

# **Baby Steps for Believer's**

**"A daily walk with Christ"**



**By Chuck Wolfenbarger**

# Daily Readings

## INTRODUCTION

The greatest relationship that a person can ever have is with Jesus Christ. After you have come to know Him in a personal way you need to grow closer to him daily. You need to learn how to take baby steps and walk in His ways. This group of daily readings is designed to help you learn how to do just that. Then you will be able to share the hope of Jesus Christ with your world. Each daily reading will include a **Prayer Time** (talking with and listening to God), and a **Reading the Word Time** (reading a verse from the Bible and listening to what God is saying through it to me), and a **Challenge Time** (that will send you out that day to reach out to the world that God loves). This daily reading only does six days of the week. You are encouraged to go to church on Sunday and listen to your pastor or Small Group Leader or your Sunday School teacher and take the Word they share and use it as your devotion for Sunday.

Each 7<sup>th</sup> day includes a group sharing time based upon the daily readings for the week. This will help you in your small group. It will follow the format of a small group.

### WORSHIP

### WELCOME

### WORD

### WITNESS OR WORKS

It will start with **WORSHIP**- which is telling God you love him. There will be a **WELCOME** – An icebreaker question to get people sharing. **WORD** – Application questions from the Bible readings which will help guide the group to put into practice what they have read this past week. **WORKS** – A Challenge to each person to do the Word this week in their daily life.

### Memory Verse

Each week you will be encouraged to memorize a verse from the Bible. Work on it each day. Get another person to check you. Share it with your group when you come together. This will really help you in your daily walk with the Lord.

The Bible shows us that the Christian life is a daily walk with Christ following in His steps along the way. As you learn to take those first steps of faith you will grow in your relationship with God. My prayer for you is that you will learn to take those steps of faith each day. If you do your life will become a daily adventure with Christ.

May God bless you as you walk with Him.

In Him,



Chuck

*“Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who **walk in his ways.**”* Psalm 128:1 NIV

## **WEEK ONE**

### **The Greatest Relationship of all, Knowing Jesus.**

This week memorize John 15:15. *“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”* NIV

## **DAY ONE**

### **God came to find You.**

**PRAYER** – Father I want to thank you that you chose to come and live here on the earth through Jesus Christ. I want to thank you that you came looking for me in order to allow me to become your child. Thanks for looking for and finding me. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read John 1:1, 14. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only. Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* NIV

God created people to have a relationship with Him. That is what Genesis tells us about. Remember that Adam and Eve did the one thing that God told them not to do and sinned. They ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When they did that their relationship with God was broken. They even ran and hid. People have been hiding from God ever since. They hide because of sin in their life. God came to fix that broken relationship. He sent Jesus into the world to pay for all sin. Jesus is the Word in this verse. He is God. He came to live in this world and die for it. He came looking for us so we could have a new relationship with God. He came to find you!

**CHALLENGE** – Has He found you? Have you come to the place in your spiritual life that you have invited Jesus to come into your life and be your forgiver and leader? Do you know for certain that you have a relationship with Him? Right now you might want to invite Him to come into your life. Just ask Him. Ask Him to come in and forgive all your sins. Thank Him for dying on the cross for you and arising from the dead on the third day. Tell Him that from this day forward you will follow Him and will help Him look for others who need to know Him. Tell a friend today about your decision. Soon set up a time you can follow Him in believer’s baptism. If you already made that decision, tell a friend who does not know about Jesus Christ today.

## **DAY TWO**

### **What Jesus did for me.**

**PRAYER** – Thanks for loving me enough to come and die in my place on the cross. I admit that I should have been the one who died because of my sins. Thanks for loving me enough to take my punishment. Help me to love you enough to live for you.  
In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Romans 5:6-8. *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

All of us have heard stories of soldiers giving their lives for their buddies during a war. They fell on a grenade to save their group or stepped in front of a bullet so that their friend would not have to die. I am always moved to tears when I hear these stories. I have never heard a story that describes how a guy dies for the enemy. But that is exactly what Jesus Christ did for us. We were sinners and enemies of God because of our sins. He came and died to pay for those sins so that we could become friends of God and not enemies. Can you imagine dying for people who are cursing you as you die? That is what Jesus went through. The very people that He died for were shaking their fists or making fun of him. He loved them and died anyway. He died for you so that you could have a relationship with God. He took all of your sins upon himself and said “I will pay for them with my own blood.” That’s what Jesus did for you and me.

**CHALLENGE** – Do you have any friends that could care less about God? Do you have any friends that are totally uninterested in having a relationship with Him? Make a list of those friends and start to pray for them. Ask God to touch them and help them come to understand what Jesus did for them on the cross. Do kind things for them to show them that you really care about them.

## **DAY THREE**

### **What do You want me to do?**

**PRAYER** – Lord help me to understand exactly what you want me to do. I want to thank you for offering to me the gift of eternal life. Help me to receive it and then share it my friends. In Jesus, Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Romans 6:23. *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.”* NIV

The Bible clearly shows us that all of us are sinners. We are born that way. It is impossible to get to heaven and have a relationship with God in that condition. It looks like we are totally doomed and stuck. Then all of the sudden God offers forgiveness and a relationship and eternal life as a gift. When I was a little boy my parents used to tell my brothers and me that if we were not good we would not get anything for Christmas. We would try and it would last about ½ an hour. We would end up in a fight or getting into something that we were not supposed to be in. We thought that we were doomed and that we could forget Christmas. Christmas came and our parents offered us gifts. I never once said “no, I don’t deserve it. I have been bad.” They knew how my brothers and I were and yet they still gave gifts to us. All we had to do was to reach out and receive them. God knows exactly how we are. He offers eternal life and a relationship with Him as a gift. All you have to do is reach out and receive it. You do that by inviting Jesus Christ to come into your life.

**CHALLENGE** – Even though we already talked about this a couple of days ago maybe you still have not simply invited Christ to come into you life. Remember that it is a gift. You can’t work for it. You don’t deserve it because of sin. You have to just receive it by faith. Right now you might want to invite Christ to come into your life. If you have already done that pray for your friends and family to receive the gift of eternal life. Receiving Christ is the greatest thing you can ever do. Telling someone else how to receive Christ is the next greatest thing you can ever do. That’s what God wants you to do.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **What do I do now?**

**PRAYER** – Lord I know I have received You into my life. Help me to grow in my relationship with You. I want to follow You all the days of my life. I am willing to do whatever You tell me to do. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Acts 2:41-42. *“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*  
NIV

When people trusted Jesus Christ in the New Testament times they were eager to identify with Him. They did it by being baptized by immersion in water. They wanted to follow Him all the way. Baptism is a picture of the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we are baptized we are saying that we have trusted Jesus Christ and have received the gift of eternal life. We are identifying with Him as we follow Him in baptism. The baptism of Jesus was the beginning of His public ministry. It is also the beginning of our public ministry. We are now on a mission from God. The mission is to tell others about Him. Our baptism shows the world that we mean business. It also shows God that we are willing to do whatever He says.

**CHALLENGE** – If you have not been baptized you need to tell your pastor or Sunday School teacher that you have trusted Jesus Christ and now want to be baptized. You need to pray and ask God to use you. If you did not know that your baptism was the beginning of your public ministry you need to ask God to use you from this day forward to reach other people with the message of the Gospel. This is what you are to do now.

**REMINDER-** How are you doing memorizing John 15:5? Review it and work on it.

## DAY FIVE

### How can I grow in my relationship with Christ?

**PRAYER** – Lord I know I am supposed to grow closer to You. Will You help me as I strive to get to know You better? Will You speak to me from Your Word the Bible and guide me in my journey of faith? Thanks for wanting this was more than I do.

In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read 1 Peter 2:2. *“As new born babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious”* NKJV

The Bible tells us clearly that we are to grow. Jesus said that we had to be born again or anew. When you invited Jesus into your life you became a new person. The Bible shows us that we start out as spiritual children. We have to grow spiritually just as physical children have to grow physically. Children start out on milk and then progress to more solid foods. New believers must start out with the milk of Scripture that is not too hard to understand. Then as they grow they can take more in. As a teenager I learned this little acrostic for growth from the back of the 4 Spiritual Law booklet from Campus Crusade for Christ. **“GROWTH”** **G**-go to God daily in prayer. **R** – read God’s Word daily.

