they use their gift for His praise, honor, and glory.

SUMMARY:

What is the church? (1 Cor 1:2; 1 Tim 3:14-15; 1 Pet 2:4-5; Rev 1:6)

- The church is the household of God, those called and sanctified.
- The church is the pillar and support of the truth.
- The church is the body of Christ, a holy priesthood.
- All believers everywhere comprise the church.

What is the mission of the church? (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-42)

- The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Pentecost was the beginning of this mission.

Who is the head of the church? (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:17-18)

- Jesus Christ is the head of the church.
- Christ is making His followers to become like Him in their thinking and behavior.

How does this mission correlate with God's purpose for man? (Gen 1:26; Rom 8:29a; Matt 28:18-20)

- God's purpose for man is to make him in the image and likeness of God.
- Disciples of Christ are baptized in the name of each of the Trinity. Let Us make man in Our image.
- Disciples of Christ are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Let Us make man in Our image. They are apprentices of Christ.
- The church is the institution God created to make man in the image and likeness of God.
- As apprentices of Christ they are learning to obey God and rule as Christ ruled.
- The Great Commission is how man cooperates with God in making man in the image of God. Church is where the sanctification process occurs.

What are some warnings for the church? (Col 2:8-10; Jas 4:7-8; 2 Pet 2:1-3, 3:17-18; 1 John 4:1; Jude 3-4, 17-21)

- Don't be taken captive by philosophy or tradition of men. Follow Christ.
- Be on guard; don't be carried away by error.
- Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- Build yourself up in your faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, keep in the love of God, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How are believers commanded to relate to one another? (John 13:34-35, 15:12; Rom 12:10, 14:13&19, 15:7&14; 1 Cor 4:6, 12:25; Gal 5:15&26, 16:1-2; Eph 4:1-2&32, 5:21; Col 3:9, 12-13, 16; 1 Thess 4:18, 5:11; Jas 5:9&16; 1 Pet 4:9-10, 5:5)

- Believers are to love, respect, and help each other. Rely on Christ & word.
- Believers are in the same family, the kingdom of God. Behave as family.
- Practice the one another's as a witness to the world.

What are the resources for accomplishing the mission of the church? (John 14:23-26, 17:17; 1 Cor 12:4-7, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16, 6:11, 6:13-18; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Titus 2:11-14; Heb 4:12, 10:24-25; 1 Pet 2:1-3)

- The word of God (growth, knowledge, wisdom, protection, heart transform)
- The Spirit of God (gifts, understanding, motivation, faith, prayer)
- The people of God (encouragement, help, equipping, building up)

What are Christ's expectations for the church? (Rev chapters 2 & 3)

- Things that Christ likes:
 - Deeds, toil, service, and love
 - Perseverance and endurance
 - Cannot tolerate evil men, tests false teachers, hates false teaching
 - Keeps God's word, holds fast Christ's name, keeps faith
- Things that Christ hates:
 - Incomplete deeds and lukewarm deeds
 - Tolerates false teachers and tolerates false teaching
 - Pride, sin, spiritual deadness

Key Verses: Prov 3:5-6; Eccl 12:13-14; Jude 24-25

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize 1 Cor 12:7
- Read Rev chapters 2 & 3. What were they told to do in order to change? How were they able to do those things?
- How important is it for a believer to join a local church?
- Are paid staff the only people who can make a church run well?
- How well can a church function if only a few members use their spiritual gifts?
- Who suffers if believers don't use their spiritual gifts?
- How can you make better use of God's resources?
- Do you have a plan for effective Bible study?
- Are you part of a small group at church?

APPENDIX 4
BIBLICAL OVERVIEW: FOURTEEN-WEEK
LESSON PLAN

The following Appendix 4 contains fourteen lessons which present an overview of several major Bible themes. The lessons are especially designed for new believers in an effort to promote gift-based service in the church. They follow a biblical order. The student is introduced to God, man, and Satan, in that order. The first three chapters of Genesis are foundational to understanding Scripture. In three short chapters God clearly explains the origin of the universe, the creation of man, man's purpose, and why there is evil in the world. Through the rest of Scripture God is seen fulfilling His purpose of making man in His image and likeness. The remaining lessons describe man's heart problem, God's process for addressing man's problem, and the resources God has supplied to promote spiritual growth. The lessons also show God's complete fulfillment of His purpose for man in the new heavens and earth. All the Trinity works together in this endeavor.

The lessons emphasize class discussion, not lectures. They are arranged much like a catechism. A question is proposed, Bible verses related to the question are read, and class discussion follows. God works through His word as it transforms the hearts of His people. The teacher's primary task is to keep the discussion on track, biblical, and focused on heart transformation.

In an effort to encourage participation and maintain interest, a number of exercises from *The Discussion Book*, by Stephen Brookfield, and Stephen Preskill are suggested for each lesson. The first lesson uses a small group discussion format "Circle of Voices" to help the students know each other and become at ease with class

discussion. Each of the first ten lessons introduces a new discussion exercise. Following their introduction, they are suggested where they appear most useful. For example, “Hatful of Quotes” is used where numerous verses are referenced, “Stand Where You Stand” helps with controversial issues, “Newsprint Dialogue” with big issues, and “Titling the Text” with long verses. Some questions, of course, are open to the entire class, with no special exercise involved. Towards the end of the lessons, when most of the students are comfortable sharing their thoughts, open discussion should work well. As the class progresses, and both the teacher and students become familiar with the format and exercises, the discussion suggestions may be changed as appropriate.

Many verses are shown with some of the questions. The most applicable verses are in **bold**. If time becomes a constraint, then just the bold verses can be referenced. Homework assignments, Activities for Digging Deeper, include a memory verse and Bible reading, as well as several additional activities. Bible reading covers verses that will be included in the next lesson. A weekly quiz will include the memory verse and ask if the student read the Bible verses and completed at least two of the additional activities.

The 14 lessons are as follows:

- Week 1 God: The Glorious Creator.
- Week 2 God: The Sovereign Ruler and Judge.
- Week 3 Man: Created Personally by God; Given Real Purpose.
- Week 4 Satan: Names, Character, and Purpose.
- Week 5 Satan's Strategy, Tactics, and Subjection to God.
- Week 6 Testing Reveals Allegiance, and Man's Heart Problem.
- Week 7 Man: In the Image of God.
- Week 8 Ruling in the Kingdom of God is Serving.
- Week 9 The Holy Spirit: Guide and Seal.
- Week 10 The Holy Spirit: Gifts and Their Use in the Church.
- Week 11 The Bible: Transmission, and Purpose.
- Week 12 The Bible: Use, Misuse, and Impact.
- Week 13 The Church: Organization and Mission.
- Week 14 The Church: Mission, Expectations, and Warnings.

WEEK 1 – GOD: THE GLORIOUS CREATOR

Introduction: Each student has five minutes to introduce themselves.

