



Know What You Believe

for

The Glory of God

(STUDENT EDITION)



**"We don't think anyone can make you believe anything;
however, we do want you to know what Christianity is and what Christians believe.
After that the choice is up to you."**

Calvary Chapel of Southeastern CT
130 Sharp Hill Rd
Montville, CT 063820

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON	PAGE	TOPIC	DATE
Introduction	4	Why the “Know Series”	
Directory	9	CLASS STUDENT DIRECTORY	
1	11	Christians Believe in the Bible Part 1	
2	13	Article: “The Bible: The Word and Voice of God”	
3	19	Christians Believe in the Bible Part 2	
4	22	Christians Believe in the Bible Part 3	
5	26	Christians Believe in God the Father	
6	28	Christians Believe in Jesus the Son	
7	30	Christians Believe in God the Holy Spirit	
8	32	Christians Believe in the Trinity / The One True God	
9	36	Attributes of God (What is God Like?)	
10	38	More Attributes of God Part 2 (What is God Like?)	
11	40	Christians Believe God Created People Upright (But Something Happened)	
12	43	Thanksgiving Study	
13	44	Christians Believe in Sin and Forgiveness	
14	46	Christians Believe You Can Know You are Saved	
15	48	Christmas Study	
16	49	Christians Believe That You Must Be Born-Again Part 1	
17	53	Christians Believe That You Must Be Born-Again Part 2	
18	56	Christians Believe in Sharing Their Faith	

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

LESSON	PAGE	TOPIC	DATE
19	58	Christians Believe Satan is Real, But NOT the Opposite of God	
20	61	Christians Believe in Moral Purity Part 1	
21	62	Christians Believe in Moral Purity Part 2	
22	63	Christians Believe in the Future Part 1	
23	66	Christians Believe in the Future Part 2	
24	68	Christians Believe in Prayer Part 1	
25	70	Christians Believe in Prayer Part 2	
26	73	Christians Believe in Prayer Part 3	
27	76	Christians Believe in Having a Devoted Life	
28	78	Christians Believe in Putting Jesus First	
29	80	Christians Believe in the Resurrection	
30	86	Christians Believe in Fellowship	
31	88	The "One Anothers"	
32	90	Christians Believe in the Church	
33	93	Article: First Step In Walking with the Lord	
34	96	Christians Believe in Servicing and Giving	
35	98	Christians Believe in Having the Right Attitude	
36	101	Christians Believe that God Owns Everything	
37	103	Christians Believe in Water Baptism	

WHY THE “KNOW SERIES”

Christians, particularly young Christians know little, if anything of the scriptures in an age of information where the resources of the libraries of history are a click away. Surveys show us while Americans tend to revere the Bible, many, if not most are unfamiliar with what it teaches.

In a guest article to “The Christian Post” Richard Ross Professor of Student Ministry and J.M. Price Chair of Religious Education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary says the following:

Youth ministry researcher Chap Clark says, “I’m convinced that the single most important area where we’ve lost ground with kids is in our commitment and ability to ground them in God’s Word.”

As a result, Barry Shafer says, “The church today, including both the adult and teenage generations, is in an era of rampant biblical illiteracy.”

Duffy Robbins takes this one step further when he says: “Our young people have become incapable of theological thinking because they don’t have any theology to think about. ... And, as Paul warns us, this ... leaves us as ‘infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching’ (Ephesians 4:14).”

At the conclusion of the National Study of Youth and Religion, lead researcher Christian Smith reported: “Even though most teens are very positive about religion and say it’s a good thing, the vast majority are incredibly inarticulate about religion. ... It doesn’t seem to us that many teens are being very well-educated in their faith traditions.”

Duffy Robbins considers possible causes when he says: “The church in general, and youth ministry in particular, has demonstrated more of an appetite for goose bumps than for God’s truth, more interest in how our young people feel than how they think. ... But where are Christian teenagers learning basic tenets of the Christian faith? And if they don’t understand those basic truths or doctrines ... then how does that impact their long-term faith? I’m concerned that too much of our teaching is reduced to what can ... be communicated by a worship band illuminated by stage lighting and well-placed candles.”

Dr. David Reagan, in his “Lamb and Lion” blog wrote: “At Lamb & Lion Ministries we begin each day with a devotional. One staff member reads from the Bible, another reads from a devotional book, and then all the staff members join together in prayer, praying for each other and for the prayer requests we have received by mail, telephone and email. The devotional book

we use is *Our Daily Bread*, which is published by RBC Ministries in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The devotional for October 18, 1991 began with this story:

A pastor asked a class of Sunday School children, "Who broke down the wall of Jericho?" A boy answered, "Not me, sir!" Upset, the pastor asked the teacher, "Is this typical?" She replied, "I believe this boy is honest, and I really don't think he did it." The pastor went to the head deacon. "I've known the boy and the teacher for years," said the deacon, "and neither of them would do such a thing." Aghast, the pastor went to the Christian Education Board. "Pastor," said the chairman, "let's not make an issue of this. Let's just pay for the damage and charge it to the upkeep."

This humorous story, which 20 years ago would have been considered ludicrous, has become a reality in the modern day church. Biblical knowledge among professing Christians has become abysmal."

He cites a now famous and often quoted article from Christianity Today concerning how incoming freshman students entering Wheaton College filled out a survey and year by year continued to be less and less Biblically literate despite growing technologies and the rise of mega-churches. The questions on the test were:

- 1) Which one of these books is not in the Bible?
a. Isaiah; b. Jude; c. Hezekiah; d. Amos; e. Song of Solomon
- 2) Who was Israel's first king?
a. Saul; b. Solomon; c. David; d. Samuel; e. Moses
- 3) Sarah and Abraham had a son in their old age and named him "laughter." What was his real name?
a. Samuel; b. Moses; c. Isaac; d. Jacob; e. Ishmael
- 4) Which of the following is not an Old Testament prophet?
a. Elisha; b. Elijah; c. Aaron; d. Isaiah; e. Joel
- 5) Place these events in their biblical order:
a. the giving of the law at Mount Sinai; b. Creation; c. the Fall; d. the Exodus led by Moses; e. the flood of Noah
- 6) Place the following characters in their biblical order:
a. Moses; b. Adam; c. David; d. Solomon; e. Abraham
- 7) Which of the following books is from the New Testament?
a. Judges; b. Malachi; c. Deuteronomy; d. Hebrews; e. Isaiah
- 8) Who wrote Philemon?
a. Philemon; b. Paul; c. Peter; d. Onesimus; e. John

- 9) Which one of the following was among Jesus' 12 apostles?
a. Paul; b. Matthew; c. Luke; d. Timothy; e. Silas
- 10) Whom did Pontius Pilate release during Jesus' trial?
a. Barnabas b. Peter, c. Silas; d Barabbas; e. Paul
- 11) How many temptations did Jesus face in the wilderness?
a. one; b. two; c. three; d. four; e. five
- 12) Place the following events in their biblical order:
a. The Holy Spirit descends on Pentecost; b. John has a vision on Patmos; c. Jesus is baptized in the Jordan River; d. Paul, Barnabas and Mark are sent out on a mission by the church; e. Peter denies that he knows Jesus
- 13) Place the following events in their biblical order:
a. Paul's arrest in Jerusalem; b. Mary's song; c. Nicodemus' conversation about rebirth; d. Peter's denial of Jesus
- 14) Where would you find the Ten Commandments?
a. Isaiah; b. Exodus; c. Genesis; d. Numbers; e. Matthew
- 15) Where would you find the first Passover?
a. Genesis; b. Numbers; c. 1 Samuel; d. Exodus; e. 2 Kings
- 16) Where would you find "Create in me a clean heart, O God"?
a. Proverbs; b. Ezekiel; c. Psalms; d. Deuteronomy; e. Luke
- 17) Where would you find the Lord's Prayer?
a. Matthew; b. Acts; c. Ephesians; d. Malachi; e. Isaiah
- 18) Where would you find "in the beginning was the Word"?
a. Acts; b. Isaiah; c. John; d. Leviticus; e. Romans
- 19) Elizabeth and Zechariah were the parents of:
a. Jesus; b. Samuel; c. Paul; d. Timothy; e. John the Baptist
- 20) Jesus was crucified during:
a. Passover; b. Hannukah; c. Tabernacles; d. Sabbath; e. Purim

Answers:

1. c; 2. a; 3. c; 4. c; 5. b, c, e, d, a; 6. b, e, a, c, d; 7. d; 8. b; 9. b; 10. d; 11. c; 12. c, e, a, d, b;
13. b, c, d, a; 14. b; 15. d; 16. c; 17. a; 18. c, 19. e; 20. A

The sad part is that you reading this, as a youth leader, church leader, volunteer or church staff person, may have had trouble answering the questions yourself. Why? Because our churches have failed to teach us the Bible. In our church we are fond of saying, “It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian.” And in the context of the Bible accounts, what Christians actually believe is sometimes lost, especially in our Sunday School presentations of Bible heroes.

The basic tenants of the Christian faith have been lost among the activities of Children’s Bible Clubs, videos, youth group car washes and fundraisers, all night lock-ins, ski trips, youth band practice and contemporary topical teachings, most of which tell us to stay away from bad things. Morality has replaced theology, activity has replaced accountability, and relevance has replaced relationships. Don’t hear any of that the wrong way! These are not bad things. The church I am from practices all of these. And more! Yet there remains amazing Biblical illiteracy and a disconnect from real living faith.

Although we are involved in all of these things you might expect from an active church, including teaching line by through the entire Bible, in our church services, Sunday School and Youth Gatherings, we discovered there was a huge gap in understanding what Christians actually believe historically, and even how one actually becomes a Christian.

Surveys are showing that Christian students entering their first year of college know less about the Christian faith than in previous decades. Including Christian students!

Throughout the history of the church many movements have informed their children, youth and converts through classes, requirements and catechisms. Increasingly over the last one hundred years in the church, the responsibility of teaching doctrine and basics of the faith has been relinquished by families and given to the church. The church in turn has been relinquishing her responsibility and in many cases having little or no system to teach the fundamentals of the faith to new believers or families. The result has been disastrous!

Charles Spurgeon had a catechism he wrote to assist families in learning the basics of the Christian faith.

I am persuaded that the use of a good Catechism in all our families will be a great safeguard against the increasing errors of the times, and therefore I have compiled this little manual from the Westminster Assembly's and Baptist Catechisms, for the use of my own church and congregation. Those who use it in their families or classes must labor to explain the sense; but the words should be carefully learned by heart, for they will be understood better as years pass. May the Lord bless my dear friends and their families evermore, is the prayer of their loving Pastor. C. H. Spurgeon

The “Know Series” similar to Spurgeon’s observations grew out of this recognized need in a three-year curriculum following the school calendar. It is perfect for Sunday School classes for 7-9th grade, high school students and even college and young adult classes. Although the curriculum could be used in an adult class, it is designed with teen and high school students in

mind. The format is simple to understand and use, modern in its references and applications, and vital to the future of vibrant Christianity in emerging generations.

Many Christian traditions, but few in the Evangelical/ Pentecostal traditions, have what is known as “confirmation.” Confirmation was / is a rite of passage where a child turns into an adult, or young adult, and affirms, or confirms the faith of their upbringing. Often the student goes through a year-long, or longer study of the scriptures and of their particular church tradition. Having learned the scriptures, doctrines, traditions and practices of the church, they are asked if they are affirming their faith to be their own. Unfortunately, even this process is no guarantee that one actually embraces the faith, as much of this can become a tradition in and of itself. It does however provide a basis of understanding for future generations.

THE TWO YEAR “KNOW SERIES”

The “Know Series” is not intended to take the place of regular worship, or to usurp activities integral to a church’s calendar or practice, but is designed to be a “once in a lifetime” exploration of what Christians believe, whether it is reasonable to believe these things and how to live them out in a post-modern and post-Christian society.

YEAR ONE: “Know What You Believe” covers all area of core Christian belief, including several sessions Bible as the Word of God, the structure of the Bible, Jesus, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, Prayer, Conversion, The Attributes of God, The Resurrection, Discipleship, The Church, special seasonal lessons on origin of Thanksgiving, origins of Christmas, Easter, Mothers Day, Serving, Giving, and Attitudes.

YEAR TWO: “Know Why You Believe” includes sessions on “Does God Exist?” “What is God Like?” “What the Bible Says About Itself” “The Impact of the Bible on World Cultures” “Does the Bible Contradict Itself?” “Jesus in History” “Prophecies: History in Advance” “Science and the Bible?” “Jesus the Only Way?” “The Problem of Evil” “World and Cults” “Comparative Salvation” “Stewardship” as well as exploring national and religious holidays during the school year calendar.

LESSON 1: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THE BIBLE

PART 1

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings and events.

(I) DEFINITION

(A) The Bible is God's _____ of Himself to man, His creation. The Bible forms one _____; the story of humanity in relation to God. From the beginning to the end, the Bible has one great theme; the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

(B) The word Bible is taken from the Greek word 'biblos' simply meaning _____. It is '*the*' book; there is no other book like it as we shall see. It is the revelation of God and the words and voice of God Himself!

(II) READ HEBREWS 1:1-3

(A) In these verses we see that God's Word is a progressive revelation.

(B) Various (or Sundry) Times

(C) Diverse manners (many ways)

(D) Times past

(E) Unto the fathers by the prophets

(F) In these last days

(G) Unto us by/in/His Son (The express image of His person).

(III) READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:16,17

(A) What portion of scripture is inspired by God?

(B) The work "inspired" in this verse means "God Breathed." It's as if God spoke it himself. (See Genesis 2:7)

(C) What is God's Word profitable for?

(IV) CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORD OF GOD

(A) The Word of God is _____
"1 Peter 1:23, 25"

(B) The Word is _____
"Hebrews 4:12"

(C) The Word is _____
"Luke 21:33"

(D) The Word is _____
"Romans 1:16"

(V) HOW CAN I KNOW THE BIBLE IS WITHOUT ERROR?

(A) 2 Peter 1:20-21 assures us that God's Word is _____ and _____.

(B) There are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament fulfilled during the life and ministry of Jesus. If we analyze the probability of one person fulfilling just eight, the probability would be 1 in 10 with 17 zeros after it! We can understand why Peter declares that the written word of prophecy is more sure.

(C) 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that all Scripture finds its origin in God.

(D) Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie.

(E) What does this say about the reliability of God's Word?

The following article entitled, "*The Bible: the Word and the Voice of God*" is there to help you grow in greater confidence concerning the Word of God, its value, accuracy and inspiration.