**O**-obey God moment by moment. **W** – witness for Christ by your life and words.

**T**- trust God for every detail of your life. **H**- Holy Spirit. Allow Him to control and empower your daily life and Witness.” This little acrostic has helped me to grow in my relationship with Christ. I still use it every day as a guide of what I should be doing in my Christian life.

**CHALLENGE** –Write out that acrostic on a piece of paper and stick it in your Bible. Memorize what each letter stands for.

**G**  
**R**  
**O**  
**W**  
**T**  
**H**

Make sure each day you are trying to do the things it says. Spend time in each area so you can grow in your relationship with Christ.

## **DAY SIX**

### **Do I serve Jesus by myself or with other believers?**

**PRAYER** – Father, I know You have a group of people called the church who are trying to serve You. Will You help me get involved with them. Help me to find other believers who are trying to lead people to you. I want to serve others and help others come to know You. Help me to learn that when I give my life for others that I am really serving You. Help me not to wait to be asked, but to volunteer to help others who need You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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

All through the New Testament believers got together. They started worshipping on Sunday’s after the resurrection. They met in homes and in public places. It seems that they were stronger together than they were by themselves. The New Testament calls this assembly the church. The word “church” means a called our assembly. It is a group of people on a mission. The mission is to tell the whole world about Jesus and why He came. In the process people come to know Jesus and become a part of this assembly called the church. It is in the church that people are encouraged to grow in their relationship with Christ. It is in the church that we discover that God has gifted us to serve Him. This passage tells us that we are to encourage each other to love more and to do more good deeds. We are also told that we need to be faithful to and committed to the assembly that we are a part of. It means we support it with our time and our talents and our money. We are stronger when we serve Christ with a group of believers.

**CHALLENGE** –Look for ways this week that you can be of help at your church. Is there anything that you can do to make someone else’s job a little easier? One of the greatest things that you can do is to pray for those who serve. Pray for your pastor and other workers at your church. It would be good to make a list of them and to pray for them on a regular basis. Leading a church is not always the easiest ministry to be involved in. They need your prayers and your encouragement. Start looking for a place in your church that you can serve on a regular basis. Go through different classes that help you grow and that help you discover how you can serve.

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me through my Pastor or teacher?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** - Try to apply to your life this week the Scripture that your pastor or teacher reads.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He chose to come into the world and die on the cross. He did this so that we could have a relationship with Him. (Someone might play a praise song or you can listen and sing along with a CD.)

**WELCOME** – When was the first time that Jesus and God became more than a word to you? What caused it to be different?

**WORD** – Read Acts 4:1-13 and answer some of the following questions.

1. What upset the leaders in verse 29? Why would this be upsetting to them?
2. By what power or authority did Peter and John preach? (Verses 8-10)
3. What did they say about Jesus?
4. Is there any other way that people can find salvation and get to heaven than through Jesus? (Verse 12) John 14:6
5. What does verse 13 mean to you? Is there a message in it for you?

**WORKS** – As a group plan an activity that you can do to demonstrate the love of Christ to your community. Make sure that the message of Christ is shared in some way. Close in prayer praying for the members of your group. Encourage them to work on memorizing the Scripture verse for the week.

## WEEK TWO

### **The Bible is a love letter from God to me.**

This week memorize 1 John 5:13. *“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”* NIV

## DAY ONE

### **The Bible is a very special book.**

**PRAYER** – *Father, I want to thank You for giving me the Bible. I have found in it the words that give me life. Help me to spend more time reading it. Please help me to learn how to do what it says. In Jesus Name. Amen.*

**WORD** – Read 2 Peter 1:20-21. *“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s 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.”* NIV

If you own a Bible you possess a very special book. It is God’s Holy Word. The Holy Spirit inspired the people to write it. God chose to reveal His plan of having a relationship with mankind in the Bible. It is a history of God’s love for the human race. The books of the Bible have been passed down to us intact. No other book of ancient times has as many manuscripts and editions. It has been proved true over and over again. People have tried to discredit it and destroy it. Yet it still remains the number one seller. The Bible tells us the wonderful true story of how Jesus came to die for us. In it’s pages we discover the many promises that God has for us. I heard a person say once that the Bible is the only book that the author is always present every time you read it. The same Holy Spirit that inspired the writers of the Bible is there with you when you read it for yourself. You possess a very special book.

**CHALLENGE** – If you are not in the habit of reading the Bible start today. It will take a little more time than doing this devotion. You might want to start with the Gospel of John. I would encourage you to read one chapter a day. Buy yourself a pocket New Testament and carry it with you. When you find yourself waiting on someone or just hanging around pull it out and knock out a few chapters. Remember that the Bible is God’s love letter to you.

## **DAY TWO**

### **I can hear God's voice when I read the Bible.**

**PRAYER** – Dear God, would You speak to me today as I read Your Word. I want to hear from You. I want to get to know You better. I want to grow closer to You. I ask You right now to help me to really hear You and understand what You are saying to me. In Jesus Name. Amen.

**WORD** – Read John 14:23-24. *“Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”* NIV

When I read the Bible I ask God to speak to me. I know He will. I always read a chapter from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John along with the other readings that I do. I want to see what Jesus was up to. When I read it seems that one word or a phrase will kind of leap out at me. It usually applies to what I am going through at the time. I underline it and ask God to help me to do what He is telling me to do. This doesn't happen everyday but it usually happens. The key is for me to really be listening. If I am too busy or distracted by other stuff it is hard for me to hear God's voice. I need to really be listening. When I am really listening I can hear God's voice when I read the Bible.

**CHALLENGE** – Set aside a time every day that you can get by your self and start reading the New Testament. Get a notebook and write down things that speak to you. Share what you find with other believers. If you really want to get serious about this ask a friend to periodically ask you how you are doing with your Bible reading and quiet time. They will help you stay on track by your being accountable.

## **DAY THREE**

### **I need the Bible to guide me and show me the truth.**

**PRAYER** - Lord please teach me Your truth. The world is so crazy. Things come in and out of style. New information comes out faster than I am able to take it in. There are so many different opinions and philosophies. I need to know the truth. I need direction and guidance. Will You help me to learn your Word so that I can have a firm foundation for my life? Thanks. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read John 8:31-32. *“Then Jesus said...If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* NKJV.

It is very hard to have a clear understanding of truth these days. There are so many voices. There are so many opinions and sides. There is only one way for us to have a firm foundation in today's world. We need the Bible, the Word of God, to guide us. The Bible has not changed. It is timeless. It deals with the basic needs of people. Yes, ideas come and go. Things are discovered and proved by science and then changed and disproved. However modern people are empty because they have no standard by which to base their life. God has given us the Bible. Jesus said if we live in it (read it and study it and apply it) then we really are His disciples. He gives us a big promise for doing that; we will know the truth and the truth will make us free. Not many people are free these days. But you can be. I need the Bible to guide me in my life and show me the truth.

**CHALLENGE** – Write down some truths that you have discovered this week as you have been reading the Bible. The greatest truth is that God loves you and wants to have a relationship with you. Read John 3:16 and see what I mean.

## DAY FOUR

### **The Bible is the Spiritual Food I need.**

**PRAYER** – Jesus You said that we needed the Word in our life. Will You help me to see how I need it? Teach me to feast on Your Word. Help me to take it into my life and grow. I need to become strong in my Christian life. Holy Spirit will You teach it to me? In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Matthew 4:4. *“Jesus answered, It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

One of the easiest things to forget about in today’s culture is that we are spiritual beings. It is so easy to get all caught up in the physical and the emotional and neglect the spiritual. You might know someone who has an eating disorder. It is a very hard illness to deal with. All kinds of things are involved. But many Christians have a spiritual eating disorder. They neglect taking in regular portions of God’s Word. They may eat once a week or once a month or hardly ever. They might take in a little bit after a retreat or special event or concert. Jesus says in this passage to the devil that we can’t live by bread alone. We need spiritual food. He says the Word of God is spiritual food. If Jesus thought it was important to take in the Word of God as spiritual food, don’t you think you and I need to take it in on a regular basis? The Bible is the Spiritual Food I need.

**CHALLENGE** – All week long I have been encouraging you to read your Bible. Let me share a little challenge with you. I try to do this in my life. It helps remind me about reading my Bible and praying. **I don’t eat physically until I eat spiritually.** When I get up hungry and start thinking about fixing breakfast I am reminded that I am hungry spiritually. I need to read my Bible and pray first. They say that breakfast is your most important meal of the day. I say your spiritual breakfast is. **Make the Bible a regular part of your morning.** The old Quaker Oats commercial used to say “nothing is better for thee than me.” I think God should have said that. Enjoy your breakfast!