OBJECTIVES:

- Acknowledge God as Creator of the universe.
- Identify Jesus Christ as the Creator in Genesis 1:1.
- Develop an understanding and respect for God.
- Realize the practicality and profundity of Scripture.

Note: Use the next four questions to identify students who readily comment.

Question: Who knows Genesis 1:1?

- Ask a volunteer to recite or read this verse.

Question: Why would God begin the Bible with this verse?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - God is introducing Himself to His creation, mankind.
 - God is answering a basic philosophical question, “What is the origin of the universe?”

Question: Who is the focal point of this verse?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Student response (answer should be God).

Question: What does this verse tell us about the Creator God?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - God is: preeminent, powerful, intelligent, and a communicator.

Question: Who is the most important person in the universe?

Read: Deut 8:3; 1 Chr 29:11; Ps 24:1; **Rom 11:36; Rev 4:11.**

- Student response (answer should be God).

Question: Why is God the most important person in the universe?

- Class discussion: TDB, “Circle of Voices.”
- Answer: God created all things and they were created for Him.

Question: Which person of the Trinity is credited with taking a more active role in creation?

Read: John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-17.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer: Jesus Christ.

Question: What do these verses demonstrate about the character of God?

Read: Genesis 1:1-25.

- Class discussion. Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - God is orderly, extremely creative, and has a plan.

- God is good and He defines what it means to be good.
- God is a teacher and He wishes to communicate with man.

SUMMARY:

The Bible addresses questions that have puzzled philosophers for thousands of years. For example, what is the origin of the universe? The Bible answers this question in the very first verse, and provides more detail on earth's creation in the rest of the first chapter. The Bible begins with God introducing Himself. He is the first and most important character in the Bible story. All things exist by Him and for Him. How should man relate to God?

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Gen 1:1.
- Read: Gen 1:1-31; Deut 6:1-6, 8:2-3, 10:12-21; Ps 19:1-11, 103:19-22; Eccl 12:13-14; John 1:1-13; 1 Cor 10:11-31; Col 1:9-18, 3:8-24; Rev 20:1-15.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Isa 6:1-7; Rev 1:9-18 and answer the following questions: Why were Isaiah and John frightened? Would you respond differently?
- If you remembered God as Creator would this change what you do and say?
- What steps can you take to thank and praise God for His daily care and provision?
- How do you see God working in your life? Do you need to thank and praise Him?
- Why is it important to know God's character?
- Read Exod 6:1-3, 15:1-18, 22:13-14. What do these verses say about God's character? How is this reassuring?

WEEK 2 – GOD: THE SOVEREIGN RULER AND JUDGE

OBJECTIVES:

- Recognize God’s right to rule over creation.
- Recognize God’s right to judge His creation, including man.
- Identify a proper response to the Creator God.

Note: The next four questions are quick response, open to all.

Question: Have you ever created something (invention, art, game, etc.)?

- Student responses: Let several students briefly describe what they created.

Question: Who knows the most about what you created?

- Answer: Rhetorical question – you do. You are the creator.

Question: Who has the right to determine the purpose of what you created?

- Answer: Rhetorical question – you do.

Question: Who has the right to determine the purpose of everything in the universe?

- Answer: Rhetorical question – God does.

Question: What is the purpose of everything in the universe?

Read: Ps 8:1, **19:1**, **103:19-22**; **1 Cor 10:31**; Col 3:17; Rev 4:8-11.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Circle of Voices.”
- Answer: Everything in the universe is created to glorify, praise, serve, and honor God.

Question: Who has the right to judge everything in the universe?

- Answer: Rhetorical question – God does. He is the Creator.

Question: Why is it important to remember that God is both Creator and Judge?

Read: **Job 38:1-11**; Eccl 12:13-14; Isa 45:9; Jer 18:6; Acts 17:22-34; **2 Pet 3:3-7**; **Rev 20:11-15**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - False teachers err because they forget that God is Creator and Judge.
 - God will eventually judge everyone.
 - Since God is Creator, His purpose is preeminent, not man’s.
 - Man has no right to question God. God questions man.
 - Since God is Creator, His justice prevails, not ours.
 - Since God is Creator, He is to be obeyed.

Question: What should be man's response to the Creator and Judge of the universe?

Read: Deut 6:1-5, 10:20-21, 11:26-28, 26:18-19; Ps 33; Rev 15:1-4.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Mankind should serve, praise, obey, and honor God.
 - Obedience is blessed, and disobedience is cursed.

SUMMARY:

In any endeavor it is critical to know and master the fundamentals. The Bible communicates the fundamentals of life (truth, faith and servanthood). The first several chapters of Genesis set the foundation for all that follows. God begins His word by describing the Creator and His creation. In Genesis, God is giving man a framework for life. More than anything else, man needs to know His Creator and give Him the glory and praise He deserves.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Eccl 12:13-14.
- Read: Gen 2:1-25, 3:1-24; Matt 5:1-48, 22:29-40; Rom 8:9-30; Eph 1:3-23; 1 Pet 1:6-16; 2 Pet 3:3-7.

Pick at least two of the following:

- If you remembered God as Judge would this change what you do and say?
- Read Prov 3:5-6. What does it mean to acknowledge God? What keeps you from recognizing and acknowledging God in your daily activities?
- How does the Lord's Prayer reflect God as Creator, Sovereign, and Judge (Matt 6:7-13)?
- Why does God begin the Ten Commandments with a statement about Himself (Exod 20:1-2)?
- How is God's character seen in the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:3-17)?
- In reading Scripture look for what it says about the character of God. How should this influence your life?
- Read Acts 17:22-34. Why does Paul describe God as Creator and Judge?

WEEK 3 – MAN: CREATED PERSONALLY BY GOD; GIVEN REAL PURPOSE

OBJECTIVES:

- Highlight God’s direct and personal creation of man.
- Recognize man’s God-given purpose.

Question: What was God’s last creative act in Genesis chapter one?

Read: Gen 1:26-27.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer: God created man.

Question: How does the creation of man differ from prior creative acts?

Read: Gen 2:7.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - God counsels within Himself prior to the creation of man.
 - Man is created directly and personally by God.
 - God explains man’s purpose.

Question: What is God’s purpose for man?

Read: Lev 11:44-45; Deut 6:4-6; Micah 6:8; Matt 5:48, 22:35-40; Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:14-16; Rev 1:6.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Newsprint Dialogue.”
- Possible answers:
 - To be made in God’s image and likeness (perfect, holy, blameless).
 - To rule over and care for God’s creation.
 - To humbly obey and honor God.
 - To love God and neighbor.

Question: What does the image of God look like?