LESSON 2: ARTICLE
 “THE BIBLE: THE WORD AND VOICE OF GOD”

The Bible is the world's all-time best selling book. About 2.5 billion copies have been printed which are available in over 700 languages. Although the Bible has enjoyed such vast distribution and attention, it is read relatively little. Perhaps part of the reason the Bible is so neglected is the many doubts people have about this unique book. If the Bible came from the mouth of God, then the scriptures are believable when they speak of Jesus Christ and accurate when they touch the realm of science.

(I) IS THE BIBLE INSPIRED?:

(A) *“All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work .”*(2 Timothy 3:16,17)

(B) The word inspired; (theopneustos) in the original Greek language literally means ‘*God breathed*’. When the Bible claims to be inspired, we understand therefore, that it came from the mouth of God. It is God-breathed, inspired.

(C) But a skeptic will say, Everyone knows the Bible was written by men! The book of I Corinthians, for example, was written by a man named Paul. After all, the very first verse bears his name as the author. In reply to this we answer: Yes, I Corinthians was written by Paul. Notice however, what Paul said in chapter 14 verse 37: *“the things I write to you are the Lord's commandment.”*

(D) Paul knew the source of his writings and understood that he was like a pen in the hand of Almighty God. We must not view the Bible as the word of Paul, Peter, or Jeremiah but rather as the message God revealed through these men just as it is written in Jeremiah 1:9, *‘Then the Lord stretched out his hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, behold. I have put my words in your mouth’.*

(E) The Bible writers were not like news reporters giving their personal interpretation of events they eye-witnessed, but were divinely guided as 2 Peter 1:20-21 says, *‘Above all, you must understand that no prophesy of scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophesy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.’*

(F) God and man worked together in writing the scriptures. However, in this work, God is the author who dictated the message, and man is the writing instrument. Men were guided or inspired to write the exact message God wanted recorded in the Bible. Now that we have a fundamental understanding of inspiration and the origin of the Bible, let us look at some evidence of inspiration.

(II) UNITY OF THE BIBLE

(A) Have you ever discussed some controversial subject with a small group of your friends. Chances are, not everyone agreed with your personal point of view! Do the guests of a typical television talk show ever agree? Very rarely! In contrast, 40 different men wrote the 66 books of the Bible and discuss hundreds of controversial subjects, yet they all agree. What makes this even more remarkable is that the 40 Bible writers lived as much as 1600 years apart.

(B) Imagine their cultural differences! Despite this great potential for contradiction between Bible writers, there is harmony and unity in the Bible's message. That is because the Holy Spirit was directly guiding each of the 40 men to write the Bible.

One scholar has noted that the unity found in the Bible is vastly superior to the sacred writings of all other world religions, including Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Bahai, and Islam. Anyone who has ever studied these writings must admit they are jumbles of disjointed material, without order, continuity or unity of any kind. The 66 books of the Bible on the other hand, weave a unified message from Genesis to Revelation.

Consider the high degree of unity found within the Bible. There is nothing like this, not even approaching this, in any other collection of sacred books of any world religion . The direct inspiration of God is what sets the Bible apart from all other books. The unity of the Bible is a powerful argument for divine inspiration because even a small group of men can rarely come to any degree of unity on even one topic.

(III) THE INSPIRATION PROCESS

- (A) The Holy Spirit
- (B) 40 Different Writers
- (C) Unified Message of the Bible

(IV) DIVINE PROPHECY

(A) Prophecy is foretelling an event in such detail before it happens so as to necessarily require divine guidance. The Bible is a book containing hundreds of detailed prophecies. There are, for example, well over 60 distinct prophecies in regard to our divine Savior Jesus Christ. Here is a sample of just 10 prophecies that foretold the crucifixion of Christ. Not only were the predictions made 1000 years before Christ came from heaven to earth, but they were made over 500 years before crucifixion was first used anywhere in the world as a form of capitol punishment! Crucifixion didn't exist when the prophecies were made.

<u>PROPHECY</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>FULFILLMENT</u>
Psalms 41:9	Betrayed by friend (Judas)	John 13:18-27
Zech. 11:12-13	Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver	Matthew 26:15
Psalms 22:18	Clothes gambled for	Matthew 27:35
Psalms 22:16	Hands and feet nailed to cross	Luke 23:33
Psalms 34:20	No bones broken when killed	John 19:36
Zechariah 12:10	Side pierced	John 19:37
Isaiah 53:12	Prayed for his murderers	Luke 23:34
Psalms 22:1	His forsaken cry	Matthew 27:46
Isaiah 53.9	Buried in rich man's tomb	Matt 27:57-60
Psalms 16 10	Raised before body decayed	Acts 2:31

(B) A scientist picked out 48 such prophecies and determined that the probability of one man randomly fulfilling them all is 1 in 10 to the 157th power. That is one followed by 157 zeros!

(A) Although the Bible is not primarily a book of science, it does contain numerous scientific facts. We laugh at the scientific knowledge of just a hundred years ago. If man alone were the author of the Bible, we would expect to find many such humorous errors contained in it. However, if we examine the scientific data of the Bible and find it to be accurate to present day knowledge, then we have powerful evidence for divine authorship.

The scientific facts we are about to examine are not only accurate, but were revealed thousands of years before man discovered them for himself. We will look into the fields of astronomy, oceanography and biology. Unlike the sacred writings of other world religions, the Bible does not contain any errors typical of the time in which it was written. The Bible is the only book on earth inspired by God. All others are of human origin regardless of any claims they might make.

(VII) EVOLUTION VERSES BIBLICAL CREATION

(A) If a fair maiden kisses a frog which instantly changes into a handsome prince, we would call it a fairy tale. But if the change takes 40 million years, we call it evolution. We often hear that science has proved evolution. Nothing could be further from the truth. You see, people often confuse scientific fact with scientific theory. Current scientific theory does conflict with creation. But the facts of science do not! Surprised?

(B) The theory of evolution says that over millions of years simple life forms (one celled creatures) slowly evolved into complex life forms (fish), and that one kind of animal evolved into another kind (ape to man). Genesis, on the other hand, says that all life forms were created in six, 24 hour days. Genesis chapter one states 10 times that life forms can only reproduce after their own kind (ape to ape, man to man). All the observable facts of science strongly support the Bible's claim that it is impossible for one kind to reproduce a different kind. The truth is, there is absolutely no tangible evidence to support evolution from any area of science, just theory and a wild imagination!

(C) Why then do evolutionists reject creation? Quite simply, they are faithless, godless men who find it impossible to believe in a Creator as powerful as Genesis describes! Sure, they might admit to some vague higher life form, but not one so powerful as to create all things in only six days! It has never occurred to them that when God created the universe in six short days, He may have been taking His time? There are many scientists who fully accept Biblical creation.

(D) But if the Bible is wrong and man actually did evolve in small graduations over a long period of time, we should find ample fossil evidence of links in intermediate stages of transition. For decades, evolutionists have searched for fossils of these links to prove biblical creation wrong. Although millions of fossils have been unearthed, not even one missing link has ever been found. Has it ever occurred to you that this is the reason why scientists refer to them as missing links?

(VIII) CHARLES DARWIN VERSES EVOLUTION

(A) Even Charles Darwin realized the difficulty missing links gave his theory. Darwin wrote in his book, *Origin Of The Species*, "Why, if species have descended from other species by fine graduation, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitional forms? Why is not all nature in confusion, instead of the species being, as we see them, well defined?" The reason we have never found any missing links is quite simple. Darwin's theory of evolution is wrong!
 (IX) "EXPERTS TRICKED" FOR 40 YEARS!!

(A) In 1912, Arthur Woodward announced to the world that he had found the missing link between ape and man. Piltdown Man, as he called it, consisted of a jaw bone and a piece of skull which he estimated to be over 500,000 years old! However, in 1953, when the new fluoride dating process was applied to the bones, scientists were shocked to learn that the jaw bone was less than 50 years old. Only then did they notice that the bones and teeth had been treated with salts and filed to make them appear old and primitive. In other words, Piltdown Man was a complete fraud. Take note Bible student! The world's foremost scientific experts had been fooled for over 40 years! (Read I Corinthians 3:18-20.) For almost a half century, evolutionists pushed Piltdown Man in the faces of Bible believers as scientific proof we evolved from apes! Some proof!

(X) LEADING EVOLUTIONIST REJECTS LUCY

(A) Through the years several other missing links have been found, but today, every one has been discarded. Even the famous Lucy skeleton, discovered in 1974 by Donald Johanson, has now been discarded as a missing link by several of the world's leading evolutionists including Richard Leakey! He and others view Lucy as nothing more than an extinct ape. In spite of over 100 years of intensive searching, the only place you will find a missing link today is in the colorful imagination of an evolutionist. Museums certainly don't have any! In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1)

(XI) BIOLOGY AND THE BIBLE

(A) Darwin's theory of evolution quickly influenced every area of scientific thinking. Around 1905, biologists began to teach many new theories that are today rejected as false. For example, they taught (contrary to the Bible) that the different races of men did not have a common ancestor (i.e., Adam and Eve) but evolved from several isolated sources. You can imagine how these theories greatly fueled racial tensions. Everyone has heard how Adolf Hitler ruthlessly exterminated some 12 million people during the second World War. But few realize that Hitler's personal views of racial superiority and fascism had their foundation firmly rooted in Darwin's theory of evolution. Hitler methodically identified what he believed to be the inferior races of man. He then set out to exterminate these evolutionary misfits in the same way a pure bred dog breeder will cull unwanted puppies from a litter. After all, if man randomly evolved by chance from animals, then man is nothing more than an animal! Hitler merely took the theory of evolution to its logical end. today we face a greater genocide. 30 million babies have been aborted because women are told by evolutionist doctors that the 10 week old fetus in their womb is not yet human!

(B) Today, biologists have proved through bio-genetics that all races of men have a common ancestor. Even though many biologists still reject the Biblical creation story in Genesis, they must now admit that the Bible was right all along when it said, God made from one man, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth (Acts 17:26). The theory of evolution and Bible creation are two opposing views of man's origin. Only one is right. You cannot accept both!

(XII) ASTRONOMY AND THE BIBLE

(A) The earth is round! You may be surprised to learn that the Bible revealed that the earth is round Job 26:10, Prov. 8:27, Isaiah 40:22, Amos 9:6. Today, we chuckle at the people of the fifteenth century who learned sailing because they thought they would fall over the edge of the flat earth. Yet the Bible revealed the truth in 1000 B.C.!

(B) The earth is free floating in space! Another remarkable truth found in the Bible is that the earth is free floating in space. Job 26:7 says, God hangs the earth on nothing.

(C) Compare this to how other ancient cultures contemporary with Job believed the earth was suspended:

- (1) Held up by a man named Atlas
- (2) Held up by four elephants
- (3) On a turtle swimming in a sea of milk

(XIII) OCEANOGRAPHY AND THE BIBLE

(A) Matthew Maury (1806-1873) is considered the father of oceanography. He was bed ridden during a serious illness and asked his son to read a portion of the Bible to him. While listening, he noticed the expression paths of the sea in Psalms 8:8. Upon his recovery, Maury took God at his word and went looking for these paths. We are indebted to his discovery of the warm and cold continental currents. His book on oceanography is still considered a basic text on the subject and is still used in universities. Maury used the Bible as a guide to scientific discovery. If only more would use the Bible as a guide in their personal lives!

(XIV) THE HYDROLOGIC CYCLE AND THE BIBLE (Job 36:27-28)

(A) The water cycle was not fully understood until about 30 B.C. by a Roman engineer named Marcus Vitruvius. Yet every aspect of the water cycle was fully revealed to mankind in 1600B.C.! The Bible's description is in perfect harmony with modern science. Vitruvius was 1600 years too late!

(XV) WE HAVE PUT THE BIBLE TO THE TEST IN FOUR AREAS:

- (A) Scientifically accurate facts
- (B) Historically confirmed by archaeology.
- (C) Unity of overall theme.
- (D) Genuine divine prophecy .

(E) No other book on earth can pass this fourfold test. The evidences presented here are just a tiny portion of the proof's available. Yet, they are more than sufficient to prove the inspiration of the Bible. There will always be men who scoff at the Bible. You, however, can be confident when you read your Bible that God is the author, for it is written: "We constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God (I Thessalonians 2:13).

LESSON 3: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE

PART 2

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings and events.

(I) AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

(A) The Bible contains _____ books: _____ in the Old Testament and _____ in the New Testament.

(B) The books are divided into _____ and _____ for reference.

(C) The Old Testament was written in the _____ language.

(D) The New Testament was written in the Greek language. (Remember that our English Bible is a translation from these original languages.)

(E) Did God make a mistake? Why the need for a New Testament? What's wrong with the Old one? Read Hebrews 8:9-10.

(1) The foundation of the Old covenant with Israel was man's obedience to it (v 9).

(2) The foundation of the New covenant is God's action on behalf of man. (Note the "I wills" in verse 10). It was enacted by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (Luke 22:20)

(II) BECAUSE THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HELP US UNDERSTAND IT

(A) The man without the Spirit does not understand the things that come from God (1 Corinthians 2:14)

(B) The Holy Spirit (Greek - Parakletos - One called along side to help) will teach us and help us to remember (John 14:26)

(III) ONE METHOD OF STUDYING GOD'S WORD

(A) There are many others.

(B) Turn to Mark 4:35-41 and read the passage. Now, answer the following questions from these verses:

- (1) Who?
- (2) What is said about the person or people involved?
- (3) What does the person (people) say?
- (4) What? What is happening? What are the events; in what order?
- (5) Where? Where is the event taking place? Where are people going to or coming from?
- (6) When? When did the events take place?
- (7) Why? Why is this story included? Why here in the text? Why does one person say what he does? etc.
- (8) Wherefore? So what?
- (9) What difference would it make in my life if I were to apply this truth?

(IV) BASIC DIVISIONS IN SCRIPTURE

(A) Old Testament: Historical preparation for the Messiah.

- (1) 5 books by Moses - Beginning history/law
- (2) Joshua/Esther - Messiah preparation history
- (3) Job - Poetic & Wisdom
- (4) Isaiah to Daniel - Major prophets
- (5) Hosea to Malachi - Minor Prophets

(B) _____: Manifestation - Consummation of Christ.

- (1) The Gospels: The life & works of Christ

(2) Acts: The further works of Christ through the Apostles.