## DAY FIVE

### What should I look for when reading the Bible?

**PRAYER** – Lord teach me Your Word. I want to take it into my life and be like You. It seems during Your life You were always using it. I know that You studied it growing up. Help me to study it. Help me to learn it. Help me to memorize it. I want to be Your disciple. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read 2 Timothy 3:16. *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

God gave us this special book to change our lives. When you read the Bible you need to ask yourself some questions. You might want to write them down in a notebook as you study. When reading a passage ask: Who is speaking? Who is He speaking to? What is He speaking about? What does this passage say to me today? If you take this verse as a guide after asking those questions you can see what God is saying to you. What is this verse *teaching* me? Is God telling me to stop something? (*Rebuking*) Is He *correcting* me? Is He *training* me to be more like Jesus? The end of that passage shows that God’s goal is to equip you so that you can do the work God has called you to do. All of these things are what I should look for when reading the Bible.

**CHALLENGE** – Read 2 Timothy 2:15 and apply this method and see what God is saying to you. *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” KJV*

1. *Who is speaking?*
2. *Who is He speaking to?*
3. *What is He speaking about?*
4. *What does this passage say to me today?*
  - a. *What is this verse teaching me?*
  - b. *Is God telling me to stop something?*
  - c. *Is He correcting me?*
  - d. *Is He training me to be more like Jesus?*

This will help you as you study His Word. Get a Bible dictionary and a Concordance. Different translations are helpful. A good commentary is useful but remember the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible. Ask the Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible to teach you the Bible.

## DAY SIX

### Doing the stuff of the Bible is what I want to do.

**PRAYER** - Lord, help me to do the stuff You said in the Bible. I don't want to just read it. I want to live it. I know that I can't do this on my own. I need the power of the Holy Spirit to help me. Holy Spirit fill me with the Word of God and help me to live it out daily. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read James 1:22. *“Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”* NIV

*“Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”* KJV.

Studying the Bible is great but we study it for a reason. We study it and learn it in order to learn how to live. In the New Testament Jesus dealt with people all the time that knew the Bible. They were the religious people of His day. They knew it but it didn't make a difference in how they treated people. The Bible is a book that is supposed to change our lifestyle. It should cause us to love people. It should cause us to treat people right. It should show us how to live. We are supposed to do the Word, or live the Word. I'm not talking about mouthing off the Word but living out the Word. I don't know about you but I need God's Word to change me. I'm sure that you have heard the old saying about how you are the only Bible that some people are going to read. That is, they are going to read your life. Is your life pointing people to Jesus? Ask God to help you do what the Bible says. Doing the stuff of the Bible is what I want to do.

**CHALLENGE** - In addition to my daily Bible reading I always read at least one chapter from one of the four Gospels. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) I want to see what Jesus did. I want to learn how to live like Him. Let me encourage you to become a student of Jesus. You can do it by reading the Gospels daily. Learn to live like He lived. Ask Him to live through you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** - Try to apply to your life this week the Scripture that your pastor or teacher reads.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He gave you His precious Word to speak to you and to help you grow. (Someone might play a praise song or you can listen and sing along with a CD.)

**WELCOME** – Can anyone quote a passage from the Bible? Give it a try out loud for us. Why do you know that one? Can anyone quote the memory verse for the week? Try it.

**WORD** – Read Luke 6:46-49 and answer some of the following questions.

6. Why do you think people called Him Lord but didn't do what He said?
7. How do you think Jesus felt when these people said they knew him but did not do what He said?
8. How important according to this passage is doing what Jesus says?
9. Why do we need to do what Jesus says?
10. How will it help us deal with the storms of life?

**WORKS** – Share prayer requests. Pray for each other that each one would start to do what Jesus says. (It is good to get each person to gently lay their hand on the person they are praying for.) Try to live it out this week.

## WEEK THREE

### How to carry on a conversation with God.

This week memorize Matthew 6:9-13 KJV. *“...Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”*

## DAY ONE

### Why should I pray?

**PRAYER** – Lord, I want to thank You that You desire to have a relationship with me. Will You help me to get to know You better through prayer? I want to share my deepest secrets and hurts with You. I want to hear Your voice as You show me what to do with my life. Most of all Lord I want to be really close to You. I want us to be best friends. Thanks for even wanting to be my friend. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Mark 1:35. *“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”*

Have you ever wondered why Jesus spent so much time praying? I have. He was God in the flesh. He came from Heaven. He surely knew what he was doing. Was he asking for things in prayer? Was he asking for advice? If you study the praying of Jesus you will find that he was working on his relationship with the Father. He was working on being close to the Father. He wanted to know what the Father was thinking and doing. He only wanted to please the Father. When we pray we spend a lot of time asking for things and advice and guidance. That’s ok. We need advice and God promises to provide for us. But I believe the major reason for praying is to work on our relationship with the Father. We really need to get to know Him. We need to really listen to His voice. We need to know what He is thinking. We need that time with Him. That’s why I should pray.

**CHALLENGE** – Set a goal in your life that you will spend time with God every day in prayer. Doing these devotions can be a part of that time. Look at it like spending time with your best friend. It is not a thing done out of obligation or guilt or duty or even because you have to. It is done out of love because you want to be with Him. Start today! God really want to spend time with you.

## **DAY TWO**

### **How do you get started talking to God?**

**PRAYER** – Jesus, will you teach me how to pray? I really don't know how very well. I am willing to learn though. I need to grow close to You and I know that we have to talk if that is going to happen. So please teach me? Thanks! In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Luke 11:1. *“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”*

It seems in the New Testament that this is the only thing that the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them. They saw that it was so important to Him and they wanted to learn it too. Jesus immediately responded and gave them a pattern for prayer. That pattern is what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer or the Model Prayer. We will look at it tomorrow. Do you want to learn how to pray? Then I think you can ask the Lord to teach you. I believe He will clearly show you how to pray. I believe He wants you to learn how to pray. Asking Him to teach you how to pray is how you get started talking to God.

**CHALLENGE** - Right now bow your head and ask Him. You can use the prayer at the top if you want. But just think of Him like He is right in the room with you. (He is!) Tell Him that you really need to learn how. Tell Him you will start praying. Thank Him for showing you how. Spend some extra time talking with Him as He helps you. Enjoy your special time with the Lord today.

## DAY THREE

### Using Lord's Prayer in my daily quiet time.

**PRAYER** – Lord will You help me today as I learn how to use the Lord's Prayer. I really want to learn how to pray. Teach me. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Matthew 6:9-13 KJV. “...*Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*”

When Jesus used this model prayer for His disciples He was introducing an intimate way of praying. Calling God father shows an intimate relationship. God is a loving father. He is a caring father. He is a close father. He is a father that you can talk to about anything and be accepted. There is a word used in the New Testament referring to father and it is “abba”. It means daddy. It shows the close intimate relationship between a father and his child. The model prayer that Jesus taught includes everything you need in prayer. That's why I like using the Lord's Prayer in my daily quiet time.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to follow this pattern as you pray today. If you memorize the verse for this week this method becomes very easy and natural.

1. “*Our Father which art in heaven.*” **Thank God for being your father because you received Jesus Christ into your life**
2. “*Hallowed be thy name.*” **Tell the Lord that He is precious to you. He is your righteousness and your provider and your father. He is more.**
3. “*Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*” (The word kingdom means the rule of God.) **Ask Him to rule your life today. Whatever He wants to do is ok by you. Your will be done Lord.”**
4. “*Give us this day our daily bread.*” **Lord will you meet my needs today. I need \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Thank him for caring.**
5. “*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*” **Ask God to forgive you your sins. Be specific. Also tell him that you forgive in advance what people will do to you.**
6. “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*” **Thank Him for protecting you.** You might want to pray through the spiritual armor of Eph. 6:13-17.
7. “*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*” **End in the same way you began praising God for who He is. Tell him that He can have all the glory for whatever happens in your life.**

This may seem awkward at first but as you use it daily it becomes a part of you. You can pray a long time this way and include many things or you can pray quickly this way. This is a very old method of prayer. Give it a try today.