Read: Rom 8:29.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer:
 - The image of God looks like Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY:

After introducing Himself in Genesis 1:1, and then briefly summarizing the creation of the universe, God introduces the second character in the Bible story, man. In one short chapter God clearly explains the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. These are the two primary questions that philosophers have pondered for thousands of years. God has given mankind all he needs to know in the Scriptures. God communicates clearly, directly, and with few words. Man did not evolve from apes, and he has a God-given purpose.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Gen 1:26.
 - Read: Job 1:6-22, 2:1-10; Matt 12:24-50; Luke 11:2-28, 22:31-42; John 8:31-51, 12:26-46, 16:7-14, 17:6-17; Acts 5:3-42; Eph 2:1-10.
- Pick at least two of the following:

- How critical is it to know who made you?
- What is the importance of knowing your maker's expectations?
- What is the significance of purpose in life?
- In what ways does knowing God's purpose for your life impact your goals?

WEEK 4 – SATAN: NAMES, CHARACTER, AND PURPOSE.

OBJECTIVES:

- To show Satan’s true character.
- To understand Satan’s purpose on earth.

Question: What is an obstacle to fulfilling God’s purpose for man?

Read: Gen 3:1-6.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Disobedience to God.
 - Listening to lies.
 - Yielding to peer pressure.

Question: Who promotes disobedience in the Bible?

Read: Gen 3:1-5; John 12:31; Eph 2:1-2.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer:
 - Satan, the prince of this world.

Question: What are some of Satan’s names?

Read: Matt 4:3, 12:24; Luke 11:15; John 12:31, 16:11, 17:15; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:18; 1 Thes 3:5; Rev 9:11, 12:3, 7, 9-10, 20:3.

- Class discussion: TDB “Hatful of Quotes.”
- Possible answers:
 - Abaddon, accuser of the brethren, angel of the abyss, Apollyon, Beelzebub.
 - Deceiver, destroyer, devil, dragon, evil one, god of this world, great dragon.
 - Red dragon, old serpent, prince of demons, prince of the power of the air.
 - Ruler of this world, spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience, tempter.

Question: What do these names reveal about Satan?

- Class discussion: TDB, “Circle of Voices.”
- Possible answers:
 - Satan is powerful (prince of the power of the air, god of this age...).
 - Satan rules over the unbelieving world (the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience).
 - Satan is evil (evil one, destroyer, and accuser).
 - Satan cannot be trusted (tempter, deceiver).

Question: What is Satan's purpose?

Read: Gen 3:1-5; **Job 1:6-12**, 2:1-7; Zech 3:1; **Matt 4:1-11**; Mark 4:14-19; Luke 13:16, **22:31-32**; **John 8:44**; Acts 5:3; 2 Tim 2:24-26; Rev 2:10, **12:10**.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Newsprint Dialogue."
- Possible answers:
 - Oppose God, His word, and His people.
 - Thwart all of God's plans.
 - Be worshipped as god.

SUMMARY:

The first two chapters of Scripture introduce God and man, the two main characters in the Bible. They also paint a beautiful and attractive picture of a new world. The great and glorious God creates a splendidly diverse, complex, unified and fantastically fruitful universe. As a culminating act He personally creates a creature in His own image and likeness, man. Man is given the honored position of ruling over earth as God's representative. He is an apprentice of the Creator God. Two perfect people, Adam and Eve, are placed in a perfect environment that provides everything they physically need. More importantly, God Himself walks and talks with them daily, providing all the spiritual counsel they need. What could possibly go wrong? Chapter three of Genesis introduces the final major character in the biblical story, Satan. God has already explained the creation of the universe and the purpose of man. He now answers the question "Why is there evil in the world?"

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Eph 2:1-2.
- Read: Mark 7:6-23; Jas 1:2-22, 4:1-8; 1 John 2:15-17.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Eph 6:13-18: What are two practical steps you can take to put on God's Spiritual armor?
- How can you replace looking at circumstances with a focus on God and His word?
- How can you identify Satan's schemes?
- In what areas are you most vulnerable to Satan's schemes?

WEEK 5 – SATAN’S STRATEGY, TACTICS, AND SUBJECTION TO GOD

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand Satan’s strategy.
- Recognize his subjection to God.
- Realize his defeat, and ultimate end.

Question: Why did Eve yield to Satan’s deception/temptation?

Read: **Gen 3:6; Mark 7:20-23; Jas 1:13-15, 4:1-4; 1 John 2:15-16**

- Class discussion: TDB, “Think-Pair-Share.”
- Possible answers:
 - Eve was captured by fleshly heart desires. Eve wanted to be in control.
 - Eve thought she had a better plan than her creator God.
 - Eve desired the created things of the world more than the Creator.
 - Eve’s thoughts were focused on herself, not on God.
 - Temptation comes from Satan, the flesh, and the world.

Question: What is Satan’s strategy?

- Class discussion: TDB, “Newsprint Dialogue.”
- Possible answers:
 - Satan appeals to fleshly, worldly, desires.
 - Satan tempts, deceives, tests, persecutes, distracts, and accuses.

Question: How does knowing Satan’s strategy benefit a believer?

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - Believers can be alerted to vulnerable situations.
 - Believers can build defenses in weak areas.
 - Believers can avoid risky paths.
 - Knowing your enemy is a great advantage.

Question: How is Satan limited by God?

Read: **Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Luke 22:31-32; Rev 20:1-3, 7.**

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Satan needs God’s permission for all that he does.
 - Satan is subject to God’s sovereignty.
 - Satan serves God’s purposes.

Question: What is Satan’s end?

Read: **Rev 20:7-10.**

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer:
 - Satan spends eternity in the Lake of Fire

SUMMARY:

Satan enters Scripture in the third chapter of Genesis and exits in the third chapter from last in Revelation. He plays a part only until all the elect have been tested, proved, and saved. Everything started in the first three chapters of Genesis is completed in the last three chapters of Revelation. Creation is made perfect, man is made fully in the image of God and is serving Him faithfully, Satan is disposed, and all creation is praising, honoring, and glorifying God. Note that two perfect people living in a perfect environment that provided all that they needed still disobeyed God. Circumstances are never man's problem, and changing circumstances is never the solution. More education, greater self-esteem, and better jobs are not the answer to man's problems. The answer is faith in God and obedience to His word. Temptation comes from Satan, the flesh, and the world.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: 1 John 2:15-16.
- Read: Exod 20:3-20; Josh 24:14-15; Jer 17:10; Matt 7:1-29; Luke 9:23-24; Gal 3:2-22, 5:15-26; Phil 2:12-16; 1 Pet 2:1-21, 4:9-13, 5:5-11; Jude 3-25.
- Read Matt 13:36-39. In what ways does Satan mislead mankind?
- Read Jas 4:7. How can you put this verse into practice? What would it look like to resist the devil? What things do you need in order to submit to God?

WEEK 6 – TESTING REVEALS ALLEGIANCE, AND MAN’S HEART PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES:

- Show that testing is a part of life.
- Recognize that testing reveals allegiance.
- Realize that allegiance is shown in deeds.

Question: How does a teacher know if their students have learned the material?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer: Testing.

Question: How do you know if a doctor, attorney, or engineer are competent to practice?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Answer: Comprehensive examinations.

