

## Lesson 1: The Need for the Church

### Key Verses:

***“Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”***  
(Matthew 16:18)

***“And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”*** (Acts 2:47)

***“That the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church...”***  
(Ephesians 3:10)

**Main Idea:** As a new Christian, it is essential to be a part of a local church. Why is this part of God’s plan?

### Points to Cover:

#### I. The church is described as the body of Christ

a. Read Ephesians 1:22-23 and discuss the principle (illustration) of the head/body. What is the importance of the head? What is the importance of the body?

b. A Christian is a follower of Christ. Is it possible to follow Christ and not be connected to the church? Why or why not?

c. The Bible says there is “one body” in Ephesians 4:4. Discuss the implications of this truth. What spirit should we possess as we discuss this topic? (James 4:6)

#### II. What is the function of the church?

a. Worship (Hebrews 13:15)

b. To glorify God (Ephesians 1:13-14)

c. To teach the word of God (2nd Timothy 4:1-2)

d. To encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13, 10:23-25)

e. To help brothers and sisters in need (1st Corinthians 16:1)

d. What are not some functions of the church? (entertainment, social issues?)

#### III. What is your role in the church?

a. Grow (1st Peter 2:2)

b. Participate (Hebrews 10:24-25)

c. Contribute (Matthew 6:33)

## Lesson 2: The Need for the Word

### Key Verses:

***“Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.” (1st Peter 2:2)***

***“from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2nd Timothy 3:15)***

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

**Main Idea:** As a new Christian, it is essential to understand that the word of God is food for your spirit and soul. Without it, you will starve spiritually.

### Points to Cover:

#### I. The word of God is described using the analogy of food

a. We need food to live, both spiritually and physically. Read 1st Peter 2:1-3 and discuss how babies long for food.... make spiritual applications.

b. Read Hebrews 5:12-14. Is it wrong for babies to only drink milk? Is it strange for adults to only drink milk? Relate this to the need for spiritual growth and discuss how Bible study and the word of God lead to growth.

c. Read Matthew 4:4. How does Jesus answer the temptation of Satan? How does man *truly live*?

#### II. The word of God is described using the analogy of a SWORD

a. The word of God is the sword of the \_\_\_\_\_. (Ephesians 6:17) What does this mean?

b. What words are used to describe the word of God in Hebrews 4:12-13? What is the word of God able to do (as described in *these* verses)?

c. What is the word of God able to do as discussed in James 1:21?

d. If the word of God is a sword, how should we handle it? (2nd Timothy 2:15; Carefully!)

#### III. What is your responsibility to the Word?

a. Read it. Study it. (Romans 10:17, 2nd Timothy 2:15, 2nd Timothy 3:16-17)

b. Obey it. (James 1:22)

## Lesson 3: The Need for Repentance

### Key Verses:

***“Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)***

***“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)***

***“Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:5)***

**Main Idea:** Discuss the need for repentance. As we grow in Christ, we learn more about what is pleasing to Him and how we need to repent of old practices to grow to become like Jesus.

### Points to Cover:

#### I. The Importance of Repentance

- a. The word repentance means to change one’s behavior, to turn away from sin and to turn toward God. (Think of a car going down the wrong road.... sometimes you gotta make a u-turn!)
- b. Repentance was one of the first principles of the early preaching of the Gospel (Mathew 3:2, 4:17).
- c. What did John require with repentance? (Matthew 3:8)
- d. What specific teaching did John give to help people understand repentance? (Luke 3:10-14)
  - i. What did he require of the crowds? (Luke 3:10-11)
  - ii. What did he require of the tax collectors? (Luke 3:12-13)
  - iii. What did he require of the soldiers? (Luke 3:14)
- e. How important is repentance? (Luke 13:1-5)

#### II. The Need for Repentance.

- a. Are there issues that we need to repent of as we leave the world and come to Christ? (James 4:4)
- b. Issues to consider... clothes we wear, civil obedience, responsibilities in the work place, copyright laws, movies/entertainment, sexual purity, church attendance, willingness to forgive others.