## DAY FOUR

### How do I know what to pray for?

**PRAYER** – Lord many times I don't have a clue on what to pray for. I'm not even sure how to ask You to help me on many things. But I come to You knowing that You want to help me as I pray. Holy Spirit, thanks for always being there when I pray. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read 1 John 5:14-15. *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And we know that he hears us –whatever we ask –we know that we have what we asked of him.”*

This seems like a really hard one, knowing God's will for certain things. Many people think that you can't know God's will on anything. I think you can. Many things that God wants done are spelled right out in the Bible. He tells us what to do. We need to get into His Word and see what He is about. Jesus said in John 15:7, *“If you abide in me and my words abide in you then you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.”* Note the process. 1. Abiding or living in Christ. That means we are close and intimate. 2. His words abiding or living in us. We are listening to Him. We are reading His Word the Bible. 3. Asking. Based upon our relationship with Him and knowing His Word we can ask Him to do certain things. We know that He will do those things because those things are what He is about. There are some things in life that you can't figure out and don't know how or what to pray. The Holy Spirit shows up at this time and helps us pray. In Romans 8:26 it says, *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.”* When you can't even make a sound He prays for you. So when you don't know how to pray the Holy Spirit helps you. When you clearly see what God's Word is saying, then you know what to pray for. God has you covered both ways. Amen!

**CHALLENGE** – What are you praying for? Write down some things. Look at these things in the light of God's Word. Do they line up with God will according to the Bible? If so you can pray with confidence about these things. Use the Word to test your prayers. If you are having a struggle on how or what to pray, ask the Holy Spirit to help you make your request to God the Father.

## DAY FIVE

### How I use the Bible to pray for people.

**PRAYER** – Lord, help me to become so familiar with Your Word that when I pray I know how to use Your Word to guide my prayers. Thank You for providing such a wonderful means to help me in my praying. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Philippians 1:9-11. *“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.”*

In this passage we see Paul’s prayer for the believers at Philippi. God’s Word is so awesome you can pray it. I can pray the same prayer for my friends where I live. For example if I have a friend named Tom. I can pray: “Lord I pray that your love may abound more and more in Tom. I pray that it he would have more insight and would be able to make right choices. Help Tom to stay pure. Fill him with the fruit of righteousness. I will glorify and praise you for what is done in Tom’s life. In Jesus name.” If I am praying for a person who is not a believer yet, I can use 2 Peter 3:9 and 2 Cor. 4:4. Let’s say her name is Donna. “Lord, I know you said that it is not your will that Donna perish but that Donna would come to repentance. Will you please draw her to yourself? Open her blind eyes so she can see the light of the Gospel. In Jesus Name, Amen.” The Bible is not magic but it does give you direction on how to pray for people. When you are so familiar with the Bible it is easy to use it in prayer. These are just a few example of how I use the Bible to pray for people.

**CHALLENGE** – Go through the Bible and look for some other prayers. Mark them and start to use them in your prayer time. Try even using the ones mentioned above to pray for your friends who have not yet come to Christ.

## DAY SIX

### **That's what hanging out with Jesus will do for you.**

**PRAYER** – Lord will You help me see the importance of starting and maintaining a daily quiet time with You. I want to hang out with You. I know that spending time with You will change my life forever. I want to be changed. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Acts 4:13. *“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.”*

I remember the first time I heard someone talk about that verse. It changed my life. I was taught that these ordinary men (fishermen) were changed because of hanging out with Jesus. He rubbed off on them. They spent so much time with Him that they started acting like Him and talking like Him and doing the stuff that He did. I realized that if I spent time with Jesus every day in my quiet time, He would rub off on me. People might even one day take note that I had been with Jesus. I made a commitment that I would have a daily quiet time and spend time with Jesus. That was a long time ago. He has changed my life. I do the things now that Jesus did. I say the things that Jesus said. I still spend time with Him. He is still changing my life. That's what hanging out with Jesus will do for you.

**CHALLENGE** – I challenge you to take this verse to heart like I did. Here is how.

1. Set aside a time every day that you will spend **time** with Jesus.
2. Have a special **place** that you have your quiet time.
3. Here are some **tools** to help. Bible, notebook, CD player for Worship CD
4. Have a **plan**.
  - a. **Worship Time**. Spend some time worshipping.
  - b. **Prayer Time**. Use the Lord's Prayer Method or any method to pray. Write down requests in notebook.
  - c. **Read the Word**. Gospel of John good place to start. Again use notebook to write down things.
  - d. **Journaling Time**. You might want to write things down like this.  
**What I am saying to God**. Your prayer and needs.  
**What God is saying to me**. Listen to Him through His Word and in your prayer time.
5. View your daily quiet time as a **special meeting with your best friend**.

I wrote a little covenant with God about my quiet time. It was something like this:

Lord I plan on meeting with you every day at \_\_\_\_\_ in my \_\_\_\_\_, until you come again in person to take me home to Heaven. In Jesus Name, Amen

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today though my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from you and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He wants to spend time with you. Worship Him because He provided a way for you to get to know Him better.

**WELCOME** –Can you remember one of the first prayers that you ever heard? Can you remember the first time you ever prayed? Share with the group about one of these experiences.

**WORD** - Read Matthew 6:5-14 and answer some of the following questions.

1. What does it mean to pray like a hypocrite?
2. If verse 8 is true then why pray?
3. What are the basic things that God covers in the Lord's Prayer? (v.9-13)
4. Why is forgiveness such a big thing?

**WORKS** – Have people share specific prayer requests about themselves. Take time to pray for each person. Everyone in the group stand around that person and lay your hand gently on their shoulder and one person pray for that person. Do that to everyone in the group.

## WEEK FOUR

### Telling God you Love Him.

This week memorize John 4:23. *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.”*

### DAY ONE

#### Why should I worship God?

**PRAYER** – Lord, will You help me to understand the importance of worship. Help me not to be afraid of what other people around me will think if I really start to worship You. I do love You and want to tell you. Help me learn how to tell You. In Jesus Name. Amen.

**WORD** – Read John 4:23-24. *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit and his worshippers must worship in spirit and truth.”*

I believe we should worship God with our whole being. It is the place that we tell him and show him that we love him. God is seeking people who will be honest before Him. He isn't impressed by a show at church or some performance for other people. He just wants you to express your love for Him. The word worship means to “kiss toward.” It means to “adore and bow down.” It is an expression of love. Sort of like a singing a love song to someone you really care about. It is an attitude of reverence and respect. Note in this passage that God is seeking people who will worship Him in spirit and truth. If God is seeking me to worship, then that is why I should worship God.

**CHALLENGE** – Start today to worship God. Sing a song to Him. Put on a worship CD and sing with it to the Lord. Get used to expressing yourself to God this way. As you sing let it come from your heart that you really love Him. Worship Him with your whole being and be honest before Him. He loves you and wants to have this relationship with you.

## **DAY TWO**

### **How You Worship God.**

**PRAYER** – Lord will You please help me to learn how to worship You. I know You desire a relationship with me. I know You want to get close to me. I want to get close to You too. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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

Worship is a heart thing. There are lots of different ways to express your love to God. You can sing or play an instrument or dance. You can play a tape or read something out loud to Him. You can sit quietly and focus on Him. The key to me is the part of this verse “in your heart.” God knows your heart and how you love Him. So no matter how you worship Him He knows you really are. It doesn’t matter what other people think of you and your method. They can’t see what’s inside you. You know deep down inside that you love God and want to somehow tell Him and show Him. Worship is a heart thing. With your heart is how you worship God.

**CHALLENGE** – Practice telling God that you love Him. Say it inside from your heart. Put on a tape and sing it to Him. Get in the habit of telling Him that you love Him. Learn to express the emotion of your heart to God. You will be glad you did. God will appreciate too.

## **DAY THREE**

### **Who is Worship for?**

**PRAYER** – Lord will you help me to see who worship is really for? I don't want to go through the motions of something that is not focused on You. I love you Lord and I give You all my worship. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Psalm 145:1-3. *“I lift you high in praise, my God my King! And I'll bless your name into eternity. I bless you every day, and keep it up from now to eternity. God is magnificent: He can never be praised enough.”* (Message)

A lot of the things we do in church or even in our Christian life are for us or other people. Much of Christianity is performance oriented. We do things because we want approval or acceptance. We do things because we think those things are expected of us by the group. To some people worship is performing or singing to a congregation. One guy said that worship is for an audience of One. Worship is for God alone. It is in worship that we tell Him that we love Him. If you are in a relationship with someone you don't let others tell that person how you feel about them. You tell them. You love them. Worship is for God and it is for you to tell Him that you love Him. No one can do that for you. Who is worship for? God.