Question: What was the point of testing Eve?

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Eve’s test demonstrated kingdom allegiance.
 - Who would Adam and Eve serve?
 - Did they want to be independent and in control?

Question: What was the impact of Eve’s decision to follow Satan’s counsel?

Read: **Gen 3:16-19**, 3:22; **Rom 8:19-23**; **Gal 3:22**; Eph 2:1-2.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - A harder life for Adam, Eve, and all their descendants.
 - Conflict in the family.
 - All creation was cursed.
 - Mankind gained the knowledge of good and evil.
 - All mankind became sinners in the kingdom of Satan.

Question: How is genuine faith in God demonstrated?

Read: **Gen 39:7-9**; Job 1:20-22, **2:9-10**; **Dan 3:16-18**; Acts 4:18-20

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answer:
 - Faith is demonstrated through testing (quality control in the church).

Question: How common is testing?

Read: **Exod 16:4**, 20:20; **Deut 8:2**; Jud 2:20-22; 2 Chr 32:30-31; Jer 9:7, **17:10**; Dan 11:33-35; Zech 13:8-9.

- Class discussion: TDB “Hatful of Quotes.”
- Possible answers:
 - Testing is universal (in all ages and in all cultures)
 - God searches the heart, mind, and forces choices that produce deeds.

Question: What are the benefits of testing?

Read: Dan 11:35; **Matt 5:11-12**, 7:16-20; Luke 9:23-24, 21:12-13, 16-19; **Acts 5:40-42**; Phil 1:29-30; **Jas 1:2-4**; 1 Pet 1:6-9, 2:20b-21, 4:12-13, **5:8-11**; Jude 24-25.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Snowballing.”
- Possible answers:
 - Purifying, refining, and purging.
 - Identifying true belief from false belief.
 - Honoring God and providing opportunity for testimony.
 - Obtaining blessing, joy, and eternal life.
 - Producing endurance, proof of faith, and strength in faith.

Question: How does Scripture describe the two roads in life? (Testing reveals the road).

Read: Josh 24:15; **Ps 1:1-6**, 81:11-15; Prov 14:12; Jer 20:12; **Matt 7:13-14**; Rom 6:22, 8:10-14; **Gal 5:16-25**; Phil 2:14-15; 1 John 2:15-17.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Think-Pair-Share.”
- Possible answers:
 - Narrow/wide, blessed/cursed, smooth/crooked, obedient/disobedient.
 - Spirit/flesh, slave of God/slave of sin, light/dark.

SUMMARY:

Like Adam and Eve, all mankind is tested by God. Choice reveals allegiance. There are only two roads in life, allegiance to God or allegiance to Satan. There are only two kingdoms, God’s and Satan’s. God’s kingdom is eternal, Satan’s is temporal. Everyone starts in Satan’s kingdom. Man’s choice depends on his heart (Prov 4:23).

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEPER: (Choose at least two)

- Memorize Prov 4:23.
- Read: Ezek 36:25-27; Matt 28:18-20; Rom 12:1-10; 2 Cor 3:18, 5:5-21; Eph 4:1-32; Col 1:9-10; 2 Pet 1:1-21; Rev 22:3-19.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Memorize Rom 12:1-2
- What do you listen to (radio), watch (TV), or read (books, mags, blogs)? Log your data intake for 1 week. Is it wise or foolish intake?
- Stop news for 1 week. What is the result?
- What is the focus of the Ten Commandments? What is important to God? Is this your focus?
- What did Eve emphasize in Gen 3:6? What was important to her?
- Read Proverbs chapter 9. How are the two roads in life described? Which woman is truthful?
- Read Gal 5:16-25. What steps can you take to be Spirit led?
- Read Gal 6:7-8. How are you sowing? What are you reaping?
- Read Ps 1. What are the choices described? What are the consequences of each?

WEEK 7 – MAN: IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify how God makes man in His image and likeness.
- Show how man cooperates with God in this process.
- Demonstrate the relationship between God’s purpose for man and the Great Commission.

Question: Who makes man in the image and likeness of God?

Read: Gen 1:26; Isa 64:8; John 1:12-13; **Rom 8:28-30**; 2 Cor 5:21; **Eph 1:3-5, 2:8-10**; **Phil 2:12-13**; Col 1:13-14; 2 Pet 1:1-4.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - God makes man in the image and likeness of God.
 - All the trinity is involved.

Question: How is man made in the image and likeness of God?

Read: above verses plus **Ezek 36:25-27**; **Rom 8:20-30**; **2 Cor 3:18**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Newsprint Dialogue.”
- Possible answers:
 - God foreknows, predestines, creates, calls, justifies, and glorifies.
 - God forgives, washes, and sanctifies.
 - God gives a new heart and His Spirit.

Note: God designed all of earth’s history prior to day one of creation.

Question: What does man do to grow in the image of God?

Read: **Luke 9:23-24**; **Rom 12:1-2**; **Eph 4:22-24**; Phil 2:12-13; Col 3:8-10; Jas 1:22; 1 Pet 1:14-16.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Stand Where You Stand.”
- Possible answers:
 - Believers grow in the image of God as they follow and obey Jesus Christ.
 - Obedience is a choice. God gives the ability to choose and do His will.
 - Choosing to obey God shows allegiance to His kingdom.
 - Man must intentionally obey God rather than pursue his own personal desires.
 - Believers are servants, not masters.

Question: When is man fully in the image of God?

Read: **Rev 22:3-5**.

- Class discussion:
- Answers: Open to all.
 - Man is fully in the image and likeness of God at the glorification in the new heavens and earth.
 - In the new heavens and earth the redeemed are sinless, have Christ’s name on their forehead, and are serving Him by reigning over His creation forever.

Question: How does Genesis 1:26 correlate with the Great Commission?

- Class discussion: TDB, “Think-Pair-Share.”
- Possible answer:
 - Gen 1:26 “Let Us make man in our image and likeness...”
 - Ezek 36:27 “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes...”
 - Rom 8:29 “Predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ...”
 - Matt 28:19 “Make disciples (of Jesus Christ)...teaching them to obey...”

SUMMARY:

The Creator planned all of history prior to Genesis 1:1. God is both Creator and Savior. His plan requires man’s cooperation, but God gives man the faith and the will to cooperate. Believers have the privilege of representing God, beginning in this life. The Great Commission is the process God uses to make man in His image and likeness. This process occurs in the church.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Eph 2:8-10.
- Read: Deut 13:1-4; Mark 10:5-42, John 5:24-30, 6:38-68, 7:16-39, 13:3-34, 14:15-26.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Phil 1:6, 2:12-13; 2 Pet 1:3-11. How do God and the believer work together in the discipling/sanctification process?
- In what ways does knowing God’s purpose for your life impact your goals?
- How do your personal life goals support God’s goal for you as a Christ follower?
- Read Gen 2:15-3:24 and Rev 4:9-11, 7:9-12, 15:1-4, 19:1-8. How does Adam and Eve’s behavior toward God compare with that of angels and saints in heaven?
- Read 1 Cor 15:42-53. How do these verses provide hope, but also send a warning?