(3) The Epistles: Church doctrine

(4) Revelation: Jesus' rule established

(V) BASIC THEMES OF SCRIPTURE

(A) _____ - Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 1:1; Psalms 103

(B) _____/Creation - Genesis 2:7

(C) _____ - 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 3:23

(D) Jesus - John 5:39, Luke 24:7, 44, 45

(E) Redemption - Romans 3:24; 10:8-13

(F) Salvation - Romans 1:16; 10:8-13

(G) Satan/spirit world - Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 4:4

(H) Prophecy - 2nd coming of Jesus - Revelation 4:20

(I) Man - Beginning and final end - John 3:17-19

Pray for one another. Invite some unsaved people to church and see what God does.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 4: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THE BIBLE

PART 3

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings and events.

(I) WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ITSELF

- A. "All Scripture is _____ and is useful for _____, rebuking, _____, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (II Tim. 3:16)
- B. "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of the Lord stands forever." (I Pet. 1:24)
- C. "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophets own interpretation, for prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." (II Pet. 1: 20-21)
- D. Read Psalm 19. Some things we can learn about God by looking at nature. However, other things (salvation, the fall, etc.) we can learn only as God "reveals" them through His Word.

(II) THE BIBLE ANSWERS LIFE'S BASIC QUESTIONS

- A. Where did I come from? (Origins)
- B. Who am I? (Identity)
- C. Why am I here? (Purpose)
- D. What happens when I die? (Destiny)

(III) WHY WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE

- A. _____
1. Read John 14:26.
 2. Internal Witness
- B. Witness/Testimony of Jesus
1. "Think not that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matt. 5:17)

C. Witness of the _____

D. Witness of the Apostles

1. Would you die for a lie? Here is a listing of how the original Apostles died still claiming that they had witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

- a. Peter - Crucified upside down
- b. Andrew - Crucified
- c. Matthew - The Sword

- d. John - Natural, but put in burning oil for his faith and banished to the island of Patmos.
- e. James, son of Alphaeus - Crucified
- f. Philip - Crucified
- g. Simon - Crucified
- h. Thaddaeus - Killed by arrows
- i. James, brother of Jesus - Stoned to death
- j. Thomas - Spear thrust
- k. Bartholomew - Crucified
- l. James, son of Zebedee - The sword

2. The Apostles were witnesses of the resurrection:

- a. Luke 24:48; John 15:27; Acts 1:8;
Acts 10:41; Acts 13:31; I Cor. 13:15;
Acts 3:15; Acts 4:33, I John 1:2

2

E. The witness and history of archaeology.

(IV) SOME FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

- A. Written over a period of _____ years.
- B. Over _____ authors (written by kings, prisoners, shepherds, doctors, Rabbi, tax collector, military, generals, fisherman, politician.)
- C. Written in different places.
- D. Written in three languages: _____.
- E. The Bible deals with every major issue in life and speaks of many _____ issues; yet always without _____.
- F. The Bible contains history, law, medical information, poetry, songs, biographies, correspondence.

- G. No book has been published more than the Bible. The Bible is translated into well over _____.
- H. No book has ever survived through more _____ and _____ than the Bible.
- I. The Bible has been the inspiration for more music, art, stories, plays, than any book in history.
- J. The Bible is _____ accurate historical document of its time.
- K. The Bible is _____ accurate archeological book of its time.
- L. The Bible is a book of prophecy. Three hundred concerning Christ's' first coming, and 300 concerning His second coming, and hundreds concerning history.
1. The Bible says that it may be _____ if the prophecies it contains
fail: Deut. 18:20-22; 13:1-4; Matt. 7:15-20.
- M. The Bible has changed the lives of millions even though _____ by hundreds.

(V) BASIC REVIEW OF THE BIBLE

(A) What is the Bible?

(1) The Bible is _____ revealed to us.

(a) Heb.1:1-2

(2) The Bible has many writers but only one author.

(b) II Tim. 3:16

(B) Why has God given us His Word?

(1) II Tim. 3:17

(C) The Bible is broken into two major sections.

(1) Old Testament

(a) 39 Books

(2) New Testament

(b) 27 Books

(3) 66 Total Books

(D) The Bible has one single unifying theme.

(1) _____

(E) The Old Testament is an account of a nation. (Israel)

(F) The New Testament is an account of a Man. (Jesus Christ)

(G) The Nation was founded and nurtured of God to bring the Man into the world.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

- (D) Eternal (_____) - Deuteronomy 33:27
- (E) Holy (free from all defilement, _____) - Isaiah 6:3
- (F) Righteous or just (_____) - Psalms 145:17
- (G) Merciful (_____) - Deuteronomy 4:31
- (H) Immutable (_____) - Malachi 3:6
- (I) Truthful (_____) - Titus 1:1, 2
- (J) Awesome (inspiring awe which is reverent wonder tinged with fear) - Deuteronomy 7:21

(IV) PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ASCRIBED TO HIM

- (A) Knowledge - Isaiah 55:8-10
- (B) Emotions - Genesis 6:6
- (C) Will - Joshua 3:9, 10

(V) THE LOVE OF GOD

- (A) What is the very essence of His nature?
1 John 4:7, 8, 16
- (B) Whom does God love?
 - (1) God loves His Son - Matthew 3:17
 - (2) God loves the world - John 3:16
- (C) How did God demonstrate his love for us? - Romans 5:8
- (D) How do I experience God's love each day?
 - (1) Romans 5:5

(VI) THE FATHER IS GOD

The Father holds the place of authority within the Godhead. He is not more important than the Son or the Holy Spirit, but authorizes their ministries (John 6:38, 14:16)

LESSON 6: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN JESUS THE SON

(I) JESUS POSSESS ALL THE _____

- (A) Omnipresent - Matthew 28:18-20
- (B) Omnipotent-Matthew 28:18
- (C) Omniscient-John 16:30
- (D) Eternal John 1:1, 2
- (E) Holy-Acts 3:14
- (F) Creator-Colossians 1:16, 17

(II) JESUS IS CALLED _____ IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- (A) John 10:29-33
- (B) John 20:28
- (C) Who is called God in Hebrews 1:8?

(III) THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS

- (A) Webster's definition of unique "being the only one".
- (B) Unique in His virgin birth:
- (C) Prophesied in Isaiah 7:14
- (D) Fulfilled in Matthew 1:18-25
- (E) Unique in His sinless life-Hebrews 4:14-16
- (F) Unique in His death:
 - 1) Why did He die? 1 Peter 3:18
 - (2) He was separated from the Father for the first time-Matthew 27:46.

(G) Unique in His resurrection from the dead (_____).

(1) It is recorded in the Bible-Matthew 28;

(2) Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20, 21

(3) Witnessed by over 500 people-1 Corinthians 15:1-8

(4) Because of His power over death and sin, we too have spiritual power in our lives. (1 Corinthians 15:12-14, 56, Romans 5:10)

(5) The Christian faith rests on His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:17)

(IV) CHRIST DESIRES TO LIVE HIS LIFE THROUGH HIS CHILDREN

(A) Galatians 2:20

(B) What do I receive in exchange for my life before Christ?

(C) How do I allow Christ to live through me?

(V) THE ONLY LIFE THAT PLEASED THE FATHER WAS THE SON'S

(A) Luke 9:35

(B) The only way to the Father is through _____, John 14:6. There is only one life that pleased the Father - Jesus.

Pray for one another.

LESSON 7: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

(I) THE HOLY SPIRIT: HIS DIETY AND PERSON

(A) The Holy Spirit is a _____: In Greek, personal pronouns are used - He, Him, etc.

(B) Greek (parakletos) - "One called alongside to help", Helper, Comforter, Counselor.

(C) In John 14:16, who is the "He" referring to?

(II) HE DOES THE THINGS ONLY A PERSON CAN DO

(A) He _____ and helps us to remember. John 14:26.

(B) He calls men to service (He speaks). Acts 13:2.

(C) He convicts us of sin. John 16:8.

(D) He leads. Romans 8:13,14.

(III) BEING A PERSON HE CAN BE EFFECTED BY OUR ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

(A) We can lie to Him. Acts 5:1-3.

(B) We can grieve Him. Ephesians 4:30.

(C) We can quench Him. 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

(D) We can insult Him. Hebrews 10:29.

(IV) THE HOLY SPIRIT POSSESS ALL THE _____

(A) Omnipresent. Psalms 139:7-10.

(B) Omnipotent. Luke 1:35.

(C) Omniscient. John 14:26; 16:12,13.

(D) Eternal. Hebrews 9:14.

(E) Holy. Romans 1:4;

(F) Creator. Job 33:4; Psalms 104:30.

(V) HE IS DISTINCT FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON

(A) Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:21-22

(VI) WHEN WE ARE SAVED:

(A) He regenerates us (makes us spiritually alive). John 3:3-8; Titus 3:4-7

(B) He indwells us. 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19

(C) He brings satisfaction for our needs. John 4:13-14; 7:37-39

(D) He is the seal of our salvation (Security of Ownership). Ephesians 1:13-14

(E) The Holy Spirit is recognized as God in Acts 5:3,4 and is active upon man, convicting him of sin and guiding the believer into all truth. John 16:7-11.

Summary of the Trinity

1. Genesis 1:1 - The word for God in Hebrew is Elohim.

Singular word for God - El; dual tense - Elah; three or more - Elohim (uniplural noun).

2. The doctrine of the Trinity is not explicit in the Old Testament, but it is implied:

Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7.

3. It is explicit in the New Testament:

Matthew 3:16, 17; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20, 21.

4. The Bible teaches there is only one God:

Deuteronomy 4:39; 2 Samuel 7:22; Isaiah 43:10.

5. Even creation implies the doctrine of the Trinity:

Space - length, width, depth in 1 space;

Man - body, soul, spirit in one man.

In the Holy Trinity we have one God manifested (revealed) to us in three distinct persons, all having the same attributes and all being called God. It is difficult to understand totally; we must accept it by faith.

1 x 1x 1=1

LESSON 8: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE TRINITY: THE ONE TRUE GOD

THE ONE TRUE GOD

Christianity has all of its roots in the Old Testament religion of the Jews. It is quite accurate to say that Christianity is actually Jewish.

To fully understand the Jewish religion and its God, YHWH, we must understand something of their background. The first real Jew was Abraham. The Bible informs us that Abraham's father was actually an idol worshipper (Joshua 24:2). All of civilization at this time worshipped a variety of different gods. There were sun-gods, rain-gods, gods of luck, gods of fate, and even unknown gods. In brief, anything that could not be explained by the human mind was attributed to a god. We will call this condition of many gods "pluristic society." By this we mean that there were many explanations for the universe, meaning and existence and a corresponding god for each answer. This is the environment that Abraham lived in.

Abraham was a regular sort of guy, there was nothing "special" or different about him other than the fact that God decided to "reveal" Himself to him (Gen. 12:1). The fact of the matter is that God "chose" to "reveal" Himself to Abraham for no reason at all except that He decided to. The calling of Abraham was a total act of grace, yet Abraham did choose to follow. When God did choose to reveal Himself, He did so as the ONE TRUE GOD, a personal God with a name and personality, thereby making all other "gods" false and the product of the unaided imagination man. He was YHWH, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

It is important to realize that we also live in a pluralistic society and that God has chosen to "reveal" Himself to us as the ONE TRUE GOD. May this cause us to be grateful and thankful!

(I) THE _____

- A. The Bible continually reinforces the idea of ONE TRUE GOD.
 1. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord."
(Deut. 6:4)
 2. "First...last...besides me there is no God."
(Isa. 44:6-8)
 3. "There is none else, there is no God beside me."
(Isa. 45:5)
 4. "There is one God."
(I Tim. 2:5)
 5. There is no other God but one.
(I Cor. 8:4)

(II) ALTHOUGH _____, HE IS PLURAL IN NATURE
(the idea is one of "compound unity.")

- A. "Let 'US' make man in 'OUR' image, after 'OUR' likeness."
(Gen. 1:27-28)
- B. Elohim = God in the plural.
- C. Father speaking, Servant and Spirit mentioned.
(Isa. 42:1; Mt. 12:18)
- D. All three members at the same time.
(Isa. 48:16-17)
- E. Baptismal formula.
(Matt. 28:19)
- F. Family is a singular word for a plural reality

(III) CHRIST IS REFERRED TO AS GOD

- A. "The Word of God...the Word was God."
(Jn. 1:1, 18)
- B. God calls the Son God.
(Heb. 1:8)
- C. YHWH attributed to the Son the New Testament.
(Ps. 24:7; I Cor. 2:8)
- D. "Unto us a child is born...mighty God, everlasting Father."
(Isa. 9:6)

(IV) SPIRIT IS REFERRED TO AS _____

- A. Never grieve God's Spirit.
(Eph.4:30)
- B. Holy Spirit is called God.
(Acts 5:3-4)
- C. The Lord is that Spirit.
(II Cor. 3:17)

(V) WHY IS THIS SORT OF THING EVEN IMPORTANT?

- A. If there isn't one true God than one god is as good as another.
- B. Wherever this concept is misunderstood, another plan of salvation follows.
 - 1. Jews, because of their misunderstanding of Deut. 6:4 crucified Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Cults always deny this doctrine.
 - 3. It answers theological questions; thereby, making the Bible a unity.

4. We can know we are right and this is important.
5. $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$

(VI) JESUS AS GOD REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Job 33:4-----Heb. 1:8-12
Gen 1:1-----Jn. 1:3

Isa. 48:12-----Rev. 1:17
Isa. 44:6-----Rev. 2:8
Isa. 43:10-----Rev. 22:13

SAVIOR

Ps. 106:21---Jn. 4:42
Is. 43:3-----Acts 5:31

ROCK

I Cor. 10:4- Deut. 32:4
II Sam. 22:32-I Pet. 2:6-8

I AM (EGO EIMI)

Exo. 3:13-14
Jn. 8:58
Jn. 13:19, 18:5

JUDGE

Joel 3:12-----II Tim. 4:1
Gen. 18:25----II Cor. 5:10
Rom. 14:10

KING

Jer. 10:10---Matt. 2:1-6
Isa. 44:6----Lu. 23:3
Ps. 47:8-----Jn. 19:21

SHEPHERD

Isa. 40:11---Jn. 10:11
Ps. 100-----Heb. 13:20
Ps. 23-----I Pet. 5:4

LIGHT

Isa. 60:20---Jn. 1:9, 8:12
Ps. 27:1-----Lu. 2:32

- Gen. 1:2 - The Spirit in creation.
Ps. 139:7-10 - The Spirit is present everywhere.
Heb. 9:14 - The Spirit is eternal.
Acts 5:4 - The Spirit is called God.
Jn. 20:28 - Thomas says "My Lord and my God", Jesus doesn't argue.
I Jn. 5:20 - His Son, Jesus Christ, this is the true God.
Jn. 1:1 - The Word was God.
Jn. 1:3 - All things were made through Him.
Matt. 18:20 - For where two or more are gathered...Jesus is everywhere.