## Lesson 4: The Need for Prayer

### Key Verses:

***“Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (Matthew 6:11-13)***

***“With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18)***

***“Pray without ceasing.” (1st Thessalonians 5:17)***

**Main Idea:** As a new Christian, it is essential to communicate with God. We *listen* when we read His word, we *talk* to Him when we pray. How important is communication in a relationship?

### Points to Cover:

#### I. The importance of prayer is emphasized over and over again in God’s word

- a. Discuss key verses noted above.
- b. Read Matthew 7:7-11? What does Jesus tell us to do in order to find God? How does God compare to an earthly father?
- c. Read 1 Peter 5:7? What does God want us to do with our problems? How do we do this?
- d. What else does God desire from our prayers? (1st Thessalonians 5:18) Is it reasonable for God to desire and expect this? Why?

#### II. What can you do to improve in this area?

- a. Be consistent (Daniel 6:10)
- b. When/where will you offer your best prayers?! (Matthew 6:5-7)
- c. How can we collectively be more like the early church? (Acts 12:5, Acts 12:12)
- d. What power can we tap into through prayer? (Ephesians 3:20-21)
- e. What can we learn from Jesus’ example? (Luke 6:12)
- d. What can we learn from Elijah’s example? (James 5:17-18, note Elijah was just a man, just like us)

## Lesson 5: A Light to the World

Key Verses: Matthew 5:14-16

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.*

*Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.*

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

**Main Idea:** As a new Christian, a major part in your growth is to have a positive influence for Christ on those around you.

### Points to Cover:

#### I. Jesus identifies what makes a Christian a real Christian

- a. Read the beatitudes and discuss what it means to be poor in spirit, mourn, pure in heart etc.
- b. Discuss the different between outward religion and inward religion. Where does Jesus focus?
- c. Read Matthew 5:21-42. Would adopting these characteristics make you stand out?

#### II. God intends for others to see the change in you

- a. Talk about the purpose of being the salt of the earth? How would salt have been helpful?
- b. Lights aren't meant to be hidden. What are some ways we can "hide our light"?
- c. Even as a good person, people will still persecute you. Why should we joy in that?

#### III. Your light is meant to bring others to God

- a. How do we show people our good deeds, without showing off?
- b. Be sure that people know you are doing good for GOD, and not for society, yourself, etc.
- c. Discuss some bible characters that let their good works bring others to God.

## Lesson 6: Leaving Worry Behind

### Key Verses: Matthew 6:25-27

*"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"*

*Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"*

*And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?"*

**Main Idea:** The people of the world are consumed with concern for this life. As a Christian, God wants to free us from that mindset of anxiety.

### Points to Cover:

#### I. The temporary nature of this world

- a. What kinds of things can happen to treasures in this life? Do they make good investments?
- b. The danger of having our focus on the wrong treasure is that it occupies our heart.
- c. Discuss how we can lay up treasures in heaven. (Luke 12:33, 18:22)

#### II. The pointlessness of worry

- a. Worry on physical things distracts us from what *really matters* in life.
- b. Discuss the plants and animals in nature that are free from worry. Are they better off?
- c. We can't accomplish anything through anxiety – God knows what we need already.

#### III. The solution to worry

- a. The Christian's focus should be on putting the kingdom of God first.
- b. God will provide for our needs if we faithfully follow Him.
  - c. Are we to sit idly by while God provides for us? No, but we are still to trust in God while we provide for ourselves and those around us.



## Lesson 7: Pure and Undefined Religion

### Key Verses: James 1:26-27

*If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.*

*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

**Main Idea:** The word *Religion* carries different ideas to different people. Pure religion to God involves caring for the helpless.

### Points to Cover:



#### I. Be doers of the word (James 1:22)

- a. Which is easier to do – hear what someone says or actually put it into practice?
- b. How is the Word of God like a mirror? What do we use mirrors for?
- c. God expects us to have the Word implanted so it can save our souls. (James 1:21)

#### II. Identifying Pure Religion before God

- a. Before you were a Christian, what do you think was important religiously?
- b. God dictates what matters to Him. *Thinking* we are religious does us no good!
- c. Discuss the term “visit”. What is expected of us as it relates to our care for widows and orphans?