WEEK 8 – RULING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS SERVING.

OBJECTIVES:

- Show how Christ defines ruling.
- Illustrate godly serving.
- Contrast serving in the kingdom of God with secular serving.

Question: What were Jesus Christ's primary goals when on earth?

Read: **Matt 14:36**; Luke 22:41-42; **John 4:34**, 5:30, 6:38-40, **7:16-18**, 12:46, 17:6-10, **18:37**.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Circle of Voices."
- Possible answers:
 - Do His Father's will.
 - Teach what God the Father taught Him.
 - Serve and glorify God the Father.
 - Witness to the truth.

Question: What are the primary goals of a disciple of Christ?

Read: **Matt 7:21**, 7:24, 12:50, 16:24-25, 28:18-20; Mark 3:35; **Luke 9:23-24**, 11:2; John 12:26, **14:15**, 14:23, **15:4-5**; Jas 1:22.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Hatful of Quotes."
- Possible answers:
 - Do the will of God. Obey His commands.
 - Imitate and serve Jesus Christ.
 - Deny self, follow Christ, and abide in Christ.
 - Obey Jesus Christ's commands.
 - Teach what Jesus taught.

Question: How does Jesus Christ define ruling?

Read: (**Mark 10:35-45**; **John 13:3-17**).

- Class discussion: TDB, "Titling the Text."
- Possible answers:
 - Ruling in the Kingdom of God is serving.
 - The greatest is a servant and the first is a slave to all.
 - Disciples are to serve one another.

Question: What was God's expectation of Israel?

Read: Exod 8:1, **20:3-6**; Num 18:7; **Deut 10:12-13**, 13:4; Josh 24:14-15; 1 Sam 12:24; **1 Chr 28:9**; Ps 72:11, **100:2**.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - To serve Him, love Him, and keep His commandments with joy and gladness.
 - The tribe of Levi was called to serve God and the other tribes (like disciples).

Question: What is God's expectation of the Church?

Read: Luke 4:8; John 12:26; Rom 7:6; Col 3:23-24; 1 Thes 1:9-10; Rev 7:15.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Snowballing."
- Possible answer:
 - Disciples of Jesus Christ are servants of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY:

Jesus Christ clearly compared and contrasted the difference between ruling in the kingdom of God and secular ruling. Rulers in the kingdom of God rule by serving. One of the primary points that Jesus conveyed on the night prior to His crucifixion was that His disciples are to serve one another. Last thoughts prior to dying are especially meaningful. Jesus illustrated this command by washing the disciple's feet, a lowly task in any culture. Disciples are to serve God by serving one another. Man naturally wishes to be in control, but believers are servants. They are God's servants.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Luke 9:23-24
- Read: Isa 44:3; Luke 24:49; John 3:5-6; Acts 1:4-5, 10:19-20, 13:2, 19:1-20; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Titus 3:5-7; 1 John 3:24.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Phil 2:1-11. In what ways is this passage encouraging and motivating?
- Read Heb 11:1-29. What did these examples of faith do? Did they innovate? How do they relate to this lesson?
- Read Matt 18:4, 23:10-12. What is the relationship between humility and leadership?
- Read Isa 57:15. How does this verse relate to the lesson?
- Read Jas 4:6 & 10. What is the relationship between pride, humility, and service?
- Read 1 Pet 5:5-6. Why does God oppose pride and promote humility?
- Why does culture have a totally different definition of ruling than the Creator of the universe?
- How does knowing that Jesus Christ was a servant change your understanding of God?
- How will viewing yourself as a servant impact work, family, and church?
- What are several practical steps you can take to be a servant at work, home, and church?
- What prevents you from being a servant in all areas of life?
- Consider the following questions to identify barriers to being a servant:
 - What is your main goal in life?
 - What makes you the happiest?
 - What is the most important thing to you?
 - What do you think about regularly?
 - What is your favorite hobby or activity?

WEEK 9 – THE HOLY SPIRIT: GUIDE AND SEAL.

OBJECTIVES:

- Show that the Holy Spirit is indispensable in the life of a believer.
- Recognize that Christ sends the Holy Spirit to live in each believer.
- Realize that the Holy Spirit enables believers to grow and serve in the kingdom of God.

Question: What was Christ's gift to His followers after His ascension and glorification?

Read: Luke 24:49; John 7:38-39, 14:15-17, 15:26, 16:7; Acts 1:4-5.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Christ promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit is with, and empowers, every Christ follower.

Question: What is the relationship between believers and the Holy Spirit?

Read: Isa 44:3b; John 14:15-17; 1 Cor 6:19-20; Gal 4:6; 1 John 3:24, 4:13.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Newsprint Dialogue."
- Possible answers:
 - The Holy Spirit abides in, and lives in, each Christ follower.
 - The Holy Spirit will be with each Christ follower forever.

Question: How important is having the Holy Spirit?

Read: John 3:5-6, 14:15-17; Acts 8:14-17, 11:15-17, 19:1-6; Rom 8:9-11; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Jude 19.

- Class discussion: TDB, "Single Word Sum-Ups."
- Possible answers:
 - All believers have the Holy Spirit. Only believers have the Holy Spirit.
 - Unbelievers do not have the Holy Spirit. They have the spirit of the world.

Question: How does the Holy Spirit minister through believers?

- Class discussion: TDB, "Hatful of Quotes" with the following verses.

Read: John 16:13-14.

- The Holy Spirit helps Christ followers to believe and understand God's truth.
- The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:26.

- The Holy Spirit helps believers pray effectively.

Rom 5:5, 15:13.

- The Holy Spirit gives true and lasting love and hope to believers.

2 Cor 5:5; Eph 1:13-14.

- The Holy Spirit is a pledge given to seal believers for eternal redemption.

Acts 8:29, 10:19-20, 13:2, 16:6-8; 2 Pet 1:20-21.

- The Holy Spirit moved prophets to speak the word of God.
- The Holy Spirit directed believers into certain areas and away from others.
- The Holy Spirit sent evangelists to those He had chosen for salvation.

Rom 8:13-17; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 3:2-3; Eph 4:23; 2 Thes 2:13; Titus 3:5-7.

- The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews Christ followers.
- The Holy Spirit helps sanctify believers.

- The Holy Spirit is instrumental in transforming believers into the image of Jesus Christ.

Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 5:18; Phil 2:12-13.

- The Holy Spirit helps believers obey God.
- Believers can either be led by the Spirit or led by the flesh.