(X) WORSHIP OF JESUS

The Bible demands that only God be worshipped, yet throughout the New Testament Jesus is worshipped and receives worship:

- Matt. 2:2 "and asked, 'Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him'."
- Matt. 9:18 "While He was saying this, a ruler came and knelt before Him and said, 'My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her and she will live!'"
- Matt. 14:33 "Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly You are the Son of God!'"
- Matt. 15:25 "The woman came and knelt before Him. 'Lord, help me!' she said."
- Matt. 20:20 "Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of Him."
- Matt. 28:9 "Suddenly Jesus met them. 'Greetings,' He said. They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshipped Him."
- Lu. 5:8 "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'"
- Lu. 24:52 "Then they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."
- Jn. 5:23 "that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, Who sent Him."
- Jn. 9:38 "Then the man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and he worshipped Him."
- I Cor. 1:2 "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ - their Lord and ours."
- Phil. 2:10 "that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,"
- Heb. 1:6 "And again, when God brings His firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship Him!'"

LESSON 9: THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD
(What is God Like?)

PART 1

(I) NATURE OF GOD: _____

A) THE GREATNESS OF GOD - Psalm 8:1, 9; 83:18; 96:1-6; 145:1-3,5-6; 150:2

B) HE IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE! - Judges 13:17-18, 22; Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 145:3

1) It refers to what He KNOWS - Job 42:3; Psa. 139:1-6; Isaiah 28:29

2) It refers to what He DOES - Isa. 25:1; Romans 11:33

3) It refers to who He IS - Psalm 145:1-3

C) HE IS INCORRUPTIBLE!

1) Because His name is HOLY - Psalm 38:4; 97:12; 99:3, 5, 9; 111:9; 145:21

2) Because His name is ETERNAL- Psalm 72:17; 182:11-12; 135:13

D) HE IS INCOMPARABLE!

1) Because of His POSITION - Ephesians 1:19-23; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:1-4

2) Because of His POWER- Psalm 66:1-4; 68:32-35

a) To answer prayer- John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-26

b) To save people - John 1:12; Acts 4:12; I Peter 1:3-5

(II) THE NATURE OF GOD: HIS SOVEREIGNTY -

A) HIS _____ OF ALL THINGS

Based on three things:

1) His POSITION - Psalm 97:1; 99:1-3; 163:19; 113:1-6; Daniel 4:17, 25, 34-35

2) His POWER - Isaiah 43:13; Colossians 1: 17; Hebrews 1:3

3) His PLEASURE - Psalm 115:3; 135:5-6; Proverbs 16:4 cf. Ezekiel 18:23, 32

B) HIS PROVIDENTIAL _____ OF ALL THINGS

Involves four things:

- 1) His WAYS - Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33 cf. Genesis 58:19-21
- 2) His WISDOM - Daniel 2:20-23
- 3) His WORK - Philippians 1:6; 2:13 cf. Acts 15:18
- 4) His WILL - Ephesians 1:11

(III) THE NATURE OF GOD: HIS GOODNESS

(A) HIS POWER IS UNIQUE!

(No one can do what God can do!) - Psalm 71:19; 77:13-14

- A) Seen in His CREATION - Isaiah 44:24; 45:5-7, 18
- B) Seen in His CONTROL of time and events - Isaiah 44:6-8; 46:5, 9-11
- C) Seen in His CARE of His people - Isaiah 43:1-3

(B) HIS POWER IS UNLIMITED!

(There is nothing too hard for Him to do!) - Psalm 145:1-6, 18-13

- A) EMPHASIZED in the miraculous birth of Isaac –Genesis 18:1-14
- B) EXPLAINED in God’s answer to Job - Job 48:9, 15, 19; 41:1, 18; 42:1-6
- C) EXERCISED in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead - Ephesians 1:19-21
- D) EXPERIENCED in the life of the believer (in five ways)
 - 1) In the SALVATION we receive - Matthew 19:23-26
 - 2) In the SUFFERINGS we encounter - II Cor. 12:9-10
 - 3) In the SUPPLY of our needs that we face –Philippians 4: 11-13, 19
 - 4) In the STRENGTH we need in the inner man –Isaiah 40:28-31; Ephesians 3:14-21
 - 5) In the SHARING of the gospel - Acts 1:8; 4:31-33

LESSON 10: MORE ON THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD
(What is God Like?)

PART 2

(I) Jeremiah 9:23-24 *This is what the Lord says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, [24] but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord.*

(II) A spiritual and _____ of God is the greatest need of every human creature.

(III) The foundation of all true knowledge of God must be a clear mental apprehension of His perfection as revealed in Holy Scripture. *An unknown god can neither be trusted, served, nor worshipped.* (The Attributes of God)

(IV) THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD ARE GENERALLY DEFINED AS MORAL AND NATURAL:

The Natural Attributes Are:

1. Omniscience of God
2. Omnipotence of God
3. Omnipresence of God

4. Eternity/Immutability of God

The Moral Attributes Are:

1. The Holiness of God
2. The Righteousness of God
3. The Faithfulness of God
4. The Sovereignty of God
5. The _____ of God
6. The _____ of God
7. The Love of God

(V) THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD: (_____)

By this we mean that in essence, attributes, consciousness, and will of God are unchangeable. All change must be for the better or the worse. But God cannot change to the better, since He is absolutely perfect; neither can He change for the worse for the same reason. He is exalted above all causes and even the possibility of change. He

can never be wiser, more holy, more just, more merciful, more truthful, nor less so. Nor do His plans and purposes change. (Thiessen)

Some Scriptures:

James 1:17 _____

Malachi 3:6 _____

Psalm 33:11 _____

Psalm 102:26-27 _____

Hebrews 1:12 _____

Romans 4:20-21 _____

Isaiah 46:10 _____

Romans 11:29 _____

I Kings 8:56 (promises) _____

2 Corinthians 1:20 _____

Psalm 103:17 _____

Genesis 18:25 _____

Numbers 23:19 _____

I Samuel 15:29 _____

Psalm 110:4 _____

If God is immutable and never changes, how do we view His Sovereignty?

Keep praying and loving one another.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 11: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE GOD MADE MAN UPRIGHT
(But Something Happened)

THE DOCTRINE OF (*TEACHING ABOUT*) MANKIND

Without a proper understanding of the fall of Man we cannot fully understand the plan of salvation. Also, without such understanding, we will fail to comprehend God's original plan for man or His future purpose and plan for man. Unless we gain the necessary insight, we will only have a partial understanding of our world and the Bible.

Question: If things were the same today as they were on the day of creation, what may we conclude about God by observation?

Question: If man is the same as he always will be then why must we be saved?

(I) MAN BEFORE THE _____

- A. Man was created in _____ and _____.
1. Ecc. 7:29; Gen 3:8-13
- B. Man had _____ fellowship with God.
1. Gen 2:15-17, 3:8-13
2. The separation we see testifies to our sinfulness.
- C. Man was given the earth to _____.
1. Gen. 2:19-20 (denotes ownership)
a. What did Adam do when he named woman?
2. Gen. 1:26, 28-30
3. Gen 9:1-2 (even in this age)
- D. Man was created in the _____ of God.
1. Gen. 1:26, 6:9
2. I Cor. 11:7; Ja. 3:9

- E. What is the image of God?
1. Is it a physical likeness? No.
 2. Is it a representation of the _____?
 3. Moral resemblance and sharing of the unique divine attributes.
 - a. In son much as man surpasses animals.
 - b. Capacity for justice and compassion, for love and hate.
 - c. Ability to relate to the past, present and future.
 - d. Ability to need to establish long meaningful relationships.
 - e. Ability to communicate and "philosophize."
 - f. Ability to choose, ability to create.

(II) THE FALL AND _____ SIN

Question: How many ate of the fruit in the garden?

Question: Why do we suffer the sin they committed?

- A. Eve listened to _____ rather than _____.
1. She set her will against God.
 - a. The will is a "free" thing affected by the mind, the soul, and the spirit.
 2. "Aspiration" is a key word to understanding the fall.
 3. We should notice the Scripture twisting going on.
- B. The _____
1. Everything in us fell; mind, body, emotions, spiritual capacity.
 2. The appetites of the flesh became lust.
 3. The will is now in bondage to Satan.
(Rom. 6:6)
 4. Man ceases to become upright and became a sinner.
 5. Inability to do good (spiritually).
 6. Gen. 6:5; Job 14:4, 15:14-15; Isa. 1:5-6; Jer. 3:33, 17:9; Rom. 3:10-18;

(III) DEATH AND FALL

- A. Death did not exist before the fall.
- B. What did Adam and Eve see when their eyes were "opened?" (Gen. 3:7)
- C. A drastic change occurred in man's relationship with animals.
- D. Sickness enters into the scene.
- E. Hate, suspicion, murder, extended through ALL creation.

(IV) THE FALL IN RELATION TO SALVATION

- A. Only the upright man could _____ with God.
(Isa. 64:6)
- B. God did not set down a law to save Adam but gave the promise of a Messiah.
- C. When Adam tried to cover his own sin to no avail, God Himself covered it.
- D. I John 3:8
- E. Jesus bore the curse of the fall. (Jn. 3:36)

Keep Praying for Each Other and Pray for Your Schools!!!!

LESSON 12: THANKSGIVING STUDY

LESSON 13: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN SIN & FORGIVENESS

Discussion and review of last week's meeting, readings and events.

(I) WHAT IS _____?

- (A) Isaiah 1:2
- (B) Isaiah 53:6

(II) WHO SINS?

- (A) Romans 3:23

(III) WHERE DOES SIN COME FROM?

- (A) Isaiah 14:12-15

(IV) WHY DO I SIN?

(A) Adams's decision in the Garden of Eden:

(B) God told Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree of Knowledge and of the tree of _____ – Genesis 2:9, 16, 17

(C) Sin in the human race originated in Adam's free decision to disobey God's will - Genesis 3:1-6

(D) The effects of Adam's decision on us today:

- (1) Sin entered the world through one man, Adam – Romans 5:12
- (2) Adam's sin separated man from God – Genesis 3:22
- (3) Adam's sin resulted in both physical and spiritual death for man:

- (a) Physical Death – separation of the soul from the body, Gen 3:19
- (b) Spiritual Death – separation of the soul from God for eternity
Romans 6:23, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10, Revelation 21:8

(E) Therefore I sin because I am a _____.

(V) SALVATION

(A) Definition of salvation

(1) Being saved from the penalty, power and dominion of sin in our life and from eternity apart from God.

(2) What is God's gift (grace) to us? John 3:16; Romans 6:23

(B) How are you _____?

(1) Ephesians 3:8-9

(c) What do we put our faith in for salvation?

(1) Romans 10:9, 10, 13

(VI) _____

(A) Definition of forgiveness is an act of pardon.

(B) What does God want to do with your sin?

(1) 1 John 1:7-10

(C) What must we be _____ to do?

(1) Mark 11:25,25

(D) How does God now see my sin?

(1) Isaiah 43:25

(2) Jeremiah 31:34

(E) What is our response to God's gift (grace) of salvation to us (grace)?

(1) Ephesians 2:10

(F) Salvation is a free gift from God. We have to "Recognize" our sin, "Receive" Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, and "Rejoice" that God has given us eternal life in His Son.

Pray for one another.

LESSON 14: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE YOU CAN KNOW YOU ARE SAVED

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings, events.

(I) KNOWING YOU ARE SAVED IS WHAT SOME CALL “_____”

(A) Assurance (certainty) of salvation is based on the authority of God's Word. There are many evidences we can look at so that we can know we are saved and have eternal life.

(B) God promises eternal life in His _____

(1) According to John 1:12, what is the promise associated with receiving Jesus?

(2) John 3:16 states that whoever believes in Christ

(3) John 5:24 says that the one who believes in God will not experience

(4) In John 10:27-28 we learn that we will never

(C) The Holy Spirit gives us assurance of our salvation.

(1) According to Romans 8:16-17, what does the Holy Spirit bear witness of in our lives?

(2) Who is the guarantee of our future life according to Ephesians 1:13-14?

(D) Turn to the book of 1 John.

(1) What is the purpose of John's letter in 1 John 5:13?

(2) John uses the phrase "we know" (assurance) throughout his letter to help these believers come to a place of assurance about their salvation.

(3) According to 1 John 2:3-5, how do we know for sure that we "know Him?"

(4) In 1 John 2:23, what is the action here that rules out the assurance of salvation?

(5) What is the basis of assurance in 1 John 3:14-15?

(6) In 1 John 4:13, what has God given to his children to bring us assurance of salvation?

(7) According to 1 John 4:14-15, what work does the Spirit produce in us that brings assurance?

(E) Read Philippians 2:12-13.

(1) Verse twelve states that the Christian life is a life of obedience. But what power is available to live the Christian life according to verse 13?

(F) God wants you and I to know that we have _____ (1 John 5:11-13). It is not His will that we live our life on a daily basis wondering if we are saved. If you doubt your salvation remember that our salvation rests only on God's work for us. Even if our hearts at times forget that, it is still true. (1 John 3:19-20). Pray and ask God to remind you of His faithfulness to keep His promises.

Pray for one another by name.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 15: CHRISTMAS STUDY

LESSON 16: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THAT YOU MUST BE BORN-AGAIN

Part 1

Together read the Gospel of John Chapter 3, find where Jesus talks about being born-again and discuss it together.

HOW TO

We live in a difficult world, in difficult times. Everyone it seems, has an opinion, and it's not easy to figure out what to believe about life, why we are here, and what is the purpose of it all. We have our inner moral compass, and just when our instincts tell us we may be on the right track, someone we may look up to is caught in some area of moral failure, or a spiritual leader falls to the temptation of the world.

Well, I found out the hard way, that there is really only one uniform source of truth, and that's the Holy Bible. This tract is not to convince you of the veracity of the Bible, but instead is for folks who are past that step, and just don't know what to do with what they know is in the Bible.