**CHALLENGE** - Take a piece of paper and write out the reasons that you love God. You might want to include the things He has done for you. Write it like God is the person you adore most. Write it out like you are going to give Him paper. Take a minute and read your paper out loud to God.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **Things that keep us from worshipping.**

**PRAYER** – Father please help me not let anything keep me from worshipping You. Help me to see the importance of worship. Help me to honestly give my love to You. I love You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Exodus 20:3. *“You shall have no other gods before me.”*

I have never really worshiped idols but I have let other things come before my worship of God. We have all kinds of things that keep us from expressing our hearts to God. Some times we get stuck in form. We think it has to be a certain way. Some times it is guilt. We think; “why would God want me to worship Him. I just blew it.” God wants us to be honest with Him. We can confess our sin and come right into His presence. Probably one of the biggest things that keep us from worshipping God is fear. We are afraid of what other people will think of us. We are afraid that they might think less of us if we get excited about God. Afraid that they might think we are fanatics. If you go to a ball game and act crazy and yell for your team you are a loyal fan. If you go to church and let loose and worship God you are thought of as a fanatic. Don’t let anyone or anything keep you from worshipping. Be a loyal fan of God!

**CHALLENGE** – This Sunday when you go to church do something different. Sing and participate in the worship time. Stand up and sing. Lift up your hands in worship of God. Close your eyes and focus on Him. Dare to be a fan of God.

## **DAY FIVE**

### **Making worship a part of your daily life.**

**PRAYER** – Lord will You help me to see that You are a part of my daily life. Help me to learn to practice Your presence all the time. I know that You are with me. Help me to remember that all the time. Thanks for keeping an eye on me and taking care of me. I worship You alone! In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Romans 12:1. *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

God wants your whole life. God wants your whole body. He just doesn’t want you on Sunday mornings. He wants you all the time. It is so easy to get busy and forget that God is in your life. In the Old Testament they offered God sacrifices. They killed them and laid them on the altar and offered them to God. This passage says that God wants us to be living sacrifices. We must constantly lay our lives on the altar of God. In other words we tell God that He can use our lives however He wants. One of the greatest Christians that I have ever met said. “There is only one problem with living sacrifices. They keep crawling off the altar.” That is why we must lay our lives down daily. Every day we need to tell the Lord that He can have our life. As we give ourselves to Him daily we are making worship a part of our daily life.

**CHALLENGE** – Tell the Lord right now that your life belongs to Him. Tell Him that He can do anything that He wants with your life. Thank Him for wanting to use you in His kingdom.

## **DAY SIX**

### **What happens when I worship God?**

**PRAYER** – Father sometimes when I go to church I don't expect anything to happen. I'm usually right. But sometimes when I am paying attention You speak to me, You change me. Will You help me to expect You to show up when I worship? I don't want to go through the motions. I want to meet You.

**WORD** - Read Psalm 22:3. *“But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.”*

Something happens when you worship and praise God. He shows up! Many times we don't think about it. Many times we are singing songs about God and what He has done. We are going through the motions of our Sunday morning routine. We think that the singing is to get us ready for the sermon because we separate the different parts of the service. The singing is for God! It is one of the greatest things that we can ever do for God. It is the time that we tell Him that we love Him. When we do that, He shows up. He comes to heal and forgive, to love and restore. He comes to hang out with us. That's what happens when I worship God.

**CHALLENGE** – This Sunday when you go to church think about what you are doing. Remember that God is showing up. Sing to Him and tell Him that you love Him. Thank Him for being in your life. Never let your worship of God become routine. It is your job to focus on Him!

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He is worthy of all your praise and honor.

**WELCOME** – Who is your favorite sports figure or movie star? Why are they your favorite and what makes them better than the others?

**WORD** - Read John 4:21-24 and answer some of the following questions.

1. What does worship mean to you?
2. Have you ever really worshiped God? What was it like?
3. What does worshipping God do for you?
4. What is your greatest fear about worship? Be honest.
5. What would you need to do to become a better worshiper of God?

**WORKS** – Pray for each person in the group that they would become a better worshiper of God. Do this one at a time. Lay your hands gently on the shoulder of the person that you are praying for.

## **WEEK FIVE**

### **How to live like the winner you are.**

This week memorize 1 John 4:4. *“You are of God, little children, and overcome them: because greater is he who is in you, than he who is in the world.”*

## **DAY ONE**

### **Watch Out for our enemy.**

**PRAYER** - Lord I want to thank You that You already won the victory for me on the cross. I know that Satan will try to mess me up but I have faith in You because You are my protector. Help me to learn how to live in the victory that You won for me. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read 1 Peter 5:8-9. *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”*

The Bible clearly teaches us that we have an enemy and that we are in the middle of a fight. All the way through the Bible the devil was there to mess people up. He tempted Jesus but Jesus won the victory. He not only resisted but He defeated Satan when He died on the cross and arose from the dead. This passage tells us to watch out because we do have an enemy. We can win the battle by standing firmly in our faith in Christ. Because Jesus won the victory we will win too. Nevertheless we need to watch out for our enemy.

**CHALLENGE** – Look at ways that the devil is after you. Ask Christ to come and help you as you stand against the enemy. How can you win the battle in these different areas? Look up some scriptures that will help you deal with these areas. Stay Away from those things that cause you to fall.

## **DAY TWO**

### **How you are tempted.**

**PRAYER** – Father, I want to thank You for looking out for me. I know that I will face temptation here but I also know that You will help me. Thanks for giving me the Bible to help me understand. Thanks for sending Jesus to die for all of my sin. I do love You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read 1 John 2:16. *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”* (KJV)

When Satan tempts us he hits us right where we live. He uses normal urges to get us. Sometimes we expect some guy in a devil suit with a pitchfork to show up. He is slicker than that. He works on our bodies and our eyes and our pride. Remember when Jesus was tempted. He worked on his hunger. He worked on his eyes by showing him all the kingdoms of the world. He even worked on his pride when he told him to jump off the temple and angels would catch him. Jesus was aware of what was going on. You need to be aware too. That’s how you are tempted.

**CHALLENGE** – Be alert to areas of your life that are weak. Ask God to help you to get stronger in Him. Stay away from things that lead you astray. You are not alone in your temptation. God is with you!

## **DAY THREE**

### **What to do when you are tempted.**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I want to thank You for not allowing me to be tempted above what I can handle. Thanks for always providing a way out for me. Please help me to be looking for that way out. Thanks for paying for all of my sin on the cross. In Jesus Name. Amen.

**WORD** – Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. *“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”* (NIV)

One of the most common things that we think we when go through something is that we are the only one that has ever done that. Satan likes to single us out and make us feel alone. This passage is saying that the temptations that we face are common. That other people are going through the same thing. It also tells us that we are not alone. God is with us. He is faithful it says. He is faithful to provide a way of escape for us. God is so cool. He does that so we can handle it. He does that so we can overcome the temptation. Our job is to look for the way of escape. Our job is to take that way out that God provides for us. That’s what you do when you are tempted.

**CHALLENGE** - Begin today to actively look for ways out when you are tempted. They are always there but sometimes we never look for them. We usually give in and then beat ourselves up because we are weak. Open your eyes today. God has provided a way out!

## **DAY FOUR**

### **Look at what Jesus did when He was tempted.**

**PRAYER** – Lord help me to be like Jesus. I need so badly to live like Him. I know that the only way that this can happen is if You show up in my life everyday. Please show up. I need You. Teach me to use Your Word like Jesus. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Matthew 4:4. *“Jesus answered, “It is written, Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God.””*

If you read Matthew 4:1-11, you will see the details of what Jesus did when He was tempted. This verse is the essence of it. He used the Bible when He was tempted. That is why it is important for you to read the Bible and memorize it. It is a weapon that we can use when we are tempted. Jesus said over and over again, “It is written.” He used God’s Word on his enemy the Devil. He spoke truth into the situation. I heard an old pastor once say that when he was tempted he quoted the Bible out loud at the devil. Use the Word that God gave you. If Satan came and tempted you to steal something would you know a Scripture that you could use to fight him off? Using the Bible was what Jesus did when He was tempted.

**CHALLENGE** – Look at some of the areas that you are tempted in the most. Try to find some Bible verses that relate to that area. Write them down and memorize them. Then use them when you are tempted in that area. You will overcome just like Jesus did.