SUMMARY:

Christ came to do the will of God the Father. While on earth Jesus Christ illustrated both the image of God, and how to serve in the kingdom of God. When God the Son left the earth He sent God the Holy Spirit to lead and empower His followers. Only Christ followers have the Holy Spirit. While ministering on earth, Jesus was only in one place at a time. The Holy Spirit, however, is in every believer around the world. The Holy Spirit gives faith, and helps believers pray. Importantly, the Holy Spirit enables believers to understand and obey Scripture. The Holy Spirit helps believers grow as servants. They are learning to do what they will do for eternity.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: John 14:15-17.
- Read: Acts 20:28-32; 1 Cor 12:4-30, 14:12; 1 Thes 5:11-19.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Has this lesson led you to think differently about the Holy Spirit? If so, how?
- How is the Holy Spirit leading you? How has the Spirit led you in the past?
- In what ways has this lesson affected your desire to obey all that Christ commanded?
- Does understanding the ministry of the Holy Spirit help clarify some previously mystifying passages of Scripture?

WEEK 10 – THE HOLY SPIRIT: GIFTS AND THEIR USE IN THE CHURCH.

OBJECTIVES:

- Show that the Holy Spirit has gifted all believers for service.
- Emphasize that all the gifts are needed in the church.
- Encourage believers to use their gifts.
- Identify some of the gifts.

Question: How has the Holy Spirit gifted believers for service?

Read: Acts 20:28; **Rom 12:4-8**; **1 Cor 12:4-30**, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16; **1 Pet 4:10-11**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Rotating Stations.”
- Possible answers:
 - The Holy Spirit gives shepherds to the church (pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.)
 - The Holy Spirit gives gifts, or motivation for service, to all believers.
 - Gifts are given for service, protection, to build up the church, and to witness to Jesus Christ.
 - A variety of gifts are found in a healthy church. All are needed.
 - The church should not stress any gifts over others, or neglect any gifts.

Question: How can believers offend the Holy Spirit?

Read: Eph 4:29-30; **1 Thes 5:19**.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Believers can grieve the Holy Spirit by what they say.
 - Believers can quench the Holy Spirit by what they do.

How important is it to use your spiritual gift?

Read: Matt 25:1-11, 15-28.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - God expects His people to use the gifts He has given for service.
 - Not using gifts may be a sign of unbelief.

SUMMARY:

The Holy Spirit is instrumental in the life of each believer, and in the life of the church. Unfortunately, modern Christian culture often forgets the Holy Spirit. In addition, spiritual gifts are either ignored or skewed. According to Scripture the Holy Spirit is to be followed and His gifts are to be fully used within the church. Every believer has a gift. All gifts are needed within the church. The ultimate goal of gifts, and the church, is the glory of God. Recognizing and heeding the ministry of the Holy Spirit will strengthen the church, sanctify believers, and glorify Christ.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: 1 Cor 12:7
 - Read: Deut 29:29; Ps 119:11 & 105; 2 Tim 3:14-17; Heb 1:1-2.
- Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Acts 4:36-5:11. How had Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit? Can believers today do the same?
- Read Acts 19:11-17. Why were the sons of Sceva not able to do what Paul did?
- How has this lesson affected your confidence to serve in the church?
- Do you understand what your spiritual gift may be?
- If you are unsure about your gift, what can you do to discover it?
- How are you motivated to serve?
- How does realizing that the Holy Spirit lives within you motivate you to be an actively growing and serving disciple?

WEEK 11 – THE BIBLE: TRANSMISSION, AND PURPOSE.

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify God’s purposes for giving believers the Bible.
- Appreciate the power of God’s word.

Question: What is God’s purpose for giving man the Bible?

Read: Gen 1:26; **Deut 29:29**; Ps 19:7-11, 119:11 & 105; John 17:17, 20:31; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; **2 Tim 3:14-17**; Heb 1:1-2; **2 Pet 1:2-3 & 20-21.**

- Class discussion: TDB, “Hatful of Quotes.”
- Possible answers:
 - The Bible is written by God for man.
 - God desires to communicate with man.
 - Only God can rightly explain creation to man. It belongs to Him.
 - Man is not independent; he is dependent on God for everything.
 - Man needs God’s counsel in order to live as God designed.
 - God simplifies life.
 - The Bible provides man with: identity, purpose, hope, and directions for life.
 - God communicates with man – He is making Christ followers in His image.
 - The Bible enables man to understand the universe, God, God’s plan for history, God’s purpose for man, man’s problem, the answer to man’s problem, and resources for living in a manner that glorifies God.
 - Only Christ followers can truly understand and obey God’s word.

Question: How did God convey His word?

Read: **Gen 1:28**, 2:18-23, 3:9-19, 4:6-7, 6:13-22; 1 Sam 10:6; 2 Chr 15:1; Jer 1:1-2; Ezek 1:1-3; Jonah 1:1; **Matt 5:1-7:29**, 10:5-42, **13:1-51**; **Heb 1:1-2**; 2 Pet 1:12-21.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Single Word Sum-Ups.”
- Possible answers:
 - God conveyed His word directly, through angels and prophets, and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Question: What are God’s claims regarding His word?

Read: Deut 8:3; 2 Chr 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-4, 5:13; **Ps 19:7-11**; Jer 25:8-11, 29:10-14; Dan 9:1-2; **Matt 5:18**, 24:35; John 5:24, 6:68, **8:31-32**, 8:51, 17:17; Acts 6:7, 12:24, 19:18-20; Rom 10:17; Gal 3:16; 2 Tim 3:15; **Heb 4:12.**

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - Because the word is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, enduring, and true it restores, makes wise, rejoices, enlightens, warns, and rewards.
 - The word is active and living, and able to transform human hearts.
 - The word is unchangeable, true, reveals truth, eternal, and effective.

SUMMARY:

The Bible is a unique book. Although written over a 1600 year time interval by over 40 different authors, it is amazingly consistent. Unlike other old books (writings of

Plato, Aristotle, Homer, and Julius Caesar) thousands of old copies exist, many dating to within several decades of when the book was originally written. In addition, archaeological discoveries continue to confirm biblical accounts of kings, nations, and battles that have long since faded from human history. Sola Scriptura is the foundation of the other four Sola's. Without the Scriptures man would know nothing of Christ, God's grace, faith, or that man's purpose is to bring glory to God.

An earlier lesson showed that the Bible is God's communication to man. It introduces God, man, and Satan. Only through God's word can man understand his environment and history. The Scriptures give purpose, hope, and direction to man. It demonstrates that man is dependent on God. The Bible is the only truth man has and it is all that is needed to lead a life pleasing to God. The Bible transforms hearts so believers can honor God by serving Him and walking in a manner worthy of His calling.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Heb 1:1-2.
- Read: Prov 3:5-6; Col 2:6-10; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 2:1-3.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Read Hebrews chapter 11. What did the people mentioned in this chapter have faith in? What was their view of Scripture? How did God's word influence their life?
- Read John 8:31-32. How do you continue in Jesus' word? How does the truth make you free?
- What is the difference between a religion and a worldview?