Before we get into the practical steps which lead you into receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior, let's look at some simple but profound facts, using the Bible as our standard of truth, otherwise this all would just be one person's opinion. I know that the Bible seems to have contradictions and inconsistencies, but really, that's only how it appears on first look. No man can really know the truth of the Bible without 2 prerequisites:

- 1) We must be _____, so that we can be led of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is understood by Divine revelation, not by intellect alone.
- 2) We must receive the revelation in steps, as we lives out the principles of the Bible in his daily life.

As you are led into what you need to know by the Spirit, and live out that which you discover, the seeming contradictions and inconsistencies seem to fade away, and the true harmony of the "whole counsel of God" becomes evident.

So...the first revelation you need is of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. After that get ready for the rest of your life, as God produces in you the character and attributes of a true Christian.

Here's a few other concepts to grasp before we begin:

- 1) Don't get _____, get _____. The first step is not about churches, personalities or organizations. It's about getting right with God. After that God can place you in a fellowship of believers where you can grow.

2) Don't judge Christ by _____. Christians are just people. Leaders fall and fail, but you don't hear that much about the ones who serve God faithfully, never cheat on their wives or husbands, never get in trouble. Believe me, these far outnumber the ones you hear about. Billy Graham is a phenomenon to have been so faithful and well known with never a hint of scandal. Get your eyes off of men, and look to God for your answers. If you approach Him with an honest, questioning heart, He will satisfy your need to know. (Seek and you will find....)

3) Don't wait to get your life together before you get _____. This is a "come-as-you-are" party. Jesus loves you right where you are. It's only he who can affect real change in your life, because real change only comes from the inside out. Our attempts at self-improvement usually are usually working from the opposite premise, and that kind of change seldom works, and NEVER works on the eternal level.

4) Don't make the mistake of thinking that you are too evil for God to forgive. The Bible says that "when we repent, He is faithful and just to forgive, and cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness. If you are truly repentant, there is nothing that cannot be forgiven. Jesus loves YOU, no matter what your past.

5) Don't think that if you become a Christian, that you won't have fun anymore. Hollywood, TV, books etc., have in general painted Christianity to be something for a bunch of losers..dried up prunes of people who have lost their zest for life.

Not true. God will change your mind about what you think is fun, but true Christians have real joy in their lives and really know what real fun is. I'm glad the days of partying down and "having fun" without remembering what happened to me because I was passed out are over. What kind of fun is that?

Let's move along, with a few more facts to consider:

1) Everyone in the world has missed God, and _____. No matter who you are, without Jesus in your life, you are lost. No matter how good a life you may lead, you are lost without Christ. Men have fallen from godliness and need to have relationship with God restored, which can only happen through the cross of Calvary.

2) Your salvation _____. This is something God has done for us, we can't earn it, we must just receive it.

3) Your salvation _____. You don't need to go to Bible school to be saved. Wouldn't it be unfair if only theologically literate people could get right with God? No, God made this so simple that a 10 year old child can receive Jesus as savior. He truly made it so simple that "the foolishness of God would confound the wisdom of the world." It's a matter of faith, not intellect.

4) You must recognize your need. You ARE a foul depraved Godless person, as we all were before receiving Jesus. Even the good things you do have a selfish agenda if you really be honest. You must be willing to call sin, and turn from it, change your lifestyle completely, pick up your cross and follow Him. Difficult club to join, you say? Yes, and I want you to know it

isn't always pretty. It's losing your life for His sake that you may gain it back. It's suffering sometimes because you do the right thing. It's not easy. Don't join if you're looking for an easy way. Yet, at the same time this life is filled with joy and satisfaction. Think of the life that Jesus led. Full of suffering, rejection and pain, and yet Jesus was the happiest most well-adjusted person who ever lived, because He did it God's way.

5) You must receive Him _____. You won't know all the answers, you may not even have thought of many of the questions. It's a matter of knowing in your heart that what Jesus said is right, then acting on it.

What did Jesus say?

1) "I am the way, the truth, the life. No man shall see the Father if not through me. He didn't say, as many gurus and spiritual leaders do that He knew a way to get truth, He said He WAS the way the truth, the life. He also said He was the ONLY way. (A hard one for a lot of people, but I didn't say it, HE did.)

2) They that _____ the name of the Lord shall be saved. Self explanatory.

So.. How do I receive Him?

It's so simple you may have a hard time believing it. No costly seminars to attend, no years spent in Bible school, only a simple prayer of faith.

Here are the steps, (not a formula, but steps)

1) _____ Recognize your sinfulness and turn from your ways. Be willing to change what needs to be changed.

2) _____. He died on the cross so that you may be forgiven. Your forgiveness was purchased 2000 years ago. Receive it now.

3) _____. Most conversion experiences are not dramatic. You may or may not experience an emotional release, it doesn't matter, we walk by faith, not sight.

4) Pray words to this effect: "_____." I've not been tremendously successful without you, and so now I'm going to try it your way. I repent of every wrong thing I've ever done, and receive the forgiveness that You offer. I believe that You are God, and that you died on the cross and rose from death to conquer all the works of darkness. I surrender my life to You this day, and pledge to do my best to be obedient to You from this day forth. You have made me a new creation, and I am now "born again" of the Spirit of God. Because of You, I will go to heaven when I die. I pray all this in the Name of Jesus."

What now?

1) Go tell somebody! "If you confess Me before men, I will confess you before my father. I'd love for you to let ME know. E-mail me, or fax me, or whatever, I'd love to hear what God did for you.

2) Get a Bible..Read it a little every day.

3) Go to church! *"Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together."* God's got a home for you.

4) Pray daily. Talk conversationally to God. The Spirit that is within you will put you in touch with Him. He does speak to us today, but you have to learn how to hear His voice.

Pray for one another by name. Pray for others. Pray for your school.

LESSON 17: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THAT YOU NEED TO BE BORN-AGAIN

Part 2

“HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?”

_____. We are all sinners....people don't always like that title. The one word that defines all sin is the Greek word "harmatia" which means "to miss the mark." What is God's mark? Jesus said, "Be perfect as My Father in heaven is perfect." Unless a person is perfect, he has missed the mark; therefore, he is a sinner. Romans 3:23 states "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

What is the result of _____? In Romans 6:23 we read "The wages of sin is death..." Every one of us has missed God's mark. Every one of us falls short of being perfect. We are getting only what we deserve, and we are bringing judgment upon ourselves. One thing we need to remember is that God never sends anyone to hell. We send ourselves there by rejecting His truth

Since we can never _____ to God's standards on our own, God has reached out to man. We cannot solve the problem of sin, but God, who is perfect, can and has. He has become a bridge for us. John 3:16-17 states "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.." In Romans 5:8 we read, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

If a person acknowledges that he is a sinner, and he accepts the promise that Christ is the solution, he is at a crossroads. Either the person must reject God's solution and accept the consequences, or he must accept Jesus Christ as his Savior. What must a person do to accept this gift? Simply receive it! Matthew 11:28-30 states "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me...for My yoke is easy and My burden is light

_____. We must come to Him. All that remains is a response. In Romans 6:23 we read "...the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." What do we have to do to receive that gift? Take it! Revelation 3:20 states "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me." Jesus stands at the door of your heart and knocks, seeking entrance into our lives. John 1:12 states "For as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God." If you would like to receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life right now, pray a prayer something like this from the sincerity of your heart...

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe you died for my sins. Right now, I turn from my sins and open the door of my heart and life. I receive you as my personal Lord and Savior. Thank you for saving me. Amen.

If you just prayed that prayer and really meant it, Jesus Christ has now taken residence in your heart! Not only that, but he has forgiven you of all your sin. The Bible tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9) God also promises, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." (Psalms 103:12)

Your decision to receive Christ also means that you are now going to Heaven one day. That's a lot to be thankful for! You need to take some practical steps to grow strong spiritually: Read the Bible, pray, and go to church.

THE ABOVE SECTION IS HOW WE COME TO KNOW GOD ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL, THIS SECTION EXPLAINS IT FROM THE BIBLE.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

(I) _____

(A) To repent means to change your mind and attitude about sin, so that you turn from your sin and you turn to God (Jesus Christ) for forgiveness and cleansing

(1) Who Preached Repentance?

- (a) Matthew 3:2
- (b) Matthew 4:17
- (c) Mark 6:12
- (d) Acts 2:38
- (e) Acts 17:30

(B) What are characteristics of true repentance?

- (1) 2 Corinthians 7:9, 10
- (2) Luke 18:9-14
- (3) 1 Thessalonians 1:9

(C) Repentance is a change of 3 elements:

- (1) Intellectual element - a change of _____. What we think.
- (2) Emotional element - change of _____. What we desire.
- (3) Volitional element - a change of _____. What we do.

(D) It is to be our message to the unbeliever:

- (1) Luke 24:44-48

(II) _____

(A) What is faith?

It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see up ahead.

(B) How does the Bible define faith?

(1) Hebrews 11:1

(C) Where does faith come from?

(1) Hebrews 12:1-2

(D) How do we receive our faith?

(1) Romans 10:17

(5) The importance of faith

(1) We should live by it - 2 Corinthians 5:7

(2) We are saved by it - Ephesians 2:8,9

(3) It is our defense (shield) against the enemy - Ephesians 6:16

(4) It never gives up - Hebrews 11:7, 30

(5) It gives us victory over the world and its problems - 1 John. 5:4

(6) The principle element in repentance is a change of mind and attitude about Christ; a change from an unbelieving and rejecting attitude to a believing and accepting attitude.

(7) True faith in Christ involves the confession and forsaking of sin.

(III) TRUE REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE INSEPERABLE. THEY ARE MUTAULLY DEPENDENT ON EACH OTHER.

Tell someone about your new life in Christ. That's called witnessing.

LESSON 18: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN SHARING THEIR FAITH

One of the hardest things to do as Christians is to share our faith. We're often reluctant to share our faith for fear of having a person reject us and our message; yet God has given us clear marching orders to go out into the world and preach the gospel "making disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19-20)

God has given us some sound principles that will enable us to effectively lead others to Christ. God will never ask us to do anything He will not give us the power to do. The calling of God is the enabling of God (see 2 Cor. 3:4-6).

Effective sharing must be _____. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." (John 6:65) Conversion must be the work of the Holy Spirit, and it must be in God's timing. That's why the Scripture tells us to be prepared to share the gospel message "in season and out of season." (2 Tim 4:2)

Effective sharing _____ in a knowledge of God's word. Although our message may begin with a personal testimony or illustration, the thrust of it must be the Word of God! We must not neglect this powerful witnessing tool, for God promises, "My Word...shall not return to Me void, but shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

Effective sharing _____. Some of the most profound things Jesus ever said were found in His one-on-one conversations. He took time with these individuals (see John 3 & 4). We must remember that we are not called to make converts, but disciples.

Effective sharing is _____. For evangelism to be effective, it must begin with a genuine concern for the lost.

Effective sharing is _____. In 1 Corinthians, Paul encourages us to tailor our approach, though not our message to those we are trying to reach for Christ. Evangelism is meeting someone at his or her level in order to bring that individual to Christ's level without compromising the truth of the gospel.

Effective sharing is discerning. We need to be discerning so that we will not "cast our pearls before swine," offering the truths of God to someone who is not genuinely interested. Rather than anger someone who's uninterested, it is best to simply present the truth and move on.

Effective sharing _____ . A good example of tact is found in the story of Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8). As Philip heard the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah, he simply said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" A number of more judgmental Christians might have shouted, "Did you know you're going to burn in hell unless you repent?" A fruitful witness is a tactful witness.

Effective sharing is _____. This final principle is the most important one we need to employ. Whenever Jesus came into contact with people, He genuinely loved them. Such love and concern will speak volumes before we even utter a word. The world today is flooded with religious cults, which are Satan's way of flooding the market with imitations. Those imitations ought to motivate us to make the truth known. Our edge over these spiritual counterfeits is the love in our hearts that Jesus had when He walked this earth, combined with the Word of God, which shall not return void.

Why not ask God for His holy boldness right now? Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone who needs Christ. Love him with the love of God, and then share the truth of the gospel. Then you'll see how "the goodness of God leads you to repentance" (Rom 2:4)

LESSON 19: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE SATAN EXISTS, BUT NOT THE OPPOSITE OF GOD

(I) HIS NAMES GIVE US INSIGHT INTO HIS CHARACTER

(A) Satan - (Greek) Satanias (adversary or opponent) most common name used 52 times.

(B) The devil (slanderer) 35 times.

(C) A _____ and murderer - John 8:44.

(D) The _____ - 2 Corinthians 4:4.

(E) An _____ of light - 2 Corinthians 11:14,15.

(F) Ruler of the kingdom of the air - Ephesians 2:2.

(G) The tempter - 1 Thessalonians 3:5.

(H) Apollyon _____ - Revelation 9:11

(I) The accuser of our brothers - Revelation 12:10.

(II) HOW DOES SATAN OPERATE?

(A) As a schemer - Ephesians 6:11

(B) As a lion - 1 Peter 5:8,9

(C) As a liar - John 8:44

(D) As a deceiver- Genesis 3:13, Revelation 20:10

(E) Spiritual Warfare - Ephesians 6:10-18

(F) How do we stand strong against Satan's schemes, lies and attacks?

1. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might; not by ourselves.
Ephesians 6:10

2. Put on the full armor, not part of it or there will be a weak spot for Satan to

attack Ephesians 6:11, 13

- (a) The Belt of Truth - Truth overcomes deceit and lies and is key to every area of the Christian life.
- (b) The Breastplate of Righteousness - This speaks of right acts as practiced by the believer. The breastplate was to protect the heart of the soldier.
- (c) The Sandals of the Gospels - The sandals speak of mobility and preparedness. We are to be ready to use God's Word in spiritual battle (1 Peter 3:15).
- (d) The Shield of Faith - (Above all take this up) - the shield of faith protects us from the attacks (those fiery darts) of Satan. (exam. temptations, impure thoughts, etc.).
- (e) The _____ - It refers to the intake of the Word which will help protect our thoughts from doubt and the world, the flesh, and the devil. It will make us secure in our relationship with the Lord.
- (f) The Sword which is the Word of God - It is the only offensive weapon. When attacked, respond with the Word.

(III) REALIZE IT IS NOT A _____ BATTLE, BUT

(A) Ephesians 6:12.

(B) Read 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. What can spiritual weapons accomplish?

(IV) _____: CONTINUAL PRAYER IS GOD'S WILL

(A) 1 Thessalonians 5:17

(B) Ephesians 6:18.

(V) HOW DID JESUS RESPOND TO SATAN'S ATTACK?