## **DAY FIVE**

### **Don't let the enemy set one-foot inside your door.**

**PRAYER** – Lord, help me to be alert to what the Devil wants to do in my life. I do want to please You. I don't want to loose the battle. I am placing myself in Your strong hands. Thanks for keeping me safe. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read Ephesians 4:27. *“and do not give the devil a foothold.”*

Have you ever heard the expression: Give him an inch and he will take a mile?” That is exactly how the devil works. He wants you to think that that little thing that you did doesn't matter. That is how he starts out. Each time he takes a little bit more. If he can get you to develop patterns in your life then he can control you in certain situations. These little habits develop into strongholds in your life. They are strongholds of the enemy. A long time ago an encyclopedia salesman came to our door. He was very good. I noticed that he was trying to get me to let him come in. Well I did. It wasn't long until I was the proud owner of a set of books that was probably out of date when they first came off the press. I learned a lesson that day. Don't let them come in. I kind of see the devil like a salesman. If I let him in just a little then it won't be long until I have the whole set. Don't give him a foothold. Don't let the enemy set one-foot inside your door.

**CHALLENGE** – Look at some of the little things that you regularly loose the battle in. How can you stop that process from happening? Ask God to help you to stop the enemy from getting a foothold in your life.

## **DAY SIX**

### **Here are some weapons that you can use in the battle.**

**PRAYER** – Lord, you have given me some awesome weapons in this fight. Help me to learn how to use them. I want to win the battle. I want to live in Your victory. Thanks for providing them for me. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. *“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*

God has given us spiritual weapons to fight our spiritual battle. If you read Ephesians 6:10-18, you will see that we are to be dressed for battle. It describes our spiritual weapons like those of a Roman soldier. People in the armed forces have certain weapons they use and certain things that they wear to protect them. God has provided the same things for us only better. No one in the Marines would go out to battle not properly dressed and equipped. However many Christians face the battle every day unequipped and unprotected. You need to suit up with God’s armor. Cover yourself in prayer and take His Word, which is called the “sword of the Spirit.” Notice in the passage said we have weapons that have “divine power.” That means that our weapons have the power of God behind them. Those are the kind of weapons that you can use in battle.

**CHALLENGE** – Take some time to get familiar with the weapons that God has provided. When you go through boot camp you are taught to get familiar with your weapons. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. You have the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness. You have the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit. You have the shoes of the Gospel of peace. You have the belt of truth. Get familiar especially with your sword, which is the Word of God. Remember that you are in a war.

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He has given us the victory in Christ.

**WELCOME** – How many of you have ever seen the Rambo movies? What did you like best about Rambo? (Or your favorite action hero.)

**WORD** - Read Matthew 4:1-11 and answer some of the following questions.

6. How did Satan tempt Jesus?
7. How did Jesus respond to the temptations that he met?
8. Why didn't Jesus just nail Satan and do away with him?
9. Why do you think Jesus used the Bible in responding to his temptations?
10. How do you respond to temptations? What can you do to improve?

**WORKS** – Pray for each person in the group that they would learn how to use the Word when they are tempted. Ask other people to pray for you. Ask for prayer requests from the group.

## **WEEK SIX**

### **The Power to Make It**

This week memorize Ephesians 5:17-18. *“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit.”*

## **DAY ONE**

### **Who is the Holy Spirit?**

**PRAYER** – Father I want to thank You for sending Jesus into the world to die for my sins and arising from the dead on the third day. I want to also thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to help me live the Christian life. Dear Holy Spirit. I want to get to know You better. Thank You for being in my life. Thanks for helping me live for Jesus. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Genesis 1:2. *“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”*

The Holy Spirit is God. He is the third person of the Trinity. He was right there at creation working to create the earth. He came upon people all the way through the Old Testament. He led people to do God’s will. He was there in the New Testament when He descended upon Jesus at his baptism. He came in power on the day of Pentecost to empower the disciples to spread the Gospel around the world. He is right there in your life. He wants to help you grow in your Christian faith. He wants to lead you to follow God’s will for your life. He wants to give you power to tell others about Jesus. He is the Spirit of God. Who is the Holy Spirit? He is God.

**CHALLENGE** – Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to get to know Him better. Ask Him to lead you as you try to live the Christian life. Ask Him to help you demonstrate God’s love to your friends and other people you come in contact with.

## **DAY TWO**

### **What does the Holy Spirit do?**

**PRAYER** - Father, will You show me how the Holy Spirit works in my life and in the life of my friends. Help me to see Him at work. Help me to give Him credit as He changes my friends and me. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read John 16:8 *“When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment,”*

The Holy Spirit is busy showing people their need of God. You could never become a Christian if it were not for the Holy Spirit. He was there in your life to help you see your need of Christ. He was showing you your sin and how you are in need of someone to forgive you. He comes to live inside you when you ask Christ to come into your life. He then guides you and helps you to live like Jesus. He is very active in your life. That’s what the Holy Spirit does.

**CHALLENGE** – Start to listen to your friends and to other people and see if they ever talk about their needs and maybe even God. Watch their life and see what they are going through. It is possible for you to see the Holy Spirit at work. Ask Him to help you as you observe what He is doing in your world.

## **DAY THREE**

### **I am a walking temple.**

**PRAYER** – Dear Holy Spirit. Would You help me to realize that You live inside me. That my body is Your temple your dwelling place. Help me to take care of the temple that You live in. Help me to be aware that wherever I go and whatever I do I have Your temple going and doing that with me. Thanks for being in my life. I don't ever have to worry about being alone. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”*

Did you know that when you invited Christ into your life the Holy Spirit came to live inside you? Your spirit is now the place where God's Spirit dwells. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Wow! Jesus paid the ultimate price on the cross for you and your sins. He now works in the world through you. You might ask how He does it. He does it because He lives in you. When you go somewhere He is there in you. I remember praying in a hard situation asking God where He was in that situation. I remember hearing in my mind a still small voice that said, “I am here in you.” The Holy Spirit was letting me know that it would be ok because He was there inside me. I guess I am a walking temple. You are too.

**CHALLENGE** – Let me encourage you to remind yourself each day as you get up that the Holy Spirit lives inside you. Remind yourself that as you go to school or work the Holy Spirit is going right there with you. Ask Him to use you at school and at work.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **You are a gifted child of God.**

**PRAYER** – Father, thank You for giving me the greatest gift of all and that is Your Son Jesus Christ. Thanks for not leaving me helpless on this planet. Thank you for giving me the gift of the Holy Spirit. I know with You in my life I will make it. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read 1 Peter 4:10. *“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”*

When the Holy Spirit comes in your life he brings lots of presents with him. God needs people to do different jobs in the kingdom. Most of these jobs require supernatural abilities. Since we don’t have any on our own the Holy Spirit gives them to us. You may not think that some of the things you do are supernatural but look at what God does with it. Something as simple as serving someone seems like an easy thing to do, but God takes it and touches someone’s heart and causes them to be open to Him. That is supernatural. Our focus should not be on the gifts but on the Giver of the gifts. Our focus should not be on what we are able to do but on the people that need to be touched by God. All of God’s kids are gifted kids. You are a gifted child of God.

**CHALLENGE** – This week think about what you like to do in serving God. This should be something you enjoy and see God working through you. As you observe this you will discover what gift God is using through you to touch other people. Remember don’t focus on your gift but on God. Also look for ways to serve the people He died for using the gift He has given you.

## **DAY FIVE**

### **I want to live like Jesus.**

**PRAYER** – Lord, help me to be like Jesus. Teach me how to allow You to lead my life. I want to really learn to live like Jesus lived. I know that is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. Please produce your fruit in my life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Galatians 5:22-23. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

There is a little bracelet that a lot of Christians wear. It has the letters WWJD written on it. It means what would Jesus do? That is a real good question to ask yourself. But because the Holy Spirit lives within us and we are His temple, we might want to ask the Holy Spirit within us to help us do what Jesus did. JWJDYWTD. “Jesus What Do You Want To DO?” (That would be my bracelet. I don’t think it will sell.) How did Jesus care about people? How did Jesus really love people? He did it because the Holy Spirit was in him too. If you look at the fruit of the Spirit in this verse you see exactly how Jesus acted and reacted. God wants to produce the same kind of fruit within us. God has given us the power to live like Jesus. Let His fruit grow in your life.

**CHALLENGE** – In different situations this week ask the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in your life. Let Him help you with your actions and reactions. Let the fruit of the Spirit grow in your life as you seek to follow Him.

## **DAY SIX**

### **Learning to live by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**PRAYER** – Dear Holy Spirit, please come and fill me with your power. I yield my life to You. I want to live like Jesus so other people can experience the love and forgiveness that I have experienced. Please take control of my life day by day as I turn it over to You. I ask it in simple childlike faith. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Ephesians 5:17-18. *“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit.”*

Your life and my life are about control or who is in charge. If someone takes a chemical into their body whether it is alcohol or some other drug they are yielding to the control of that chemical. The Bible is telling us not to do that. It is saying that we should only allow the Holy Spirit to control us. Remember I said that when you become a Christian you get the Holy Spirit, He comes to live in you and your body becomes His temple? When you are filled with the Holy Spirit He gets you. You turn over control and allow Him to direct your life, your wants and desires. When you do that the power of the Holy Spirit is released in your life and you now have the power to live a victorious Christian life. I believe you need to do that for the first time if you have never done it. I also believe you need to yield to the Holy Spirit every day. That is how you learn to live by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**CHALLENGE** – Pray that prayer again that you just prayed at the beginning of this reading. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you. Turn over your life to Him. Yield control to Him. He will change your life. You will receive power to live the Christian life that you always wanted to live.

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He has given you the Holy Spirit to help you live the Christian life.

**WELCOME** – How many of you have ever seen someone drunk or on drugs on TV or in real life? Other than being funny and dangerous what did you notice about them? What was in control of them?

**WORD** - Read Ephesians 5:15-21 and answer some of the following questions.

11. Why should we make the most of every opportunity to live for Christ?
12. Can a Christian know what God's will is?
13. What does it mean when it says to be filled with the Holy Spirit?
14. What is your greatest fear about being filled with the Holy Spirit?
15. What would you do if you had the power to really live the Christian life?

**WORKS** – Pray for each person in the group one at a time and ask the Holy Spirit to come and fill them right now. Lay your hands gently on the shoulder of the person that you are praying for.

## WEEK SEVEN

### The greatest story ever told.

This week memorize Acts 1:8. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” NIV*

## DAY ONE

### People are missing and need the Lord.

**PRAYER** - Dear Father, help me to tell my friends about You. I know they need You in their life. Please forgive me for not being very concerned about them. My desire is that all my friends and family have a real relationship with You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Luke 19:9-10. *“Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”*

Jesus describes people as missing. They are missing from God’s family. That means they are in need of being found. They are like those pictures of missing children on milk cartons or pictures on the backs of semi trucks. They are in need of a Savior someone who wants to find them. He came to find people so they could have a relationship with God. People without Him in their life have no real direction and purpose. They are lost and heading for an eternity separated from God in Hell. They don’t even know where they are going. Jesus came to find these people and pay for their sins on the cross. We have to tell them about Jesus so they can be found. We have to tell them so they can be forgiven and go to heaven. We have to help find those missing from God’s family and tell them how to come home. Will you tell them?

**CHALLENGE** – Make a list of your friends and family that you are not sure about their relationship with God. Start to pray for them. Ask God to work in their lives. Ask God to use you to introduce them to Jesus so they can experience His love and forgiveness.

## DAY TWO

### Jesus is the only way to Heaven.

**PRAYER** – Father will You help me tell people how they can have a real relationship with You. Many of them know about Jesus but they have never experienced His love and forgiveness. I really care about my friends. Help me to care enough to tell them about You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read John 14:6. *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Many people in the world today think that there are many roads to heaven. They think that all religions are the same. They think that if you’re just sincere then you will be ok. One of the sad things is that people can be sincerely wrong. Jesus who was the Son of God said that there is only one road to Heaven. He is the road. If you want to go to Heaven and see the Father you have to go through Jesus. He is the only way. That is why it is so important for us to tell people about Him. Religion will not get you to Heaven anyway. You have to have a relationship with God through Jesus. There is only one way to Heaven. It is Jesus. He is the only way to Heaven.

**CHALLENGE** – As you think about Jesus being the only way to Heaven you might want to look at some other passages that confirm that. Look up and read Acts 4:12. Also see John 14:6 and 1 Timothy 2:5-6. Continue to pray for people o your list. Ask God to help you tell them about how they can be forgiven.

## **DAY THREE**

### **Jesus commanded that we go.**

**PRAYER** - Lord, I want to obey what You commanded. Help me to go and tell my world about Your Son Jesus Christ and how He died on the cross so that people could be forgiven. I know that if I don't go they will never know about You and Your love and forgiveness. Help me to obey Your command. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Mark 16:15. *“He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”*

The last command that Jesus gave while He was on the earth was that His followers were to go all over the world and tell people the Good News. That good news is that people can be found and have forgiveness if they invite Jesus Christ into their lives. That command still stands today. We are to do the same thing. Jesus hasn't given any new commands. We still have a whole world to reach. We still have to go until we tell the whole world. Jesus didn't beg people to go and tell the Good News. He didn't suggest that we go and tell the Good News. He didn't even ask that we would go and tell the Good News. Jesus commanded that we go.

**CHALLENGE** – Begin today to work on the basic message of the Good News so that you will be able to obey this command. The basic message is:

1. People are lost and are sinners. Rom. 3:23.
2. Jesus came to die and pay for their sins on the cross. Rom. 5:8.
3. Everyone has to receive Christ into their life to become a child of God. John 1:12.
4. We need to tell someone that we made this commitment to Christ. Rom. 10:9-10.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **You don't have to go alone.**

**PRAYER** – Father I am to thank You that I don't have to go and tell people by myself. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit into my life. Lord will You give me Your power as I go to introduce people to You. Teach me to depend on the Holy Spirit. Teach me to listen to His lead as I tell people about you. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Acts 1:8. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Jesus gave the disciples the command to go but He told them to wait first until they received the power to go. That power was the power of the Holy Spirit. When He came into their lives they were never alone again. You as a believer in Jesus Christ have that same power that the early Christians had. It is the power of the Holy Spirit. As we are filled with the Holy Spirit God empowers us to witness and tell people about Jesus Christ. He will help us as we go to witness for Him. He will give you power as you go. You don't have to go alone.

**CHALLENGE** – Right now ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Ask Him to empower you to be a witness for Him. Yield your life to Him. Allow Him to be first place in your life. Then step out and try to tell others about Him. He will give you the power and the boldness as you go.

## **DAY FIVE**

### **Let me tell you about what happened to me.**

**PRAYER** – Father thank You for being in my life. I want to thank You that I have a relationship with You through Jesus Christ. I still remember the time that I invited You into my life. Lord will You help me to tell someone else about what You have done for me. Thank you that I have a story. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Acts 4:20. *“For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”*

When something good happens in your life you can't help telling others about it. They are usually really glad to share in your story. The greatest thing that could ever happen in anyone's life is for them to meet Jesus and have their sins forgiven. I know when that happened to me. People can argue religion and the Bible and church and all kinds of things, but they can't argue about what happened inside you. You have a story to tell. People deserve to hear your story. It is a common story among believers but it has a special twist. The twist is that it is about you and how you invited Jesus Christ into your life. It is about the difference that it is making in your life. You might have some friends who need to hear this statement. “Let me tell you about what happened to me.”

**CHALLENGE** – Take a piece of paper and answer these questions. How was my life before I met Jesus Christ? How did I invite Christ into my life? What difference is Christ making in my life right now? These questions will help you formulate your story. It is then up to you to tell it.

## **DAY SIX**

### **Let me demonstrate God's love in a practical way.**

**PRAYER** – Father will You help me to think of unique ways to demonstrate Your love to people. I want to do practical things that will show people real kindness and love. I want it to spark a response toward You. Please cause them to ask me why I am doing what I do. I will tell them anyway but please touch them with Your love through my kind acts. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Matthew 5:13-16. *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no long good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by me. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

Many people in our culture are hard to the Gospel message. They have heard preachers preach and are unimpressed. However when someone comes along and serves them for no apparent reason it strikes a chord in their heart. The act of kindness touches them in a way that they don't expect. You might give someone a coke or a cup of coffee. You might rake their yard or wash their car. You might help a person at your work. Just a simple way to tell them that God loves them, no strings attached. They might even ask you why you did that kind thing for them. You can tell them that you are demonstrating God's love in a practical way.

**CHALLENGE** – Make a list of ways that you can demonstrate God's love to people. Get together with your friends about once a month and do a project demonstrating God's love. For more ideas see: [www.servantevangelism.com](http://www.servantevangelism.com)

## **DAY SEVEN**

### **What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

### **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He has given You the Holy Spirit to empower you to witness..

**WELCOME** – Have you ever gotten lost as a kid or even as an adult? What happened and how did you get help?

**WORD** - Read Luke 15: 3-7 and answer some of the following questions.

Why would this guy leave 99 sheep to go look for just one that was lost?

Why would he have a party?

Why is Jesus telling this story and the other two stories? (Lost coin and lost son.)

What does this story tell us about God and about what he thinks about lost people.

What happened in Heaven the day that you trusted Christ? How does that make you feel?

**WORKS** – Pray for each person in the group that they would begin to tell their friends and families about Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill them with His fire to be bold witness for Christ. Ask your group to make a list of their friends who do not yet know Christ. Pray for them as a group.

WEEK SEVEN DAY SEVEN

## WEEK 8

### How to live with the Family of God.

This week memorize Matthew 16:18. *“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell will not overcome it.”*

## DAY ONE

### What did Jesus think about the church?

**PRAYER** – Father thank You for the church, which is made up of those who have received Christ as Savior. Help me to love my church and also learn to serve You through it. Thank You that You have put people from my church in my life that are like family. Help me to encourage those who attend with me. Help me to love the church like you do. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Ephesians 5:25. *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”*

This passage clearly tells us that Christ loved the church. The church is made up of people. People like you and me who have received Christ into their lives. The word “church” is used almost 100 times in the New Testament. Over 90 of those times it refers to a local group of people who get together for worship and fellowship and sharing the Gospel with their world. It was important that they get together. Jesus loves that group of people. They are a part of His family. He loves them so much that He died for them. What does Jesus think about the church? He thinks they are so special they he was willing to die for them.

**CHALLENGE** – How faithful are you to your church? Do you even know what your church does? Do you even know the people of your church? This week take some time to get familiar with your own church. If you don’t have a church, find one that tells people about Jesus and become a part of it. Learn to love it just like Jesus did.

## **DAY TWO**

### **Why should I go to church?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, will you help me to look for ways to serve You? I want to thank you that I am a part of a church that loves You and that wants to tell people about You. Help me to be faithful to my church. Help me to see that my going not only blesses me but encourages others who love you too. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Hebrews 10:23-25 *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Many times people go to church for what they can get. That’s ok but we need to get past that part. Have you ever thought about going because you have something to give? There might be something that you can do to minister to others. There maybe someplace for you to help. This passage tells us that we need to be faithful in going but it also says that we are supposed to encourage others to love more and to do more for Christ in our world. Why should I go to church? Because I have something to give others. I want to cause others to love more and serve more. I can’t do that if I’m not there.

**CHALLENGE** - From this day forward you need to be faithful to what is happening at your church. Make sure you show up at your small group each week. Don’t let anything other than God cause you to miss. My dad used to say that we would be there unless we were “providentially hindered.” That means God would be the one to cause you to miss. It very rarely happens. Be there

## **DAY THREE**

### **How does my church make it financially?**

**PRAYER** - Father, will You help me to be faithful in supporting my church with my tithes and offerings. I spend money on everything else. Help me to make giving a part of my Christian life. Besides, You gave the greatest gift of all for me, Jesus. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read 2 Corinthians 8:7. *“But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”*

We are to grow in every area of our Christian life. We are to excel according to this passage. That means we are not to be regular Christians who just go and sit and listen and take. We are to go and grow and participate and give. You have probably heard it said that you should give your time and talent and tithe to the Lord. Tithing is giving 10% of your gross income to the Lord through your local church. 10% is the starting place for a Christian to give. We should excel which means we should give more. When you give you are allowing God’s grace to bless others through your gift. Your church is blessed because you are helping provide for salaries and the regular budget expenses of the church but it goes way beyond that. You are blessing the world because your church passes a percentage of that money on to missionaries and other organizations that spread the Gospel around the world. Because of your faithfulness in giving your church makes it financially. Thanks for making a difference.

**CHALLENGE** – If you are not in the habit of tithing and giving start this week. I would encourage you to give at least 10% of your money from your job or allowance to the Lord through your local church. Make this a habit in your life. Set that money aside first right when you get it. That way you are making sure that you can be faithful in this grace of giving.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **How do I become a part of the church?**

**PRAYER** – Father, help me to become a vital part of my church. I want to be faithful and helpful and encouraging. I don't want to just be a number. I want to be someone who makes a difference in my world through my local church. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Acts 2:41-42. *“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*

Those who received Christ into their lives in the New Testament were baptized. When they were baptized they became a part of that body of believers. Note it says they were added to their number. Baptism is your first step in your growth as a Christian. You are identifying with Christ's death and burial and resurrection. You are identifying with the other believers because they have been baptized too. When Jesus was baptized it was the beginning of His public ministry. I believe the same is true for you. Your ministry begins when you are baptized. You are now a vital part of your church as you minister in Jesus name.

**CHALLENGE** – If you have not followed Jesus in believer's baptism you need to do that soon. Tell your teacher or pastor that you have received Christ and now want to be baptized. Invite your friends and family to your baptism. It is a great way to start out your ministry for the Lord. Others will see that you really are serious about following Jesus.

## DAY FIVE

### WHAT DOES THE CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

**PRAYER** - Lord help me to worship and celebrate when we come together on Sunday's. Help me also to be faithful to my small group. I know that I need both in my life. I need to worship and praise You on Sunday's but I also know that I need other believers to be involved in my life. Help me to be balanced in my walk with You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** - Read Acts 20:20. *"You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house."*

The early church got together for public worship and celebration. But you will note in the book of Acts it tells us that they met from house to house. They met in small groups or home groups. It is really important that you gather for worship on Sundays and celebrate God and what He has done in your life. We need that. But we also need to meet in small groups so that we can get to know each other. It is in the small group that you learn about each other. It is in the small group that you minister to each other. It is in the small group that you reach out to your neighborhood and town with the Good News of the Gospel. What does the church look like? It looks like people like you and me who love to worship and study the Word. It looks like people like you and me who like to get together in homes and eat and fellowship and share our dreams and hurts with each other. The church looks a lot like you!

**CHALLENGE** - This week make sure that you worship on Sundays with the whole body of believers but also make sure that you are in your group adding to the faith of other believers. If you don't have a group, call the church to find one.

## **DAY SIX**

### **How is God going to reach the world?**

**PRAYER** – Father will you help me to be active in sharing my faith. I know that You have allowed me to be a part of a team in doing this. You call Your team the church. I want to be a faithful part of my team (church). My friends will never know the forgiveness that You have to offer through Christ unless I tell them. Thank you that I don't have to do this alone. I have a church surrounding me and helping me share my faith. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Read Matthew 28:19-20. *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Jesus' plan for reaching the world was through people. He gave His command to His disciples. He told them to go and make followers of Jesus. He told them to teach them all that He commanded them. That is the mission and the plan for reaching the world. God's plan is for your church and my church to carry out that command. It is something that we do as a church. You go and make disciples. When you gather them together you have a church. Then they send people out and it starts again. Another church. How is God going to reach the world? He is going to reach them through your church and my church carrying out the Great Commission of Jesus, which is for us to Go. Let's do it!

**CHALLENGE** – What is your churches' plan for reaching your area and the world? Ask someone that question. Also be willing to be a part of the plan. You might want to encourage your group to be active in sharing the Gospel in your town. God's plan for reaching the world is through you and your church.

## **DAY SEVEN**

**What is God saying to me today through my teacher or Pastor?**

**PRAYER** – Lord, I am going to worship You today. I am looking forward to hearing from You and being changed by Your presence. Speak to me today. In Jesus Name, Amen.

**WORD** – Write down the Scripture that your teacher or pastor uses today. Read it again when you get home.

**CHALLENGE** – Try to apply the Scripture that your pastor or teacher read to your life this week.

## **GROUP TIME**

**WORSHIP** – Worship God because He has provided a place for us to grow as Christians.

**WELCOME** – When you hear the word **church** what do you think of? What is one of the funniest things that you have ever seen in a church?

**WORD** - Read Acts 2:41-47 and answer some of the following questions.

16. What was the message that they accepted?
17. What did they do right after they accepted it?
18. What was your baptism like?
19. What are some things that speak to you from verses 42-47?
20. What are some ways that we can reach out with the message of Christ to the people we know?

**WORKS** – Pray for each person in the group that they would grow as believers and allow God to use them to add to the ministry of this church. Is there some ministry at your church that your group can help do from time to time?