Notes:

- In any endeavor it is critical to know and master the fundamentals.
- The Bible communicates the fundamentals of life (truth, faith & servanthood).

WEEK 12 – THE BIBLE: USE, MISUSE, AND IMPACT.

OBJECTIVES:

- Show that God’s word is sufficient for life and godliness.
- Demonstrate that God’s word, and God’s Spirit, are the primary resources for making God’s people into disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Acknowledge that the word of God is truth, it directs, gives wisdom, sanctifies, protects, and it prepares God’s people to serve Him well.

Question: How does God’s word impact the lives of believers?

Read: Ezra 7:9-10; **Ps 119:11&105**; Rom 8:12-15; 1 Cor 6:9-11; **2 Tim 3:14-15**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Newsprint Dialogue.”
- Possible answers:
 - Scripture helps believers see life clearly, avoid sin, grow in wisdom and faith, obtain real purpose, overcome sinful habits, have hope, and enjoy encouragement in right living.

Question: What are the results of obedience to God’s word?

Read: Gen 22:18; Deut 28:1-14; **2 Kgs 18:17-19:37**; 2 Chr 20:20-30; **Ezra 7:9-10**; **Prov 3:5-6**; Jer 29:10-11; Dan 3:28-30; Luke 11:28; John 15:5-7, 17:17; **Acts 20:31-32**; **Rom 15:4**; 1 Cor 10:11; Phil 2:14-16; Col 1:9-10.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Think-Pair-Share.”
- Possible answers:
 - Obedience to God’s word results in blessing, growth in Christ-likeness, effective service, real hope, encouragement, as well as building up and giving eternal life.

Question: What are the consequences of disobedience to God’s word?

Read: **Lev 10:1-2**; Num 20:9-12; **Dt 28:15-68**; Josh 7:19-26; 1 Sam 15:1-26; 2 Sam 6:6-7; 2 Kgs 17:13-23; **Ezra 5:11-12**; Prov 13:15&21; Heb 12:4-13.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Disobedience to God’s word brings a curse, adversity, woes, discipline, separation from God, and ultimately death.

Question: What are God’s warnings regarding His word?

Read: **Deut 4:2**, 12:32, 13:1-4; Prov 30:6; **Matt 15:9, 22:29**, 24:11; Mark 7:6-13; 2 Cor 2:17; Eph 5:6; Col 2:6-10; 2 Pet 2:1-3; **Rev 22:18-19**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Hatful of Quotes” with above verses.
- Possible answers:
 - Do not add to His word, subtract from His word, or listen to those who change His word.
 - People who change the word do not understand either the word or the power of God.

Question: What can hinder sanctification?

Read: **Gen 3:1-6**; 1 Sam 15:10-11&22-23; **2 Kgs 17:13-18**.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Disobedience to God’s word (Scripture).

- Wanting to be in charge (not a servant).
- Thinking it is possible to improve on God's word (I have a better idea).
- Absorbing the surrounding culture (wanting to fit in).

SUMMARY:

Five hundred years ago the reformers worked diligently to restore Scripture to its rightful place in the church. Leaders in the church (Popes, cardinals, bishops, etc.) believed their word was of equal value to Scripture. The primary battle at that time was fought over the sufficiency of Scripture, Sola Scriptura. The Bible is still under attack by those who doubt the sufficiency of Scripture for the issues of life. Many today, even in the church, prefer the word of man over the word of God.

Scripture is man's primary connection with God. God's word answers the fundamental questions of life. Who made the universe? What is God like? What is the origin of man? What is man's purpose? Why is there evil in the world? How should man live? How does man overcome the problems of life? What is the history of the earth? What does the future hold? How does man discern between good and evil, wise and foolish? Without Scripture there would be no answers to these questions.

Without the Bible we would only have a superficial knowledge of God, and know nothing of His grace and mercy. No one knows man better than God. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Savior, and Sanctifier. Scripture is the only truth man has. God is making Christ followers into His image using God's word and God's Spirit. Man's word and the spirit of the flesh are opposed to God and His purposes. God is making disciples of Jesus Christ. Knowing and obeying God's word is essential for believers. God's word is sufficient for God's purposes because God is sufficient. Man cannot improve on God's word.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: 2 Tim 3:16-17
- Read: Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Tim 3:14-15; Rev 1:6.

Pick at least two of the following:

- Memorize Ps 119:105
- Read Josh 1:8 and Ps 1:1-2. What is meditation and how do you do it?
- Read Jude 3. What is "the faith" and how do you contend earnestly for it?
- How is the Bible under attack from science and social sciences?
- How is the Bible under attack from political rulers?
- Is the Bible under attack in your work or neighborhood? How would God have you respond?

WEEK 13 – THE CHURCH: ORGANIZATION AND MISSION.

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the mission of the church.
- Show the organization of the church.

Question: What is the church?

Read: 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Tim 3:14-15; 1 Pet 2:4-5; Rev 1:6.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Circle of Voices.”
- Possible answers:
 - The church is the household of God, those called and sanctified.
 - The church is the pillar and support of the truth.
 - The church is the body of Christ, a holy priesthood.
 - All believers everywhere comprise the church.
- Note: The plural of Christian is “church.”

Question: What is the mission of the church?

Read: Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-42.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Snowballing.”
- Possible answers:
 - The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
 - Pentecost was the beginning of this mission.

Question: Who is the head of the church?

Read: Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:17-18.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - Jesus Christ is the head of the church.
 - Christ is making His followers to become like Him in their thinking and behavior.

SUMMARY:

Since Pentecost, God has been accomplishing His purpose of making man in His image and likeness within the church. Believers in the church age enjoy benefits unavailable to Old Testament saints. With the close of the apostolic age the full counsel of God was completed. The Scriptures contain all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Pe 1:3). In His word God explains all of human history, from the creation of the original heaven and earth to the glorification of the saints in the new heaven and earth. Scripture also explains how man should live, what his problem is, and how to effectively address the problem. Man has a heart problem and only God can address the heart. Whereas the Holy Spirit selectively fell on God’s people for short periods of time in the Old Testament, in the New Testament the Holy Spirit resides permanently in each believer. The Holy Spirit enables Christ followers to understand, believe, remember, and obey Scripture. Christ followers are also called upon to use their God-given spiritual gifts in ministry to each other. Together, the church promotes spiritual growth of all, and glorifies God. The plural of “Christian” is “the church.”

Christ is head of the organization that is making His followers like Himself. Christ followers are His disciples, His apprentices. The Trinity works together to make disciples. Among other things, the Father foreknows, predestines, calls, justifies, and glorifies; the Son, justifies, and sanctifies; and the Holy Spirit justifies, seals, and sanctifies. Disciples are called to trust and obey. Direction for all of life comes from God, His Son, and His Spirit. Christ followers are not at liberty to change anything. God

is making humble, obedient, servants, who will praise, honor, and glorify Him for eternity in the new heaven and earth.