(A) Read Matthew 4:1-11

(B) What was Jesus' physical condition?

(C) What did Jesus respond with to Satan's three offers? - Matthew 4:4,7,10

(D) What is the only offensive weapon we have in the spiritual armor? See Ephesians 6.

(E) What does this tell us about handling temptation, or trials of any kind?

(F) What is the promise of 1 John 4:4?

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 20: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN MORAL PURITY

Part 1

This class will be taught by a guest teacher. We have many resources and many people that can help you with these issues. Please don't hesitate to ask if you have questions, need some resources or for help.

LESSON 21: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN MORAL PURITY

Part 2

LESSON 22: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE!

Part 1

STUDY OF THINGS TO COME

The study of last things is not by any means restricted to Christian circles. Wherever there are people that think about meaning, purpose, the origins of man, etc., there are people that think about last things. Today, people everywhere want to know what the future bring and what will happen when we die. It is only fitting that if Christianity be true, it would address these issues.

I. HOW CAN WE KNOW ABOUT SUCH THINGS?

- A. Through the _____.
1. The Bible is largely a book of _____.
 2. Deut. 18:20-22 and 13:14 warn that prophecy must be true.
 - a) Jesus warned about false prophets.
 - b) Bible 100% accurate; Jeanne Dixon 20%-30% accurate.
- B. Through personal experience.
1. Nobody has been to the future.
 2. Nobody has died and come back, or have they?
 - a) Jesus was resurrected from the dead.
 - b) Lazarus was resurrected from the dead. (Jn 11:1)
 - c) Jarius' daughter was raised form the dead.
(Matt. 9:18, Lk. 8:41)
 - d) The widow's son raised from the dead. (Lk. 7:11)
 - e) Dorcas was raised from the dead. (Acts 9:36)
 - f) Other accounts are recorded. (Matt. 27:52-53)
- C. Has anyone been to the future?
1. Timelessness, eternity, and Einstein's Theory of Relativity
 2. Jesus said He came from heaven.
 3. Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-9)
 4. In the book of Revelation, Jesus appears in the future.
 5. In the book of Revelation, John appears in the future.
 6. The Old Testament prophets

At this point, we will break our study into two categories:

- 1) personal eschatology
- 2) general eschatology

Personal eschatology deals with _____, _____ and _____ and the reward of the righteous.

II. _____

A. The Scriptural concept of death goes beyond the physical to the spiritual and eternal.

1. Both physical and spiritual death are a result of the fall (one can be avoided, the other cannot unless you've raptured).
2. Christ came to restore our positions and to give us life.
3. We do not yet "see" all things subject to Him.
 - a) I Cor. 15:26-28
 - b) Physical death will be eliminated in the future.

B. _____ from the dead

1. Is taught both in the Old and the New Testaments
2. References in the Old Testament
 - a) Job 19:25-27; Ps. 16:9,15,17; Dan. 12:1-3
3. References in the New Testament
 - a) Jn. 5:28-29; Lk. 14:13-14, 20:35-36; Acts 24:15; I Cor. 15; I Thes. 4:14-16; Rev. 20:4-6,13

C. Nature of the resurrection

1. Bodily resurrection
 - a) Jn. 5:28; I Cor. 15:22; Rev. 20:12; I Cor. 5:10
2. The resurrection of the body of Jesus was physical yet without limitations.
3. A new heaven and earth

D. Redemption of the body included "total redemption."

1. Rom. 8:11-23; I Cor. 6:13-20; Jn. 6:39; Job 19:25-27; II Cor. 5:4

- E. Nature of the resurrection body
1. I Cor. 15:36-37
 2. Not necessarily like the grave body
 3. Possibly some organic connection (Matt. 27 saints came out of the grave)
 4. Vast improvements over this present body
 5. Phil. 3:21
 - a) Christ's Resurrection body
 - 1) Read (Lk. 24:39)
 - 2) Recognizable (Lk. 24:31; Jn. 20:16)
 - 3) Powerful (Jn 20:19)
 - 4) Not flesh and blood, but flesh and bone, not pure spirit
 - 5) Incorruptible (I Cor. 15:42)
 - 6) Glorious, heavenly, powerful (I Cor. 15:43-49)

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 23: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE

Part 2

III. _____

- A. _____ to be the judge
 - 1. Jn. 5:22-23, 27; II Tim. 4:1; II Cor. 5:10; Acts 10:42, 17:31
- B. Taught in the Old Testament
 - 1. Ps. 96:13
- C. Taught in the New Testament
 - 1. Acts 17:31; Heb. 9:27
- D. Of saints (of works, not salvation)
 - 1. I Cor. 3:8-16; II Cor. 5:1-10; I Cor. 4:5
- E. Of nations
 - 1. Matt. 25:31-46
- F. Great White Throne (wicked dead, wicked living Matt. 25)
 - 1. Rev. 20:11-15
- G. Of Israel
 - 1. Eze. 20:33-44; Ps. 50:16-22
- H. Of angels
 - 1. Jude 6; II Peter 2:4; I Cor. 6:3

IV. THE _____

- A. First prophecy before Noah's flood
 - 1. Jude 14
- B. In the Scriptures
 - 1. 318 references in 216 chapters
 - 2. Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21; I & II Thess.; Jn. 14:3, 21:22; Acts 1:11; Heb. 2:2; 9:28; I Jn. 2:28; Jude 14, 15
- C. Hope of the Church
 - 1. Titus 2:13; II Peter 3:12

- D. Personal and visible
 - 1. Acts 1:11; I Thess. 4:16-17, Rev. 1:7

- E. Application
 - 1. Good for mental health
 - 2. Motivation for right living
 - 3. Hope and comfort
 - 4. Exciting!

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 24: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN PRAYER
Part 1

Everyone engages in prayer at one time or another. Even that person who says "I don't believe in God," cries out when the crisis looms, "Oh God, help me!" We are all acquainted with prayer to some extent or another. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has given man. We can come into the presence of God, the Creator of this universe, and talk with Him. And what's more, He always listens! Effective Prayer life (Chuck Smith) - Pg.43

(I) WHAT IS PRAYER?

(II) WHO SHOULD PRAY?

(A) Psalms 32:6

(III) WHO SHOULD PRAY?

(A) Matthew 6:6, 9

(IV) WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY FOR AND ABOUT?

(A) Philippians 4:6

(B) Matthew 6:10

(C) Matthew 9:38

(D) 2 Thessalonians 3:1

(E) James 5:13-16

(F) Ephesians 3:14-19

(V) WHERE SHOULD WE PRAY?

(A) 1 Corinthians 1:2

(B) Luke 19:46

(C) Matthew 6:6

(VI) WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

- (A) Luke 18:1
- (B) 1 Thessalonians 3:10
- (C) Psalm 61:2

(VII) WHY PRAY?

- (A) Luke 22:40
- (B) Ephesians 6:10-12
- (C) Ephesians 3 :20
- (D) John 15:5

(VIII) HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

- (A) Romans 8:26
- (B) 1 John 5 :14
- (C) Matthew 6:5
- (D) Jude 20
- (E) 1 Corinthians 14:15

(IX) HINDERANCES TO PRAYER

- (A) Isaiah 59:2
- (B) 1 Peter 3:7
- (C) James 1:6-8
- (D) Luke 18:9-14

LET'S PRAY!!!

LESSON 25: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN PRAYER

Part 2

(I) LORD'S PRAYER AS A MODEL OR OUTLINE OF PRAYER

Many people are familiar with this prayer and it is often recited. Most likely Jesus gave it as an outline or a guide, rather than something to be recited or simply memorized. But memorizing it and reciting it are fine providing we think about what we are saying when we repeat it.

A. Matthew 6:9-13

1. The Lord outlined this prayer as an example. The same account in Luke 11:1 has the prayer given in answer to the request that Jesus, "teach us to _____

B. Our Father in Heaven

1. Begin with the focus on _____, not _____.
2. _____

C. Hallowed be Your Name

1. Hallowed means set apart.
2. The different names of God are descriptions.

D. Your Kingdom Come, Your Will be Done

1. The Kingdom of God is where He rules and reigns.
 - a. Family, immediate and blood relatives.
 - b. Friends and associates.
 - c. Church, home groups, leadership.

2. You have the priestly ability to release the Kingdom of God.

E. Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

1. After him, then others, then us.
2. Matt. 6:33

F. Forgive Us Our Debts As We Forgive Our Debtors

1. Time to get relationships right.
2. Matt. 6:14, 15

G. Lead us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From the Evil One

1. Asking for leading, guidance, direction.
2. James 1:13-15

H. For Yours is the Kingdom and the Glory

1. Return to praise and adoration.
2. Phil. 4:6

I. Let's Pray Using this Model of Prayer

Pray this week using the model from the Lord's Prayer.

LESSON 26: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN PRAYER

PART 3

There are many different kinds of prayer. We'll try and define some of them so we can understand prayer better. There are also a variety of forms for praying. Basically it is simply talking to God and listening for His voice.

I. INTERCESSION

A. Biblical background

1. I Timothy 2:1

2. Ephesians 6:18

B. Definition: To come _____ or act as _____ or advocate.

C. We _____ God to others having been with Him.

II. PETITION

A. Definition: _____

B. I John 5:14

C. Philippians 4:6

D. Most common type of prayer

III. IN SPIRIT

A. I Corinthians 14:14

B. Not men but rather to God's understanding (14:2)

C. Personal edification (14:4)

D. Romans 8:26-27 valuable resource

IV. PRAYING DIRECTLY FOR AND WITH OTHERS

In this kind of prayer we pray FOR other people. Other kinds of prayer do have a place

- a. Praise
- b. Intercession
- c. Petition - asking God for our own healing.

(V) FASTING/SOLITUDE

A. Fasting

1. Definition

- a. Not to be motivated by vanity or the desire for power
- b. Demonstrates total dependence upon God for substance

2. Biblical references to fasting

- a. Luke 4:2
- b. Daniel 10:3
- c. Esther 4:16 and Acts 9:9
- d. Deut. 9:9 and I Kings 19:8
- e. Lev. 23:27
- f. Joel 2:15, II Chron. 20:1-4 and Ezra 8:21-23
- g. Zac. 8:19 and Luke 18:12

3. The purpose of fasting

- a. Matthew 6:16-18
- b. Fasting reveals the things that control versus helping with the transformation process. Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear, etc
- c. I Cor. 6:12
- d. Other values of fasting are increased effectiveness in intercessory prayer, guidance in decisions, increased concentration, revelations, etc.
- e. God rewards those who diligently see Him.

4. The practice of fasting
 - a. Start out slow, try a fruit fast or partial fast by skipping lunch, then on to a normal fast.
 - b. Drink plenty of water during fast
 - c. Don't be worried about your false hunger pains
 - d. Please don't just rush out into a prolonged fast, start small with one

5. Fasting never changes God's mind, only yours.

B. Solitude

1. Definition

- a. Settle yourself in solitude

2. Christ's example

- a. Matthew 4:1-11
- b. Luke 6:12
- c. Matthew 14:13
- d. Matthew 14:23
- e. Mark 1:35
- f. Mark 6:31
- g. Luke 5:16
- h. Matthew 26:36-46
- i. We could keep going. Do you think Jesus held a high priority on the value of solitude?

3. The purpose of solitude

- a. James 3:1-12
- b. Solitude is intimately related to trust
- c. Solitude is also intimately related to compassion

3. Developing the discipline of solitude

- a. Take advantage of "little solitudes" daily
- b. Find a place in or around your house and make it your quiet place

- c. Discipline yourself so your words are few not full
- d. Three or four times a year you may want to spend a few hours in silence developing inner solitude
- e. You will feel a renewed sensitivity and compassing for others

Pray quietly this week. Try fasting a meal and pray for unsaved friends, family and co-workers.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 27: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN HAVING A DEVOTED LIFE

(I) THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE BELIEVER (Devotions, Prayer and Memory)

This study will concentrate on our own personal lives. We deceive ourselves if we only hear the word and partake of sound doctrine. We must also be doers of the word.

We must realize that before the church is a gathering of believers, it is individuals under the Lordship of Christ. In order to be effective as a believer we must become effective in having an open and responsible relationship with God. This session is designed to challenge us to do so.

(I) DEFINITION OF DEVOTE/DEVOTIONS

- A. Webster – To dedicate, give over, to give center of attention, set apart
- B. Devotion: A religious exercise other than the regular corporate worship of a congregation (Webster).
- C. Giving of our lives to God

(II) WHAT FORM SHOULD DEVOTIONS TAKE?

- A. Variety of forms depending on needs, circumstances, schedule
- B. Should be practical
- C. Should involve action
- D. Should involve change
 - 1. In attitude, viewpoint
 - 2. In lifestyle, deed

(II) WHAT WOULD BE SOME SUGGESTIONS?

- A. Study how the Bible characters served God in their personal life.
 - 1. Daniel
 - 2. David
 - 3. Paul
 - 4. Etc.

- B. Read, think about and apply one verse of Proverbs.
 1. No need to “cram” a lot in
- C. Find verses that tell you to do something.
 1. _____
 2. Go back and answer “Do I do this?”
 3. Think about how you may apply the verse.
- D. Read books that challenge!
 1. Not only “light reading”
- E. Implement what you have learned.
 1. Share it with others.
 2. Share how you want your life to change.
- F. Study subjects which deal with life.
 1. Money
 2. Manners, speech, courtesy
 3. Giving
 4. Time
 5. Service
 6. Witnessing
 7. Etc.
- G. Apply the subjects!

(IV) HOW DO YOU BEGIN A DEVOTIONAL LIFE?

- A. Read Rom. 12:1-3
- B. Determine to live a practical life.
- C. Confess you need to change.
- D. Admit you need help.
- E. Set apart a time (Make time!)
- F. Go to the bookstore!
- G. Begin to do what you already know.
- H. Commit yourself.
- I. Share your commitment with others (now you are accountable).

(V) WARNINGS

- A. Don't get proud.
- B. Don't get “stale” and routine.
- C. Don't be afraid to change habits.
- D. Don't be in a hurry.
- E. Don't get “over-spiritual.”
- F. Don't “display” what you've learned.
- G. Devotions are a “means” not an “end.”

LESSON 28: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN PUTTING JESUS CHRIST FIRST

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings and events.

I) DEFINITION OF _____

2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 - the Lordship of Jesus Christ is the daily submission and surrender of our entire self to the authority and leadership of Jesus, recognizing His sovereign right to rule over us. (Colossians 1:18).

(II) WHAT IS CHRIST'S PLAN FOR HIS DISCIPLES?