#### III. Practicing Pure Religion

- a. Read James chapter 2. If our faith saves us, what is part of a saving faith?
- b. Make a list of some things you plan to do to help look after those who need it most.
- c. When we are champions for the needy, we are taking on the attributes of our Father in Heaven. (Deuteronomy 27:19, Psalm 68:5)

## Lesson 8: What does it mean to Love God?

### Key Verses: Matthew 22:36-38

*"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"*

*And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*

*This is the great and first commandment.*

**Main Idea:** Learning to love God is a requirement for a Christian. Without a love for God, the rest of Christianity will be difficult and unfulfilling.



### Points to Cover:

#### I. Loving God means putting Him first – Matthew 19:16-24

- a. You will face points of decision in your life where you will have to choose – God or you?
- b. Does keeping many of the commandments mean we love God?
- c. What is in your life that you think would rival your affection for God?

#### II. Loving God means obeying His commands – John 14:15

- a. Read 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 15:9-26. Did Saul love God? How was that demonstrated?
- b. Discuss how our relationships would be if we never listened to our spouse.
- c. Talk about how your love will be tested by commands you don't want to obey.

#### III. Loving God means seeking Him – Hebrews 11:6

- a. If you really love something, you will go to great lengths to find it.
- b. Careful study enables us to learn more about God's character and love for us.
- c. The more we know about God, the more we will grow to love Him. Relationships are built on communication and understanding each other.

## Lesson 9: What does it mean to Love Your Neighbor?

### Key Verses: Luke 10:25-27

*And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"*

*And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."*



**Main Idea:** Christianity takes us further than just believing in something – it pushes us front and center to have an impact on the lives of those around us. How do we Love our Neighbor?

### Points to Cover: (Read Luke 10:25-37)

#### I. Loving Our Neighbor Means We Love *Everyone*

- a. Chances are we love some people – our family, friends and those we know.
- b. God calls us to much more – to love even our enemies.
- c. Jesus demonstrated this love by laying down His life for everyone – not just his friends.

#### II. Loving Our Neighbor Means We Sacrifice for Them.

- a. Discuss how the Samaritan in the story showed his love through sacrifice.
- b. The more something is an inconvenience to us, the more it shows our love.
- c. What are some ways you can sacrifice for those around you?

#### III. Loving Our Neighbor Means We Don't Sin Against Them

- a. Ream Romans 13:8-10. How does love fulfill everything else we ought to be doing?
- b. Discuss some things that will change if we are loving our neighbor. (gossip, anger, etc.)

## Lesson 10: The Worship of the Church

### Key Verses: 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:14-15

*I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth*

**.Main Idea:** Worshipping God is an important part of being a Christian. But how am I supposed to worship Him? God has set a pattern for the church to serve as an example for future worshippers.



### Points to Cover: (Read John 4:1-26). Discuss the acts done in worship – Singing, prayer, communion, giving, and teaching

#### I. Correct worship to God is done in spirit

- a. Like in John 4, men can focus on the *external* or physical aspects of religious worship
- b. Worshipping in spirit means that our mind is engaged – in song, communion, and prayer
- c. You can perform the correct actions, but still be disappointing to God (Amos 5:21-23)

#### II. Correct worship to God is done in truth

- a. Read Leviticus 10:1-10. What was wrong with their sacrifice?
- b. Should man be the source of what is approved worship to God?
- c. Discuss current worship trends and whether they align with truth or not.

#### III. Worship to God is not limited to something done inside the church

- a. Ream Romans 12:1-2. Since worship is spiritual, it is not limited to a physical location (church)
- b. Songs, prayers, and praise to God should be done visibly as a testimony to others. (Consider Paul and Silas in prison, Acts 16:16-26)