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize Matt 28:18-20.
- Read: 1 Cor 4:6; Gal 6:1-2; Eph 6:11-18; 1 Thes 4:18; Titus 2:11-14; Heb 10:24-25; Jas 5:9-16; 2 Pet 3:3-18.
- How important is it for a believer to join a local church?
- Are paid staff the only people who can make a church run well?

WEEK 14 – THE CHURCH: MISSION, EXPECTATIONS, AND WARNINGS.

OBJECTIVES:

- The church is all those chosen by God from before the foundation of the world.
- Discipling occurs in the church through the use of spiritual gifts.
- God’s people grow through trusting God’s word, and following God’s Spirit.

Question: How are believers commanded to relate to one another?

Read: **John 13:34-35**, 15:12; **Rom** 12:10, 14:13&19, **15:7&14**; 1 Cor 4:6, 12:25; Gal 5:15&26, 6:1-2; Eph 4:1-2&32, 5:21; **Col 3:9**, 12-13, **16**; 1 Thes 4:18, 5:11; Jas 5:9&16; 1 Pet 4:9-10, 5:5.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Hatful of Quotes” with the above verses.
- Possible answers:
 - Believers are to love and help each other, relying on Christ and His word.
 - Believers are in the same family, the kingdom of God. Behave as a family.
 - Practice the one another’s as a witness to the world.

Question: What are some warnings for the church?

Read: **Col 2:8-10**; Jas 4:7-8; **2 Pet 2:1-3, 3:17-18**; 1 John 4:1; **Jude 3-4, 17-21**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Quick Writes.”
- Possible answers:
 - Don’t be taken captive by philosophy or tradition of men. Follow Christ.
 - Be on guard; don’t be carried away by error.
 - Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 - Build yourself up in your faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, keep in the love of God, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Question: What are Christ’s expectations for the church?

Read: **Rev chapters 2 & 3**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Titling the Text.”
- Possible answers:
 - Things that Christ likes:
 - Deeds, toil, service, and love
 - Perseverance and endurance
 - Cannot tolerate evil men, tests false teachers, hates false teaching
 - Keeps God’s word, holds fast Christ’s name, keeps faith
 - Things that Christ hates:
 - Incomplete deeds and lukewarm deeds
 - Tolerates false teachers and tolerates false teaching
 - Pride, sin, spiritual deadness

Question: How does this mission correlate with God’s purpose for man?

Read: **Gen 1:26**; **Matt 28:18-20**; **Rom 8:29a**.

- Class discussion: TDB, “Rotating Stations.”
- Possible answers:
 - Disciples of Christ are baptized in the name of each of the Trinity. Let Us make man in Our image.
 - God’s purpose for man is to make him in the image and likeness of God.

- Disciples of Christ are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Let Us make man in Our image. They are apprentices of Christ.
- The church is the institution God created to make man in the image and likeness of God.
- As apprentices of Christ they are learning to obey God and rule as Christ ruled.
- The Great Commission is how man cooperates with God in making man in the image of God. Church is where the sanctification process occurs.

Question: What are the resources for accomplishing the mission of the church?

Read: John 14:23-26, 17:17; 1 Cor 12:4-7, 14:12; Eph 4:11-16, 6:11, 6:13-18; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Titus 2:11-14; Heb 4:12, 10:24-25; 1 Pet 2:1-3.

- Class discussion: Open to all.
- Possible answers:
 - The word of God (growth, knowledge, wisdom, protection, heart transform)
 - The Spirit of God (gifts, understanding, motivation, faith, prayer)
 - The people of God (encouragement, help, equipping, building up)

Key Verses: Prov 3:5-6; Eccl 12:13-14; Jude 24-25

SUMMARY:

The church is God's organization for making man in His image. In accomplishing this mission, the church relies exclusively on God's word and the Holy Spirit. Only God and His resources can make man in the image of God (Let Us make...). Man, however, must cooperate with God and trust in His resources. Christ emphasized these points in His word to the seven churches. God is jealous of His word and His church. Salvation is God's plan. Man cannot improve on God's plan. Satan continually attacks God, God's word, and God's people. Each generation of Christ followers must affirm their trust in God and His word. As discussed previously, believers are tested in situations that require difficult choices. Choice reveals belief, service, and kingdom alliance. God often places His people in impossible situations so it will be clear that God produced the results, not man.

Note: End with TDB, "Appreciating Pause."

ACTIVITIES FOR DIGGING DEEPER:

- Memorize: Titus 2:11-14.
- Pick at least two of the following:
- Read Rev chapters 2 & 3. What were they told to do in order to change? How were they able to do those things?
 - How well can a church function if only a few members use their spiritual gifts?
 - Who suffers if believers don't use their spiritual gifts?
 - How can you make better use of God's resources?
 - Do you have a plan for effective Bible study?
 - Are you part of a small group at church?

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ABSTRACT

MOTIVATING GIFT-BASED SERVICE AT GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA

Rodney James Martin, D.Ed.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Stuart W. Scott

The purpose of this project is to motivate gift-based service in the church.

Chapter 1 identifies a problem in the church, a small percentage of regular attenders who are actively serving in the church. In addition, not all of those serving are using their God-given spiritual gift. The proposed solution to the problem is to teach God's purpose for man, a believer's identity in Christ, the purpose of the church, and the giftedness of each believer in the church.

Chapter 2 provides a biblical framework for addressing the problem, teach God's purpose for man. God's chosen are to be made in the image and likeness of Jesus Christ so they can serve Him forever in the new heaven and earth. Service involves the active use of each believer's spiritual gift.

Chapter 3 explains the difference between godly motivation and fleshly motivation. Satan motivates with fleshly, self-centered, desires. By contrast, God motivates through His Word and His Spirit to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4 describes the philosophy and methodology for developing eight lessons intended to motivate Christ-followers to gift-based service in the church. The lessons start where God does in Genesis chapter one and introduce God, man, Satan, and temptation in that order. God allows Satan to test mankind in order to demonstrate their allegiance. God's resources for believers are then introduced: the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God.

Chapter 5 evaluates the effectiveness of the eight lessons. Although they were deemed successful, the eight original lessons were modified to fourteen shorter lessons and the flow was changed slightly. Parts of the lessons were then taught to an ABF and a men's Bible study, both to good effect. Only God can motivate His people to gift-based service. God is a teacher, and the Bible is His textbook.

VITA

Rodney James Martin

EDUCATIONAL

P.E., Colorado School of Mines, 1967
M.S., California State University, 1998
M.A., The Master's College, 2013

ACADEMIC

Adjunct Faculty, Seminario de las Americas, Los Angeles, California, 1991
Adjunct Faculty, The Master's College, Santa Clarita, California, 1995-1997

ORGANIZATIONAL

Association of Certified Biblical Counselors

PUBLICATIONS

"A Proposed Biblical Perspective on Global Warming." *Answers Research Journal* 3 (2010): 91-106.