(A) Luke 9:23 states the heart of discipleship.

(B) Deny yourself - Putting the Lord and _____; refusing to live my life to _____ myself.

(C) Take up your cross daily - Submitting our will to the will of God. Luke 22:42.

(D) _____ - Following Jesus and no one or nothing else. Matthew 4:19; 1 Peter 2:21.

(E) The whole principle of Lordship is the removal of self off of the throne of one's life, and the invitation to Jesus to sit on the throne and rule, trusting Him to do what is best for us.

(F) The battle of submission: two reasons why people do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of their life.

(G) We're afraid God may ask us to do something we don't want to do.

(H) We are not sure that God has our best interest at heart. Jeremiah 29:11.

(III) HOW DO I KNOW IF JESUS IS LORD OF MY LIFE?

(A) We show our love for Jesus by _____ His commands. John 14:15, 21, 23.

(B) We must read the Word of God, see what God's will is for our lives and then we must _____ . James 1:22-25.

(IV) WHAT IS THE BLESSING OF PUTTING CHRIST FIRST IN MY LIFE?

(A) 1 Peter 3:15-16

(B) Romans 12:1-2

(C) Romans 6:22

(D) The Lordship of Jesus Christ is the most crucial issue of any Christian's life. We are all aware of those around us who are reaping in their lives the by-products of their lack of obedience. Jesus has our best interests at heart. We must give Him our entire life and we must live only for Him daily. Only then will we experience the full life that He has promised us. As we continually confess Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives, we are assured of true faith living in our hearts. (Romans 10:9-10)

Pray for one another by name. Think this week what it means to be a follower of Christ.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 29: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION

- (I) It's the _____ of death
 (II) It's the _____ of Christianity
 (III) It is the most _____ event in world history

(I) IT'S THE CONQUERING OF DEATH

A) Jesus Died A _____

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1) He was Scourged & Crucified | John 18:12-40 |
| 2) He was Certified Dead | John 19: 1, 18 |
| 3) Laid in the Tomb | John 19:32-34 |
| 4) Large Stone Door Closed | Mark 15:46 |
| 5) Roman Guard posted | Matt. 27:63-65 |
| 6) Secured and Sealed | Matt. 27:66 |
| 7) Dead for days | Luke 24:1 |

B) Jesus was _____

“Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. [45] When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.” Mark 15:44-45

“Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. [32] The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. [33] But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. [34] Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.” Jn 19:31-34

C) In 1986 William D. Edwards, MD; Wesley J Gabel, MDiv; Floyd E Hosmer, MS, AMI wrote an article on the crucifixion for the Journal of the American Medical Association, titled On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ

D) The final conclusion of their report was that, “*Modern medical interpretation of the historical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead when taken down from the cross.*”

E) What is a Resurrection?

1) The Dictionary says,

- A) The act of _____ or _____.
- B) The state of one who has returned to life.
- C) The act of bringing back to practice, notice, or use; revival.
- D) The Resurrection. Theology.

- a) The rising again of Jesus on the third day after the Crucifixion.
- b) The rising again of the dead at the Last Judgment.

2) There were several that were not permanent in the scriptures, most notably that of Lazarus

- a) Jesus resurrection was never to die again
- b) Death is losing it's grip

1) It is "real death" not _____ that they are brought back from... Lazarus and Jesus it had been days...

c) Death is universal and nobody has been able to beat it

- 1) None powerful enough
- 2) None rich enough
- 3) Not wise enough (Buddha, Gandhi)
- 4) THE GRAVE ALWAYS WINS!!

d) Universal Death applies not only to people, but to all of creation. (bondage of decay)

(II) THE RESURRECTION IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY

A) Christianity was founded after all His disciples lost hope

B) From an April 1996 US News & World Report

"Some extraordinary event occurred in Jerusalem to account for the radical change of behavior in the disciples."

C) "Jesus' Tomb Was _____ (a well established fact)

- 1) A known Grave site, anyone could visit it
- 2) A Broken Roman seal (a capital offense)
- 3) Stone was rolled away
- 4) Grave cloths were left behind
- 5) Disciples were confused
- 6) Enemies believed it was empty
- 7) Eye-witnesses said Jesus was alive

(III) IT IS THE MOST SCRUTINIZED FACT IN ALL OF HISTORY

A) People have been looking at this issue for thousands of years from every conceivable angle and position

1) Some as seekers, some as skeptics, some as cynics, some as believers, some to destroy faith

a) Frank Morrison was an English journalist who set out to prove that the story of Christ's resurrection was nothing but a myth. However, his probing led him to discover the validity of the Biblical record in a moving, personal way.

(IV) WHY WAS THERE _____ IN THE TOMB?

(Four Possible Answers)

1) Jesus Died and Rose exactly as He said He would

a) This is the cornerstone of Christianity

b) Everything stands or falls on the truthfulness of God's Word

c) Luke tells us in Acts that Jesus "*showed with many convincing proofs that He was alive.*"

d) This was the worst fear of those who put Jesus to death

(1) They did NOT want the Body to disappear

(2) They did everything in their power to insure that it didn't.
Now it's gone. Matthew 27:62-64)

(3) The earliest explanation was, "His disciples came and took the body at night while we (the guards) were sleeping."

a) If you were sleeping how do you know who took it?

b) I realize ALL you guys are sound sleepers, but didn't anybody hear those guys trying to roll away that big stone?

c) What soldiers are going to admit to sleeping? And all of them?

d) Why would His deserting disciples return to steal the body?
Especially when they were depressed. Couldn't remember He said it!!

(5) Why would thieves take the time to put all the grave clothes in a neat and orderly fashion?

(a) These are the kinds of things investigating officers notice for false claims of thief. Neatness.

(b) Why would you be cleaning up when there were armed guards outside the tomb you just sneaked in to?

(c) If this really happened how come there were no investigations into wrong doing?

(d) Nobody disputes the empty tomb

2) “Jesus didn’t arise, the apostles were deceived. Hallucination Theory

a) They wanted this so bad they saw Him

b) Much positive evidence against these facts

c) Post resurrection _____

1. To Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18)
2. To the other women (Matthew 28:8-10)
3. To Peter (Luke 24:34; I Corinthians 15:5)
4. To the two on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35; Mark 16:12)
5. To ten of the disciples (Luke 24:36-43)
6. To all eleven disciples, eight days later
7. To seven disciples by the Sea of Tiberias (John 21:1-23)
8. To five hundred followers (I Corinthians 15:6)
9. To James (I Corinthians 15:7)
10. To the eleven, at the ascension (Acts 1:3-12)
11. All saw the same hallucination in different places?

a) Indoors, Outdoors, Along a road, by a lake

b) Some of them touched Him

c) Skeptics having the same hallucination?

12) A similar version of this one is that the disciples went to the wrong tomb.

- a) Then why didn't the enemies of Jesus point to the right one?
- b) The apostles preached in Jerusalem and 1000s got saved... they talked about the empty tomb in their preaching...

3) Jesus Died, Didn't Rise, the disciples deceived (_____)

- a) This is morally impossible
 - 1) They were devout and genuine and preached righteousness
 - a) Says they were cheap frauds – nobody really believes that...
- b) They were confused and distraught over the crucifixion
- c) There was a sudden change in their lives after the resurrection...

4) Jesus Didn't Die (_____)

Popularized by Hugh Schonfield in Passover Plot

- a) It's physically impossible.
 - 1) He never could have survived the extent of His tortures
 - 2) The Romans were convinced He was dead
 - 3) Those who had Him crucified were convinced
- b) It's religiously impossible.
 - 1) These disciples would not be worshipping a Jesus in need of medical attention
 - 2) Their conviction and message was that He rose gloriously from the grave!
- c) It's biographically impossible
 - 1) Makes Jesus out to a deceiver and charlatan
- d) None of these were passed around in Jesus day...
 - 1) WITNESS OF THE APOSTLES

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

1) It says the women went on the first day of the week... that's Sunday, today....

a) People have been worshipping the Risen Son on Sundays ever since that morning...

2) Jesus keeps His Promises

a) Said He would Rise. He did.

b) Said you will rise. You will

NO CLASS NEXT WEEK OR THE WEEK AFTER, WE WILL BE IN THE SERVICES FOR
PALM SUNDAY AND EASTER

LESSON 30: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN FELLOWSHIP

(I) DEFINITION OF FELLOWSHIP

(A) Fellowship. _____ with another person in a deep way. Friendly relation and companionship.

(B) An association of people with similar interests and tastes.

(C) As we build our lives around Christ, we build them in relationship to other believers that He has placed in the church with us.

(II) THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SAVED AND THE LOST 1 Peter 2:9-11.

(A) What names does the Lord call us in 1 Peter 2:9?

(B) Have we always been His people according to 1 Peter 2:10?

(C) How are we described in this present world in 1 Peter 2:11?

(D) What should be our response to 1 Peter 2:9

(III) WITH WHOM DO WE FELLOWSHIP?

(A) 2 Corinthians 13:14

(B) 1 John 1:3

(C) 1 John 1:7

(IV) WHAT IS OUR MOTIVATION FOR FELLOWSHIP?

(A) Romans 8:35-39

(B) 1 John 2:3-6

(C) Hebrews 10:25

(V) WHAT ACTIVITIES DID THE EARLY BELIEVERS SHARE IN?

(A) Acts 2:42-47

(B) Colossians 3:15-16

(VI) THE KEY ISSUE OF FELLOWSHIP IS LOVE

(A) John 13:34-35

(B) 1 John 3:18

(C) Galatians 6:10

(VII) WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE FELLOWSHIP?

(A) Hebrews. 10:25

(B) James 5:16

(C) Hebrews 10:24

(D) 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

(E) 2 Corinthians 8:4

(F) Romans 15:25

(G) Romans 12:13; Acts 11:29

(H) Romans 15:1-2

(I) 1 Peter 2:2-3

(J) Matthew 18:19-20

(K) Colossians 3:16

(VII) IS FELLOWSHIP AN OPTION ACCORDING TO HEBREWS 10:25?

(A) What are the dangers of not fellowshiping with other Christians regularly?

LESSON 31: THE "ONE ANOTHERS"

REFERENCE/STATEMENT

ROMANS

- 12:10 Be devoted to one another
Give preference to one another
- 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another
- 13:8 Love one another
- 14:13 Let us not judge one another
- 14:19 Pursue the things which make for peace for the building up of one another
- 15:5 Be of the same mind with one another
- 15:14 Admonish one another

I CORINTHIANS

- 12:25 Care for one another

GALATIANS

- 5:13 Serve one another
- 6:2 Bear one another's burdens

EPHESIANS

- 4:1-2 Show forbearance to one another
- 4:32 Be kind to one another
- 5:18-21 Speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.
Be subject to one another.

COLOSSIANS

- 3:9 Do not lie to one another
- 3:12-13 Bear with one another
- 3:16 Teach and admonish one another

I THESSALONIANS

- 3:12 Increase and abound in love for one another
- 4:18 Comfort one another

HEBREWS

- 3:13 Encourage one another
- 10:23-25 Stimulate one another to love and good deeds

JAMES

- 4:11 Do not speak against one another
- 5:9 Do not complain....against one another
- 5:16 Confess your sins to one another

Pray for one another!!

I PETER

1:22 Love one another

4:9 Be hospitable to one another

5:5 Clothe yourself with humility toward one another

I JOHN

3:11 Love one another

3:23 Love one another

4:7 Love one another

4:11 Love one another

4:12 Love one another

II JOHN

5 Love one another

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 32: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH

(I) THE DOCTRINE (TEACHING) OF THE CHURCH

The church is God's _____. It is where we _____, _____ and accomplish His purposes on earth until he returns. The Bible encourages us to fellowship in the context of the church and Christianity that tries to exist without or outside of the church is both inferior and disobedient.

The church consists of those who are partakers in the blessings and benefits of Christ. The work translated church (Greek - ecclesia) in other places means an assembly or gathering. For our purposes, we will use this definition compounded with the concept of those being in the church as called out of the world by God. In essence, then, our understanding of the church means those "called out and assembled together." The church is always corporate, while Christians are individuals.

There are two common errors in understanding the church. The first error sees the church as being limited to a _____ concept, organization, _____, or _____. The second error sees the church as being only universal and invisible in nature. To limit our view of the church to either of these concepts will lead to ineffective witness and mission. The church is BOTH universal and local, yet it is important to see ourselves as part of both. The Roman Church was in gross error to think that both concepts could be brought together perfectly on earth. They set up a system of government which would identify and unify the church around the world. This eventually lead to church authority and power superseding that of Christ and the Bible. The other error is to simply see ourselves only as individuals separated from the Body at large.

Another common error is to let the church take priority over the kingdom of God. The church does not exist as an end in itself, but rather a means to an end. Our purpose is the furthering of the Kingdom of God, through the groups of bodies God has raised up to do this in a particular locality. When the kingdom takes precedence, the local body and believers suffer, when the church takes precedence, the Kingdom of God suffers. There is a fine balance somewhere in-between which we need to learn.

(II) DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH

- A. Ecclesia
 1. Used 111 times in the New Testament
 2. Used for assembly or called out (Mt. 16:18; Acts 19:39; Rom. 8:30, 16:4; I Cor. 1:2; II Cor. 6:17)

- B. The Church Belongs To _____
 1. He is the _____, He has dominion and authority.
 - a. Therefore, the church, universal or local, can have no other "head."
 2. The church is the _____.

- a. Col. 1:18; I Cor. 12:27 - this refers to both universal and local bodies.
 - b. Stresses unity
 - c. We can function together with Christ. (Eph. 1:22-23)
 - d. No life apart from the Head. (Col. 1:18; 2:19)
- C. Temple of the Holy Spirit of God.
- 1. I Cor. 3:9-17; 6:19; Eph. 2:20-22; I Pet. 2:5
- D. The Jerusalem that is above
- 1. Counterpart of the old Jerusalem, dwelling place of God, where the people are brought in communion with God, while on earth belongs in the heavenly sphere.
 - 2. Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:2,9,10
- E. Pillar and ground of truth
- 1. The church is the guardian of truth, the citadel of truth.
 - 2. Defender of the truth
 - 3. I Tim. 3:15
- F. The church is the _____.
- 1. II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7; 22:17; 21:2
- G. The church is a _____.
- 1. Acts 10:28

(III) ESTABLISHING THE CHURCH

- A. Foretold in prophecy by Christ
 - 1. Matt. 16:16-18; 18:15-20
- B. Founded by the Apostles (historically speaking)
 - 1. Acts 1 - 2:47; Acts 2:46; 12:12

(IV) CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- A. _____ and Baptism
 - 1. Acts 2:38-41; Matt. 28:19; Rom. 10:9-10
- B. Faith in Jesus Christ
 - 1. Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:38-39.
- C. Adherence to the Apostles teaching, i.e. the Bible
 - 1. Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20
- D. Characteristics of the Early Church

1. Believers, Acts 4:32
2. Brethren, equality among believers
 - a. Matt. 23:8-10; Acts 11:29; Rom. 1:13
3. Saints
 - a. Acts 9:13; I Cor. 1:2; Rev. 13:7
4. Elect
 - a. Mk. 13:27; Rom. 8:33; Eph. 1:4

(V) THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

- A. _____
 1. Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38,41; 8:36-40; 10:47-48
- B. The Lord's Supper
 1. Acts 2:42,46; 20:7; I Cor. 11:20-34

(VI) THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- A. To _____
 1. Eph. 1:4-6
- B. To _____
 1. Eph. 4:11-15
 2. Failure to be part leads to trouble.
 - a. Heb. 10:25-28; I Thes. 5:11; I Cor. 12, 14
- C. To _____ and _____
 1. Mat. 28:19-20 - GO!
 2. Acts 5:42; 6:5-8; 13:1-7; Eph 3:8; Acts 15:7; Acts 1:8
- D. To be glorified in Christ in the future
 1. Eph. 3:20,21; Rev. 21:9-27

*LESSON 33: "An Important First Step in Walking With the Lord:
Your Place in the Church"*

An Important First Step in Walking with the Lord

Now that you have decided to follow Christ and live a life pleasing to Him, you are probably wondering, "What do I do? How do I go from here? Which path will bring spiritual growth?"

One of the essential building blocks of spiritual growth is to become a part of a local church. The church, meaning the entire body of Christians, was established by Christ to provide you with biblically sound instruction, allow you to express genuine worship with other believers, enable you to use your God-given gifts and abilities as He intended, and keep you accountable to spiritual leadership.

But the church is not designed to only benefit the believer. The ultimate goal of the church is to bring attention and glory to the Person who unifies it: Jesus Christ. When the church operates as God intended, it serves as a powerful witness of His love and provision to a watching world.

Your Place in the Church

The first-century church had the reputation of "turning the world upside-down" with Christ's message. It was a place for devoted fellowship and valuable instruction, and it serves today as our model. God wants the church, also called in Scripture "the body of Christ", to stand out and be His light in these ever-darkening days. Any Christian who wants to please God and make a positive impact for Christ must become part of a local church.

Christ designed the church to provide you with tremendous blessing and opportunity. Involvement in the local church is necessary for your spiritual growth, and it is something you will never outgrow. God has placed spiritually gifted people in the church to both instruct you and encourage you to lead a holy life. No Christian can endure or prosper long if he lives in isolation without the support of the church. Not only do you need the Church, but the Church needs you! God has given you, as a Christian, unique gifts and abilities that will be a blessing to others.

The Bible instructs us to, "...consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..." (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Christians need to gather for corporate (united) worship. The benefits you receive from expressing your thanksgiving and praise with other believers, publicly reading and studying the Scriptures and praying in accord cannot be duplicated or replaced. This is one of the ways God has instructed us to worship Him in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

The church provides an ideal outlet for serving Christ. God has created you with unique spiritual gifts and talents that benefit the rest of the body of Christ. Scripture explains that the Holy Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church (1

Corinthians 12:7). No one is "left out" so to speak. If you fail to regularly fellowship in a church with other believers, you are neglecting the opportunity to use what God has given you.

Following Christ's example, the early believers shared food, clothing, and housing with each other. The Bible asks, if you see a fellow Christian who is in need and you say to him "Well, good-bye and God bless you, stay warm and eat hearty," without giving him any food or clothes, what good have you done? (James 2:16). The body of Christ should look out for its own.

Characteristics of a Healthy Church

The church is not really an organization so much as an organism. It thrives by keeping its members spiritually active and well fed. The Bible has plenty to say about the characteristics of a healthy, vibrant church, and you can measure its vitality by comparing its qualities to the characteristics of the first-century church (Acts 2:42,44-47).

A healthy church meets together regularly, places a high priority on Bible study and develops caring people who concern themselves with the well-being and spiritual development of each member. It recognizes the power of corporate prayer and worship and demonstrates Christ's love in meaningful ways. Its members desire to minister to others and seek to share God's good news with others.

In any Biblically-sound, God-centered church the following beliefs should be obvious:

The Bible is held as the inspired and only infallible authoritative word of God (2 Timothy 3:16)

God is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (John 14:26, Matthew 28:18, 19)

Salvation is the free gift of God to all who will repent of their sins and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is the only way to come into a relationship with God (John 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9)

A healthy church is also a growing church. But growth alone should not necessarily be viewed as proof of God's blessing. The first disciples had a "gladness and a singleness of heart" about the early church. Your church home should be a place you look forward to attending not only on Sundays, but throughout the week.

Among other things a feeling of discomfort in a church can be a prompting from the Holy Spirit that the church is unscriptural. The Bible warns of false teachers and only by growing in your understanding of the Scriptures and through prayer will you be able to discern truth from error. Avoid any group that teaches doctrines, beliefs or rituals that deviate from the Bible. Many false teachers speak only parts of the truth and their messages have been aptly described as the "skin of the truth stuffed with a lie." Most cults are identifiable because they refuse to:

Adhere solely to the sixty-six books of the Bible. Instead, they add their "special revelations."

Accept that our relationship to Jesus Christ has been provided by God through His grace and is received through faith alone. Instead they practice salvation by works.

Acknowledge Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God and give Him the full recognition He merits.

Commonly known cults are Jehovah's Witnesses, Latter-Day Saints or Mormons, Unification Church, Worldwide Church of God, Unitarians, Spiritists, and Scientologists.

Finding Your Place

It has been wisely said, "The church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints." Regular fellowship and participation in the church for a disciple cannot be overemphasized. As you come to church and find your place in it, you will then be in a position to give to others what God has given to us.

The church that is right for you will be a place where you can grow in your love for the Lord and serve Him by contributing to the life of the church. Remember we are all sinners doing our best to follow God's teaching. Rely on Him to show you the way.

Billy Graham offers this advice, "First, . . . I would select a church which preaches the Gospel faithfully. However, it is not enough to be sound theologically. I would choose a church which endeavors to practice what it preaches, translating its beliefs into everyday life. . ."

Remember that the model for a God-honoring church is in the Scriptures. Study God's design and pray to be led to the place He has prepared for you. God bless you as you grow in your faithfulness.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 34: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN SERVING AND GIVING

- I. TITHING - A _____ of all income given to God for furthering His work in this world. The word tithing itself means a “tenth.”
- A. Genesis 14:18-20 - Abram gives a tenth of everything.
 - B. Leviticus 27:30 - A tenth of everything belongs to God.
 - C. Proverbs 3:9 - Honor the Lord with the first fruits.
 - D. Malachi 3:10 - Flood Gates
- II. GIVING - Above and beyond the tenth.
- A. II Corinthians 9:6-7 - attitude: cheerful, not reluctantly.
 - B. Matthew 10:8 - freely you have received, freely give.
 - C. Luke 16:10-13 - trusted servants
- III. _____
- A. Matthew 26:7-9 - wasting perfume?
 - B. I Peter 4:11 - serving in God's power.
 - C. Luke 4:39 - at once she waited on Him.
 - D. John 13:4-5 - our example washes feet.
- IV. OVERVIEW:
- A. God wants a people who want Him.
 - B. Selfishness and greed are taught and learned. God wants to break into these areas of our lives and free us from ourselves by instituting giving and service.

- C. God desires us to serve Him and others in "His power".
- D. God is looking for wise servants.
- E. Serving and giving should be a joy, continually
- F. Everyone in God's family has a job and responsibility.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS:

LESSON 35: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN HAVING THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

(I) ATTITUDES

A. Out with the _____ and in with the _____

1. Eph. 4:22-24

- a. First, we need to recognize that when we come to God we come with defeated thinking and actions due to wrong old attitudes.
- b. Secondly, we need to understand that we are to cooperate with the renewal process. Romans 12:1,2
- c. Actions spring from attitudes. That's why Jesus attacked attitudes during His sermon on the Mount.
- d. We will begin to work on rearranging our attitude, thus affecting our action.

2. _____ through _____

- a. Humility is never gained by seeking it. The more we pursue it, the more distant it becomes. Service is the most conducive to the growth of humility.
- b. Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service and nothing transforms the desires of flesh like serving in hidden ness.
- c. The old nature is infatuated with natural human power and abilities without any dependence upon God. 1 John 2:16
- d. We must make a daily discipline of service in order to keep our flesh in check, we must also see the difference between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant.
- e. When we choose to serve, we are still in charge. When we become a servant, we give up the right to be in charge.

f. Service is not connected with _____. We are all to become _____.

g. Service must have a visible outworking if it is a genuine attitude so this is how it may look in our lives.

- 1) The service of hiddenness to cultivate tasks of service that remain generally unknown.
- 2) The service of _____ the reputation of others. Titus 3:2
- 3) The service of small things like Dorcas. Act. 9:39
- 4) The service of being served. Peter refused at first to let Jesus wash his feet.
- 5) The service of common courtesy. Titus 3:2
- 6) The service of hospitality. 1 Peter 4:9
- 7) The service of listening. To listen to others quiets and disciplines the mind to listen to God.
- 8) The service of _____ of each other. Gal 6:2
- 9) The service of _____ the word of life with one another.

3. Submission way to true freedom

a. Freedom through the ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get our way.

b. The touch stone for the biblical understanding is Mark 8:34

- 1) _____ is the lesson, the result is our happiness is not dependent upon getting what we want.
- 2) Self-denial means to hold others interests above self interest. In this way, self-denial releases us from self pity.
- 3) Self-denial is the touchstone for the discipline of submission.

c. Submission as taught by Jesus

- 1) Phil. 2:8
- 2) Mark 8:34
- 3) Mark 9:35
- 4) John 13:15

d. Submission as taught in the epistles

- 1) Eph. 5:21
- 2) Phil. 2:3
- 3) Col. 3:18-22

e. The limits of submission

- 1) Matt. 22:37-39
 - a) 1 Peter 2:13,14 reconciled with Acts 4:19-20 and Acts 5:29
 - b) Romans 13:1 reconciled with Acts 16-37
- 2) When defining the limits of submission we are thrown upon a deep dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

f. The acts of submission

- 1) To the triune God
- 2) To scripture, first to hear, second receive, third to obey.
- 3) To our family. Phil. 2:4
- 4) To our neighbors and those we meet in the course of our daily lives.
- 5) To the believing community, the body of Christ.
- 6) To the broken and despised. James 1:27
- 7) To the world. Live as a responsible member of an increasingly irresponsible world.

Pray for friends, family and co-workers. Do something good this that only God knows about.

LESSON 36: CHRISTIANS BELIEVES GOD OWNS EVERYTHING

(I) GOD AND POSSESSIONS

A. What Does the Bible Say?

1. Warnings against the inner spirit of slavery that an idolatrous to wealth brings.
 - a. Though your riches increase, do not set your hearts on them. Ps. 62:10
 - b. The 10th commandment is against covetousness, the inner lust to have, which leads to?
 - c. He who trusts in riches will wither - Proverbs 11:28
2. Jesus comments on materialism
 - a. Luke 16:13
 - b. Luke 6:24
 - c. Matthew 6:21
 - d. Matthew 6:19
 - e. Luke 12:15
 - f. Relate a remembered incident where Jesus addressed the issue of money or possessions.
3. The Epistles reflect the same concern
 - a. I Tim. 6:9
 - b. I Tim. 3:3
 - c. I Tim. 6:8
 - d. Hebrews 13:5
 - e. James 4:1,1
 - f. I Tim. 6:17-19
 - g. A note of caution, forced poverty is evil and should be renounced. Scripture declares consistently and forcefully that the creation is good and to be enjoyed.

4. Now we come to the central point in this teaching. How do we stay in _____ and not give too much or too little.
 - a. Matthew 6:24-33
 - b. This is the central point for exercising the discipline of simplicity. Seek the Kingdom of God and the righteousness of His Kingdom _____. First things first.
 - c. Using the other disciplines we have learned like prayer, solitude, meditation, get silent and seek God.

5. The inward reality of _____
 - a. To receive what we have as a gift from God "daily bread", sun, water, air.
 - b. To care for what we have. God is able to protect what we possess. We can trust Him.
 - c. To have our good's available to others. Fear of the future.

6. _____ expression of simplicity
 - a. These should not be viewed as laws, but as an attempt to flesh out the meaning of simplicity into twentieth century life.
 - b. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status
 - c. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you
 - d. Develop a habit of giving things away
 - e. De-accumulate
 - f. Refuse to be propagandized by modern gadgets
 - g. Learn to enjoy things without owning them
 - h. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation
 - i. Look with healthy skepticism at all "buy now, pay later" schemes.
 - j. Obey Jesus' instructions about plain speech - Matthew 5:37
 - k. Reject anything that will breed the oppression of others
 - l. Shun whatever would distract you from your main goal

Pray for one another and how we use our lives and possessions.

LESSON 37: CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN WATER BAPTISM (COL. 2:12)

Discussion of last week's meeting, readings and events.

A) _____ precedes baptism, along with repentance, and confession of Jesus Christ as Savior.

B) Thus, water baptism is an _____ of an inward reality.

C) Baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God.

D) We must always remember that it is by grace that we are saved through faith:

E) The Greek word for baptizing is baptizontes, a participle of the verb baptizo. This word is derived from bapto, which means primarily, to dip, plunge or immerse

(I) THE WATER

A. Symbolizes _____ from sin

B. Symbolizes a water grave where we die to the old, or a grave (death) which is the result of sin.

(II) THE ACT

A. _____ to self

B. _____ to life

(III) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYMBOLISM

A. Christ baptized into death (Mark 10:38)

B. Went into the grave

C. Resurrected

D. We receive by faith

(IV) INTO CHRIST

- A. Demonstrated outwardly your inward union
- B. Lost identity found in Christ
- C. Public declaration

(V) READ TOGETHER Matthew 28:18

- A. If you have been born-again consider being baptized

Read our pamphlet on Baptism available in the church lobby.

Memorize Matthew 28:18-20.

Pray about when and how you will follow the Lord in obedience through baptism.

SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS: