

*A Believer's Guide to
New Testament Church Planting*

Yes, We Can!



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INTRODUCTION

“John, I wish we had a church in my neighborhood like you have in yours. So many of my friends do not know Jesus as Savior and Lord. I believe that if they saw the joy and excitement of a group of their friends and neighbors meeting together to worship, it would help draw them to Jesus.”

“Well, Robert, why don’t you start a church in your neighborhood?”

“Me? I couldn’t do that; I’ve only been a believer for a short time! I wouldn’t know where to start. No, I can’t!”

Have you ever heard a conversation like this? Maybe you’ve been in a similar situation. For many believers who have a desire to start a new church, it seems like too big a task to even try. In truth, it IS a task too big for you and me alone, but it is not too big for us to do together under the leadership of the Holy Spirit of God.

In *A Believers Guide to New Testament Church Planting: Yes, We Can!* you will see what the Bible has to say about starting new churches. You will find answers to questions like:

- What does the Bible say is a church?
- What does it mean to be church?
- How are churches started?
- How can I go into a community and start a new church from scratch?
- How do I share the good news of Jesus Christ with people?
- How do I lead them to join together for worship and Bible study?
- What do I teach them once I get them together?

This guide will not only help you find answers to these questions, but you will also learn how to study the Bible and teach it to others. And every lesson comes directly from the Bible. No man-made formulas, no three-step plan to successful church planting, just a guide to help you see what God has already said on the subject.

With this material, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, not only will you be able to start a new church—you will be able to train others to do the same!

Now put yourself in Robert’s place as he listens to John.

*“Just as a leader in the church I attended showed me how to start a church in my neighborhood, I can do the same with you. By using *A Believer’s Guide to New Testament Church Planting...* the Lord will show you how to start a new church. No, we can’t start a church on our own, but with God’s help... **YES, WE CAN!**”*

PRAYER

Introduction: The best way to get to know someone is to talk often with him or her. God desires that you get to know Him. It is important that you be a person who is passionate, frequent, and faithful in praying.

It has been said, “When men work, men work. When men pray, God works.” Jesus Himself saturated His ministry with prayer. There has been no significant growth or progress in the church that was not accompanied and fueled by prayer.

God desires that His followers know Him. God says, “*And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD...*” (*Jeremiah 24:7*) And *1 Chronicles 28:9* says, “*...if thou seek him, you will find him...*”

- Jesus sets the example for us. (Read *Mark 1:35*.)
- Jesus taught the need to prayer. (Read *Luke 18:1*.)
- What did the disciples ask Jesus to teach them? (Read *Luke 11:1*.)
- Why should we pray without ceasing? (Read *1 Thessalonians 5:17*.)

Scripture: *Ephesians 6:18-20; Matthew 5:43-44; Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 18:1-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; John 14:13-14*

Four Elements in Developing a Prayer Life

1. Adore Him (*Exodus 34:14*).

Adoration is when we focus our thoughts and heart on who God is. Read *Psalms 145:3* and *Psalms 147:1,5*.

Read *Psalms 100* or *Psalms 150* and use it as a prayer to God.

2. Confess to Him (*Joshua 7:19*).

The word confession means “to agree with.” In prayer it means that we agree with God concerning sin that His Spirit points out in our lives. Sin cannot break our relationship with God, but sin will become an obstacle in our daily, intimate relationship with Him. (Read *Psalms 66:18*.)

- Confess your sin immediately (*1 John 1:9a*).
- Receive the promise of cleansing (*1 John 1:9b*).
- Reclaim the victory over temptation (*1 Corinthians 10:13*).

3. Give thanks to Him (*Philippians 4:6*).

To give thanks is to express appreciation to God for His specific acts in our lives. To know when to give thanks, read *1 Thessalonians 5:18*.

Make a list of specific things you want to thank God for.

- Spiritual Blessings
- Personal Blessings
- Physical Blessings
- Material Blessings

Now give thanks to God in prayer.

4. Ask Him (*1 John 5:14*).

This can take the form of personal petition or intercession.

Petition is presenting our needs to God. (Read *John 15:7* and *Philippians 4:6-7*.)

Intercession is when you pray for the needs of others. (Read *Exodus 32:30-34*.)

Four Ways God Answers Prayer

- No—Your request is wrong (*Matthew 26:36-39*).
- Slow—Your timing is wrong (*John 11:1-6*).
- Grow—Your spiritual condition is wrong (*James 4:2-3*).
- Go—Your request, timing, and spiritual condition are okay (*Acts 12:5-17*).

It is very important that you spend time in prayer (talking and listening with God) each day.

When is the best time of the day for you to do this? _____

Where is the best location for you to do this? _____

SUGGESTED PRAYER GUIDE

Prayer: Praise and Worship, Confession, Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Supplication

Use the following chart to organize your daily pray life. Place in the empty boxes below the names of individuals or groups the Lord places on your heart to pray for. Then each day of the week you will spend a special time in prayer for those you have listed.

DAILY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Spouse, Children, Parents, and Brothers & Sisters	Church Members and Leaders	Company, Employees, Boss, Coworkers	The Lost: Family, Friends, and Others

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Church Planters and Christian Leaders	Public Officials	Discouraged Believers and Special Projects	Other Close Relatives, Extended Family

HOW TO STUDY AND TEACH THE BIBLE

Introduction

The Bible is your manual for living and for leading. Only through studying the Bible can you find the instruction, training, wisdom, and skills necessary to live your life of faith. The Bible is:

- **The Word of God** (*Hebrews 4:12*).
The Bible does not just contain God's thoughts, but also His very words. It will reveal to you His message of redemption for all mankind, without any mixture of error.
- **The Mind of Christ** (*1 Corinthians 2:16*).
The Bible clearly communicates the Lord's will to you, and to all those who honestly seek Him. It will guide you in all your life decisions, allowing you to follow Christ's example.
- **The Leadership of the Holy Spirit** (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*).
The Bible is the only guide you will ever need on matters of faith and right living. Through prayer and Bible study, the Holy Spirit will help you find the answers to all of your questions.
- **The Absolute Truth** (*John 17:17*).
God's Word is final, sufficient, and absolute. There is no other book, tradition, teaching, or special revelation equal to the Bible. All teachings must be examined in the light of the Holy Scriptures (*Hebrews 1:1-2*).

You must discipline yourself to study the Bible daily. As a believer, you are instructed by God to study His Word and to be prepared to teach it to others (*2 Timothy 2:2, 15*). There is only one way you will be able to fulfill this part of God's plan for your life, and that is by growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (*2 Peter 3:18*). If you are to become the Christian leader that God has called you to be, you must choose to ignore the distractions of the world and look to the truth of God's Word (*Matthew 5:6*).

Five Steps to Studying the Bible

As you read God's Word, remember that the purpose of the Bible is to communicate God's plan of salvation to all people. God used more than 35 people, over a 1,500-year span of time, to accomplish this task. The 39 books that make up the Old Testament tell the history of God's chosen people, Israel. They also foretell the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The 27 books of the New Testament tell of Jesus' life and ministry, God's new chosen people, the Christians, and the churches that He formed and sent out to share the Good News.

Step 1: Pray.

Begin every time of personal or public Bible study with prayer. Express your deepest feelings to God, praising Him for His goodness, thanking Him for His mercy, confessing your sins to Him, turning from them, and seeking His forgiveness and cleansing. Tell Him you want to know Him better, and ask Him to make His Word clear to you through the power of His Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord to teach you what He wants you to learn today, and what He wants you to teach to others. Remember, the goal of Bible study is never just to gain knowledge, but rather to become more like Christ.

Step 2: Read with understanding.

As you read a selected passage, try to understand the context of the text by asking yourself these questions:

- Who are the persons involved?
- What happened?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it take place?
- Why did it happen?

Step 3: Answer the following questions about the passage of Scripture.

- What is the main lesson or teaching?
- What does this passage teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Man? Satan? Sin? Salvation? Church? The Christian life? Other spiritual questions?
- What questions do you have about this passage?

Step 4: Live what you've learned from the Scripture.

- Is there an example I am to follow?
- Is there a sin I am to avoid?
- Is there a command I am to obey?
- Is there a promise I am to claim?
- Is there a change I must make in my life?

Step 5: Pray again with thanksgiving.

God makes His truths known to those who study His Word with humility and trust. Thank Him for allowing you to have an opportunity to read His Word and for guiding you with His Spirit. Ask Him for wisdom to correctly interpret what you've read, and for the opportunity to teach it to another. Write down the truths you have discovered today, and live them out in your daily walk with Christ.

Steps to Teaching the Bible to Others

As a leader in a new church, it is your privilege to teach the Bible to others. However, it is just as important that you also teach others how to study and learn from the Bible for themselves. The best way for new believers to learn how to study the Bible for themselves is to see how it is done. Remember that your goal is for people to come to trust in Jesus Christ, and that they become more and more like Him. The following steps should help you with this task. Do not be afraid! The Word of God is powerful and will always be a blessing to those who hear it (*Romans 1:16, Isaiah 55:10*). It is more important that people hear what the Word says about us, than what we have to say about the Word.

Step 1: Prepare yourself.

Use the *Five Steps to Studying the Bible* to study the Scripture passages. Try to answer all the Bible study questions as you seek to discover the spiritual truths of the text. It is good to prepare, but you do not have to have the answers to all the people's questions. Together, you will find the answers in the Bible.

Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* located at the end of this section to help you prepare to teach.

Step 2: Prepare the group.

Jesus made his teaching relevant to hearers by showing how God's Word made a practical difference in their lives (*John 3:1-6; John 8:1-11; Mark 10:17-22*).

- Remind the group of last week's lesson and ask who can remember the principal teachings.
- Ask if anyone has found special victory or difficulty in applying last week's lesson.
- Begin this week's lesson by talking with the group in order to discover if there are things happening in their lives that relate to the lesson. Are there things in the newspaper or on the news that relate to the lesson for the day?
- Remind the group of Bible lessons they've learned previously and, if time permits, let someone in the group tell again one of the Bible stories that has to do with today's lesson.
- When the group is ready, challenge them to listen to today's Bible verses and discover God's truths.

Step 3: Share the Bible message.

Ask someone to read the passages from the Bible that you want to teach, or read the verses yourself and tell the Bible story in such a way that the people understand the context of the passage. In this manner, everyone will know the story is from the Bible, but those who cannot read will also be able to remember the Bible story. Use gestures, maps, drawings, or whatever else you have to communicate the lesson. You want people to be able to remember what the Bible says and apply it to their lives.

Step 4: Lead the group to discover the Bible truths.

Use the questions below (from the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* located on the next page) to guide the group in discovering what God's Word is saying to them. Do not lecture, but rather help others to find the spiritual truths present in God's Word. If there are non-believers in the group, have one of the believers share his testimony of how he came to be saved. Or you may want to give your personal testimony. Invite non-believers to place their faith in Jesus Christ.

- Who are the persons involved?
- What happened?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it take place?
- Why did it happen?
- What is the main lesson or teaching?
- What does this passage teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Man? Satan? Sin? Salvation? Church? The Christian life? Other spiritual questions?
- What questions do you have about this passage?
- Is there an example I am to follow?
- Is there a sin I am to avoid?
- Is there a command I am to obey?
- Is there a promise I am to claim?
- Is there a change I must make in my life?

Reinforce the lesson by summarizing all that the group has learned from the Bible today. Remind them of any promises from the day's text, as well as any commands. Encourage them to be obedient during the week.

Step 5: End the lesson with prayer.

It is also important that you as a leader prepare others for the ministry (*2 Timothy 2:2*). Therefore, you should encourage others in the group to pray, sing, and take turns leading the Bible studies. As you end the lesson, use this time to pray for needs within the group and to pray for the salvation of lost friends and relatives. Ask God to help all of you apply today's lesson to your daily life.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?

HELPS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE

- 1. Make it a priority to read the Bible every single day.** Dedicate a certain time each day, preferably in the morning, to prayer and Bible study. Make sure it is a time you will not be interrupted.
- 2. Make it a goal to read the entire Bible all the way through.** This can be accomplished over a period of one year by reading three chapters each day and five chapters on Sunday. If possible, you should use a modern Bible translation that is easy to read and uses modern language.
- 3. You may wish to use the three chapters per day plan,** but choose to first study the books of the New Testament. Read them in the following order:
1 John, John, Mark, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, Luke, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Matthew, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 & 2 Peter, James, Hebrews, Jude, 2 & 3 John, Revelation.

You will then study the Old Testament books in order, but will also read one Psalm and one chapter of Proverbs per day.

- 4. The Old Testament books can be grouped under the following categories:**
 - Law: *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.*
 - History: *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.*
 - Wisdom: *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.*
 - Major Prophets: *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.*
 - Minor Prophets: *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.*
- 5. The New Testament books can be grouped under the following categories:**
 - Gospels: *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.*
 - Paul's letters: *Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.*
 - General letters: *Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude.*
 - History: *Acts.*
 - Prophecy: *Revelation.*
- 6. Set a goal to memorize key Scripture verses.** Write the verses on note cards to carry with you and study throughout the day. Some key verses to begin with are:
1 John 5:11-12; John 3:16; 1 John 1:9; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; John 14:6; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; Romans 10:13; Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 6:10-11; Joshua 1:8; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 5:8; Psalm 119:11, 105; Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Add a new verse each week and review other verses regularly.

EVANGELISM: HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH

There are many ways to share your faith. You can tell the story of salvation history, beginning with creation and continuing through Jesus' resurrection. You can use evangelistic tracts or booklets, such as *Four Spiritual Laws* or others. You can share evangelistic movies on videocassette, such as *Jesus* or others. You can lead people through an evangelistic Bible study, such as *Good News for You* or others. There are training events to equip people to share their faith, and presentations that may be learned, such as *A Biblical Plan of Salvation*. In addition to all of these, you can share your personal testimony of salvation. Below are instructions on how to use your personal testimony and *A Biblical Plan of Salvation*.

Personal Testimony

There are many ways to bring up spiritual matters in everyday conversation. Some very direct ways include asking questions such as, "Do you ever think about spiritual things?" or "What is the most important thing in the world to you?" or "Can I share with you the most important discovery of my life?" Once you have turned the conversation to spiritual things you can usually find a way to naturally share an account of how you came to follow the Lord.

Your personal testimony should contain the four elements listed below. You should be able to share these basics in about three minutes. It is a good idea to use Scripture verses in your testimony.

1. Tell what your life was like before you became a Christian.
2. Tell how you realized your need for Christ.
3. Tell how you accepted Christ.
4. Tell what difference it has made in your life since you began to follow Him.

Conclude with the following statements if you plan to share *A Biblical Plan of Salvation*.

1. Now I am certain I have eternal life.
2. Would you allow me to share with you from the Bible how you too may have certainty of eternal life?

Many people in the Bible shared their personal testimonies. Some examples are the Gerasene demoniac (*Mark 5:18-20*), the Samaritan woman (*John 4:28-30, 39*), Peter and John (*Acts 4:18-21*) and Paul (*Acts 9:1-22; Acts 22:3-16; Acts 26:9-18*). You should read these passages to get some ideas about how to share your faith in this way.

How to Mark your Bible for Sharing the Plan of Salvation

One way that will help you share the saving message of Jesus Christ is to mark the verses in your Bible with reminders of each point of the Plan of Salvation.

THE INTRODUCTORY CONVERSATION:

1. Casual Conversation.
2. What church do you attend?
3. If you were to die today, where would you spend eternity?

PRINT ON THE FRONT FLYLEAF:

Let's see what the Bible has to say about salvation.
Go to page X, *Romans 1:18-20, 28-32*. (In place of the "X",
write the page number where this verse can be found in your Bible.)

PRINT AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE:

Who is God? What angers God?

PRINT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

Go to page X, *Romans 3:23*.

PRINT AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE:

Man's need for salvation. Who has sinned?

PRINT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

Go to page X, *Romans 6:23*.

PRINT AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE:

The results of sin. What is the penalty for sin?

PRINT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

Go to page X, *Romans 5:6-10*.

PRINT AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE:

Jesus paid the penalty for our sins.

PRINT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

Go to page X, *Romans 10:9-10*.

PRINT AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE:

How can a person receive this salvation from God?

PRINT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE:

Go to the back flyleaf.

PRINT ON THE BACK FLYLEAF:

Would you like to ask Jesus to be your personal Savior and Lord by praying?
Prayer is nothing more than talking with God. In order to help you, here is an example
of how you can pray to God.

*Prayer: Lord, I admit that I am a sinner—that I have done wrong. I ask You to forgive me
of my sins and cleanse my heart. I invite You to come into my heart and take total control
of my life. Thank You, Lord, for saving me. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.*

A Biblical Plan of Salvation

After sharing your personal testimony, use your marked Bible and allow the person to whom you are witnessing read the verses for himself (if he can). Have him explain each verse in his own words and make sure he understands each verse before proceeding to the next one.

1. *Romans 1:18-20, 28-32*. God's identity and role.
 - a. Who is God?
 - b. What angers God?

2. *Romans 3:23*. Man's need for salvation.
 - a. What is man's spiritual problem?
 - b. Who has sinned?
 - c. What is sin?

3. *Romans 6:23*. The results of sin.
 - a. What is the wage/penalty for sin?
 - b. Who will receive this wage/penalty?
 - c. What is God's plan for man's salvation?

4. *Romans 5:6-10*. Christ died to pay the penalty for sin and rose again to give new life.
 - a. When did God love us?
 - b. How did He pay for our sin?
 - c. How did He save us and give us new life?

5. *Romans 10:9,10*. How can a person receive this salvation God offers?
 - a. What two things must a person do to be saved?
 - b. What does it mean to believe?
 - c. What does it mean to call Jesus your Lord?

6. Ask if the person to whom you are witnessing would like to become a follow of Jesus. Pray with him to accept the gift of eternal life and commit his life to God.

7. *Romans 10:13*. Assurance of salvation.
 - a. What does this verse promise?
 - b. What did you just do?
 - c. What did God do for you?

8. Make an initial follow-up visit and begin the "Immediate Follow-up Bible Study for New Converts" with the new believer. (See next section.)

You can make copies of the sample tract found on the next two pages and distribute them as you share your personal testimony. You can also give tracts to those you meet as you look for the "men of peace" and find homes where you can start Bible studies.

If you were to die in this instant, are you sure you would go to heaven?

The Bible says that there are four things that a person must know in order to go to heaven:

1. *For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). This means that we are all sinners and are separated from Jesus Christ, who is the Glory of God.
2. *For the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23a). Our sins have a price, and that price is death, that is, separation from God in hell.
3. *But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 6:23b). God offers us eternal life as a free gift through Jesus. However, we must receive His Son, Jesus Christ, in order to receive the gift of eternal life.
4. *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...* (Revelation 3:20). Jesus is standing before the door of your heart, waiting for you to invite Him to come in as your Savior.

The next step is making Jesus the Savior of your life. How? Easy. Speak with Him, and simply ask God to save you.

Tell Him these words:

“God, forgive all my sins and save my soul. I repent of all my sins and ask You to enter my heart and be Lord of my life. Take control of my life. I give myself to You. Thank you for hearing my prayer and saving my soul. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.”

1 John 5:11-13 says, “*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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.*”

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Tell Him these words:

“God, forgive all my sins and save my soul. I repent of all my sins and ask You to enter my heart and be Lord of my life. Take control of my life. I give myself to You. Thank you for hearing my prayer and saving my soul. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.”

1 John 5:11-13 says, “*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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.*”

If you were to die in this instant, are you sure you would go to heaven?

The Bible says that there are four things that a person must know in order to go to heaven:

1. *For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). This means that we are all sinners and are separated from Jesus Christ, who is the Glory of God.
2. *For the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23a). Our sins have a price, and that price is death, that is, separation from God in hell.
3. *But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 6:23b). God offers us eternal life as a free gift through Jesus. However, we must receive His Son, Jesus Christ, in order to receive the gift of eternal life.
4. *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...* (Revelation 3:20). Jesus is standing before the door of your heart, waiting for you to invite Him to come in as your Savior.

The next step is making Jesus the Savior of your life. How? Easy. Speak with Him, and simply ask God to save you.

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What Should You Do Now?

1. Pray every day.
(1 Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 18:1)
2. Read the Bible every day.
(Acts 17:11; Psalm 1:2)
3. Tell others about Jesus every day.
(Acts 1:8; Acts 5:42)
4. Confess Jesus publicly by being baptized.
(Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41)
5. Live out the teachings of Jesus daily.
(John 14:15)
6. Become a member of a church that teaches the Bible and serves the Lord.
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INITIAL FOLLOW-UP VISIT

A new believer is a babe in Christ and, like any newborn, needs the immediate assurance of the love of Christ, the nurture of His Word, and bonding with his new family in Christ (*1 Peter 2:2*). **It is essential that you, or another believer from the new church, personally visit every new convert within 48 hours of his/her conversion!** Just as the newborn baby would be lost if not cared for immediately after birth, so a new believer can quickly fall back into his old nature if not immediately mentored and disciplined in his/her newfound faith.

Immediate Follow-up Bible Study for New Converts

The following lesson is what a new convert needs to know immediately after placing his/her faith in Jesus Christ.

Six Truths for the New Convert

Read *Colossians 2:6*. In this lesson you will learn how to live in fellowship with Christ. You were born the first time when you were born physically. When you receive Christ you are born spiritually. In other words, you are “born again.” This what the Gospel of John calls the “new birth.” Both of these experiences can happen only once. Physically you can’t be reborn every Sunday, and this is also true of your spiritual birth.

Truth 1 – You are a son of God and your salvation is assured.

What is eternal life? Read *John 17:3*. In other words, eternal life is Jesus in your heart (spirit). This means that when Jesus enters your life, He gives you a new life, and you will live with Him in heaven forever.

Read *1 John 5:12*. What happens when you sin after you receive Christ? **You do not lose your salvation!** When our children disobey, do we parents send them away forever? Of course not! They are our children, and we love them. What we do is correct them, teach them, and discipline them. Read *Hebrews 12:7-8*. The Bible teaches that when you received Christ, you became a son of God (see *John 1:12*), and a son will be corrected for his sins. If not, you are not really a son of God. But a true son cannot lose his salvation because he has eternal life.

If you sin after you receive Christ, God will discipline you in order to train you to walk in the right ways, but He will not take away your salvation. It is eternal—and this means forever!

Truth 2 – As a child of God, you must be baptized.

Read *Matthew 28:19-20*. Maybe you were baptized when you were a baby, but Jesus says that only those who have decided to become His followers have the right to be baptized. You were not a follower of Christ when you were a baby. You did not know anything about Jesus. You only became a follower of Christ when **you** accepted Him in your life through faith and repentance. Baptism is a public expression of obedience that identifies you as a follower of Christ.

In the Bible, all of Jesus' followers were baptized by immersion after they had placed their faith and trust in Him. What is "immersion"? The word "baptize" means to "place under the water," so baptism is the physical act of being immersed in water. The person baptizing you will put your whole body under water for just a moment to symbolize the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Just as He died, was buried in a tomb, and rose again, so baptism symbolizes your spiritual death, burial of the old way of life, and your rebirth to a new life with Christ Jesus. You cannot do this when you are a baby, but rather should do this after you have received Jesus as your Lord. Read *Romans 6:3-4*.

The water does not save you or cleanse you from your sins. Only Jesus can do that. Your baptism is the first sign, an act of obedience, which shows you are a believer. You should be baptized as soon as possible. By doing so, you publicly declare your fellowship with a group of believers, which is what the Bible calls a church.

Truth 3 – You must read the Bible daily in order to grow in your faith.

Read *Psalms 119:105*. The Bible is the Word of God and will teach you all of God's plans and promises for your new life with Him. It is divided into two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament. The word "testament" means "covenant." The Bible is actually a collection of 66 different books, written by more than 35 different men over a period of more than 1,500 years. These were men inspired by God to record His words as He communicates to us His perfect will and instruction for our lives.

How should you read the Bible in order to gain the most benefit? Remember that the Bible is a love letter from God to you. Read it in the following manner:

1. Begin by selecting a book (for example, the book of 1 John).
2. Read the first verse.
3. In prayer, ask God to show you the spiritual truth(s) in this verse. Ask the following questions: What does this teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Myself? Sin? Church? Heaven? Family? etc.? What does this verse tell me I should do, or should not do, in order to make my life pleasing to God?
4. Read the entire paragraph or chapter in this way and let God speak to you about who He is, commands you must obey, etc.

Truth 4 – You converse with God through prayer.

The Bible says that we should pray always and never give up, or lose heart (*Luke 18:1*). But, how can you pray and converse with the Father? It is very important for your new walk with God that you have time alone with Him every day. Begin your time with Him in this way:

1. Read the Bible for 5 minutes.

2. Praise the Lord. You might begin by telling Him, “Father, I love you because...”
3. Give Him thanks. “Thank you, Father, because...”
4. Pray for others you care about (intercession). “Lord, I pray for my friend/sister /_____, because he/she needs...” Maintain a list of people you pray for, and see how God answers your prayers in their lives. Then give Him thanks for answered prayer.
5. Pray for your own concerns (supplication). “Lord, I have this burden on my heart...”
6. Remain silent for a time. Ask the Lord to bring to your mind any sin in your life (confession). Ask Him to give you His guidance. Read *1 John 1:9*. This was written for people who have already received Christ. When you are dirty, you must bathe. Confession allows you to become spiritually clean.

Truth 5 – You must become a member of an evangelical church.

Read *Ephesians 1:22-23*. Jesus is the head of the church. The local church is a group of baptized believers led by the Holy Spirit to meet together for the purpose of worship, fellowship, witness, nurture, and ministry. God commands His followers to gather together in this way in order that they might remain faithful, worshipping Him and growing spiritually strong (*Hebrews 10:23-25*). If you do not know of an existing church in your neighborhood, you can form a church from your own family members, friends, and neighbors who are Christians. If you do not know any other Christians, you should try to lead others to faith and begin meeting with them. Read Jesus’ words in *Matthew 18:20*.

Why do you need to belong to a local church?

- To praise the Lord with other brothers and sisters in Christ.
- To learn more from God’s Word.
- To fellowship with other believers in Christ.
- To serve others in Christian love.
- To share with other people who have not yet received Christ.

Truth 6 – Witness.

Read *Matthew 28:19*. This means that each follower of Jesus should tell others what has happened in his/her life. This testimony should begin with the members of your family. (See *Personal Testimony* in the section on *Evangelism: How to Share your Faith*.) You should explain to others how your life was before you met Christ, how you realized your need for Jesus, how you received Him, and what your life is now like with Christ. After doing this, ask if they would also like to receive Christ and have assurance of eternal life. You may want to use *A Biblical Plan of Salvation* shown above as you share.

FINDING THE “MEN OF PEACE”

Before continuing with this lesson, read *Luke 10:1-9, 16*. The “men of peace” were people who showed interest in the message the disciples proclaimed. Locating a man of peace whose heart God has already prepared is a proven way to begin new churches. Often, his family, friends, and neighbors will come to the Lord as well, and they will form a new church.

However, you may have to make dozens of visits in order to find one man of peace. Remember that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of the lost to convince them of their sins and lead them to new birth in Jesus Christ. Your job is merely to find those in whom the Holy Spirit is working, share the Gospel, and help them to become like Jesus Christ.

Build on relationships that already exist (*John 1:40-49*). (Use the “List of Lost Family and Friends” after this section to help you identify these people.) Make your initial visits with any known family members or close friends that live in the community. Follow that up by visiting any coworkers or acquaintances. It is often very difficult to win individual converts, disciple them, and then form them into a new church. Instead of winning a person to the Lord and then having that person tell his family and friends, why not locate someone who seems to be open to the gospel and have him get his family and friends together before he becomes a Christian? A witness in the group setting can often reduce suspicion among family members and open possibilities for the entire group to become Christians. After someone in the community has become a Christian, begin visiting their immediate family and friends as well.

Go door to door in the community to find the men of peace (*Luke 10:1-9*). This method involves simply knocking on doors and discovering if anyone in the house is interested in learning more about the Bible. Be polite, respectful, and appropriately dressed. Introduce yourself and explain that your purpose is to start a new church in the community. If the person is interested, ask if he or she would be willing to invite other family members and friends to participate in a Bible study in the home. Ask if you can invite others from the neighborhood to participate also. Meet with these seekers and share the gospel with them.

Use public areas to find men of peace (*Acts 2:1-47; Acts 16:10-15, Acts 17:16-18*). Go to plazas, markets, or other high traffic areas and share the gospel in order to find those interested in spiritual truths. Remember, it is not your goal to begin a new church with disgruntled members of other churches, but rather to win new converts and begin the new church with them. Several methods are possible:

- Distribute gospel tracts, share your personal testimony and converse with people, just as if you were knocking on their doors (*Acts 8:1-4*).
- Visit in hospitals, senior adult centers, community centers, schools, universities, etc. (*Acts 3:1-10; Acts 17:19-34*).
- Share the gospel through music, singing, drama, etc., in order to find people interested in learning more about the Bible (*Colossians 3:16, Acts 16:25-34*).

- Purchase a Bible and set up a table in the market, plaza, etc., to have a Bible giveaway. Announce that you will be giving away this Bible, and have people fill out information tickets with their name, age, address, phone number, email address, and other pertinent information. After the drawing, visit all who signed up and seek to win them to Christ and start a new church.
- Hold open-air preaching services (*Acts 2*). Make sure that you have the necessary permission to preach in the plaza, on street corners, etc. Be prepared to get personal data on those who show interest in the gospel message.
- Meet with city officials, village elders, tribal headmen, etc., and seek opportunity to share your faith and testimony with them (*Acts 10; Acts 13:4-12*).
- Use radio, TV, or newspaper advertising to locate people interested in studying the Bible and beginning a new church in the community.

There are many other possible methods for finding the “men of peace” in a community. You must use those ideas that are practical for your situation. Once the man of peace has been located you should use your evangelistic skills with all interested persons, and seek to start the new church, perhaps in their home.

Should the group become too large for a home, then you should allow the group to decide where they will meet. Some possible meeting places are: home, garage, storefront, school, daycare center, plaza or park, shop, barn, restaurant, hotel conference room, or any facility that is not used on Sundays. Be creative and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

LIST OF LOST FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Identify your lost friends and loved ones. Use this list to begin to pray for them. Plan a time to witness to each one. As each one is saved, put the date beside the name.

Use this same list to help you identify the “men of peace” around you. Put an asterisk by the name of each one who might agree to have a Bible study in his home.

Family

Neighbors

Co-Workers

Friends

BECOMING A CHURCH

Church: “A local church is a group of baptized believers led by the Holy Spirit to meet regularly for the purpose of worship, fellowship, witness, discipleship, and service.”

Scripture: *Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25*

The New Testament Church

Introduction: The church revealed in the Book of Acts can be described as explosive, exciting, and revolutionary.

- Explosive, because the church was growing by large numbers on an almost daily basis.
- Exciting, because there was a sense of wonder, amazement, and expectancy among the believers.
- Revolutionary, because the message proclaimed by the church, the lifestyle emerging among those who believed in the message, and the spontaneous worship of Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord, shattered the religious setting of first-century Israel.

Biblical Images of the Church:

Body of Christ (*Ephesians 1:15-23; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31*).

Bride of Christ (*Ephesians 5:22-32*).

Family of God (*1 Timothy 3:14-15*).

The purpose of this study is to provide a view of the early church that will help us shape the church of today so that it can be the instrument of God to proclaim the Good News to all the peoples of the world.

1. The Book of Acts (*Acts 2:14-39*) proclaims that the new church was marked by the following:

- The church had a common faith in Jesus of Nazarene as the long awaited Savior who would save the people of Israel as promised by God through the prophets.
- The new believers knew that Jesus came from the Father, was crucified, buried, and rose again on the third day.
- Through genuine repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, one became a true child of God and found his or her place in the newly founded church.

2. The Book of Acts (*Acts 2:40-47*) teaches that the first century Christians:

- Continued to worship in the temple for a short while but soon began to worship together in houses.
- Shared possessions with other members of the church so that all needs of the people would be met.
- Suffered persecution from Jewish religious leaders.
- Emphasized prayer and the need to worship together.
- Saw miracles and wonders performed by disciples of Jesus.

3. The Book of Acts describes how the early church began to carry out the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Forced to flee Jerusalem because of persecution, Christians preached as they went from place to place (*Acts 8:1-4*).
- Early leaders initiated ministry with those of other nations (*Acts 8:26-40*).
- When the early church leaders witnessed the openness and response to the gospel by the Gentiles, they realized that salvation was also for the non-Jew (*Acts 15:9-29*).
- The church at Antioch sent missionaries into the world to carry the message of Christ across borders and cultures (*Acts 13:1-3*).
- The gospel impacted even Rome, the center of the Roman world (*Acts 28:17-31*).

4. It is important to understand that in the Book of Acts the early church:

- Did not have leaders with formal theological study.
- Did not have a paid clergy at any level.
- Relied on laity for its leadership.
- Did not have buildings built especially for Christian worship.
- Depended on the leadership of the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction in all matters relating to ministry, church life, and structure.
- Was marked by boldness (*Acts 4:23-31*).
- Had a vision as evidenced by Stephen, Peter, and Paul.

5. How does your church compare to the church described in the Book of Acts?

- Can your church, house church, or cell group be described as exciting or revolutionary?
- Does the group really look to the Holy Spirit for direction?
- Are the times of worship marked by expectancy as people wait before the Lord?
- Do the people in the groups see themselves as potential leaders?
- Are the people burdened for the lost of their neighborhood, city, province, and nation?
- Does the group have a common vision?
- Are the believers bold in their witness?

What do you need to do to bring your group to be more like the church in the Book of Acts?

CHURCH LIFE

Church: A local church is a group of baptized believers led by the Holy Spirit to meet regularly for the purpose of worship, fellowship, witness, discipleship, and service.

Scripture: *Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25*

Introduction: In the previous section you have just studied about the church in the book of Acts. In that study you learned what the church is and to some extent, what a church, or body of baptized believers does. The purpose of this study is to help you better understand what it is that your church should be doing. In other words, what does the Bible teach us about the work of the church? It is important to remind yourself again that the church is the people. So when we talk about what a church does, we are really asking, “What do the people of God do as they express themselves as church?”

Home Worship

You have learned in your study of the church in the book of Acts that God’s people, the church, gathered themselves in various places. One of those places was in homes. As a way to study the work of the church, let’s look at a plan to start a home worship. However remember, as seen in the book of Acts, a church can meet anywhere the people want to meet.

Why Establish Home Worship

- To provide a setting where all five functions of the church can grow and develop (worship, fellowship, witness, discipleship, and service).
- To establish growth momentum.
- To create an environment where new leaders can be developed to start future churches.
- To help the church planter establish credibility and spiritual leadership.
- To make use of the church planter’s teaching gifts.
- To provide a setting where the church planter can model basic ministry or service skills and train future leaders and church planters.
- To lay a foundation of the Biblical fellowship from the beginning of the church.

How to Establish Home Worship

- Determine to use someone’s home to begin a new home worship or church.
- Use your home or the home of a key member or a new believer who lives in the area of the community where a new church is needed.
- Set a time to meet on a weekly basis when most people can attend.
- Gather, gather, and then gather some more.
- Teach the truths of the Bible in a way that answers people’s questions and meets needs. Teach in such a way that moves people toward a genuine Christianity and Christian community.

- Organize activities that encourage fellowship and service opportunities outside of regular meeting times.
- Plan the meetings to be informal and comfortable for new people attending.

A Suggested Home Worship Meeting Schedule

- You may want to start with a meal or snacks as people arrive.
- Begin with singing.
- Lead in a Bible teaching time: 30 – 40 minutes.
- Lead in a time of prayer, allowing all those who desire to pray.
- Share testimonies of what God is doing. Be careful not to force anyone to speak.
- End with a time of “vision casting.” Give a brief description of the vision you have to start a new church and how they can be part of what God is doing. Offer to speak to people individually and, when needed, offer training classes.

Work of a Church

As the new church grows and matures, it will be important to develop all the different things that a church should be doing. Listed below you will find what the Bible says is important for a church to do. Study each topic and Scripture passages to better understand what the Bible teaches that a church should do. Understand that this is not an exhaustive list. Your continued study of God’s Word will lead you to other expressions of the work of the church.

Worship and Praise:

Worship (*Acts 2:42-47; Acts 13:1-3; 1 Peter 2:1-10*)

Baptism (*Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12, 36-38; Acts 10:44-48; Romans 6:1-4*)

Lord's Supper (*Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 10: 14-22; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34*)

Singing (*1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:12-17*).

Praying (*Acts 2:42-47*).

Reverence & Awe (*1 Corinthians 11:17-34; Hebrews 12:28-29*)

Reading the Bible (*1 Timothy 4:13*)

Fasting (*Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-15; Acts 13:1-3, Acts 14:23*)

Giving (*Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:7; Acts 2:44-47*)

Fellowship:

Fellowship & Encouragement (*Acts 2:42-47; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24-25*)

Witness:

Evangelism & Missions (*Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8*)

Discipleship:

Reading the Word (*1 Timothy 4:13*)

Teaching (*Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 2 Timothy 2:2, 2 Timothy 4:2*)

Discipline (*Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11*)

Service:

Taking care of each others' needs (*1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Galatians 6:9-10*)

Praying (*Acts 2:42-47*)

Singing (*1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:12-17*)

Reading the Word (*1 Timothy 4:13*)

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

God makes leaders.

When we think of church leadership, it is important to understand that God makes leaders, not man. Wherever the Holy Spirit brings believers together into church, He also raises up leaders that are needed for that church to carry out its work. It is also important to note that the leaders that God raises do not have to be formally educated. In fact, requiring formal education will put a man-made limit on the pool of possible leaders, and add things that are not written in the Bible. **Note that the only issue not related to character in the letters to Timothy and Titus, which show us qualities needed by church leaders, was the ability to teach. This ability comes from a person's continuous study and practice of God's Word, not from a course that he takes** (*Ephesians 4:1-11, Acts 4:13, Matthew 13:55, 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1:5-16, 2 Timothy 2:15*).

God raises up leaders.

As we realize that God raises up leaders in local churches in order that these churches might grow and reproduce, we also begin to understand that requiring full-time, paid, leaders will slow down the starting of new churches. This slowing down of new church starts will come because large groups will be needed to support such leaders. Therefore, much of the time, energy, and resources of the new church will be spent on that church's internal needs, rather than reaching out to others.

Leaders share the work.

Having several leaders sharing the work in each church is important. A careful reading of the New Testament clearly shows this was the biblical pattern. Paul always worked with one or more partners whenever he did ministry. Jesus always sent His disciples out in pairs. Church planters always identified and empowered multiple leaders in the churches they planted. This helped reduce the load on any one individual, making it possible for people to serve in this manner on a volunteer basis. It also reduced the difference between clergy and laity, encouraging all members to serve in the God's work (*Luke 10:1, Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5*).

Leaders equip others.

The primary ministry for leaders is to equip other members of the Body to do the work of building up the church. Having several leaders enables this preparation to be handled on the job through discipling and leading by example (mentoring). Perhaps most importantly, it provides a ready supply of leaders who will be used to lead new churches locally as the church grows and starts new churches in other places. It also provides insurance against loss of vision in the church if a church leader moves to another city, or when a leader dies.

Scripture: *1 Corinthians 12:4-12, 14-26; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Romans 12:3-8*

A church leader multiples himself.

As a church leader whom God has called (*Ephesians 4:1, 11-14*), you will need to make a mindful and focused decision to see, gather together, equip and use the leaders that God has placed within your church (*Matthew 9:36-38; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; 2 Timothy 2:2*).

- 1. Look for ways every believer in the church may be used.** It is God who calls leaders and gifts them for service; therefore, you must depend on Him to be your guide as you pray for direction and discernment.
- 2. Desire to see others grow in grace and truth.** Once you have identified potential leaders, you will invest yourself in preparing them to take on ministry tasks.
- 3. Gather together believers who are ready to use their gifts, talents, personalities, and experiences in a useful way through the church.** Do not be afraid to delegate responsibility and authority within the church. In this way, you will mobilize your congregation to reach far beyond what one man can do, and you will be able to reach many more people with the gospel.
- 4. Disciple (mentor) a circle of members so that each one discovers his/her spiritual gifts and finds his place of usefulness within the church.** Pray for God to show you a group of at least five people that you will personally mentor and who will in turn mentor their own groups of at least five people each.
- 5. Make sharing leadership a priority.** Assure that each believer has a challenging ministry within the church.

Lessons for All Believers

- You were created for ministry (*Ephesians 2:10*).
- You were saved for ministry (*2 Timothy 1:9*).
- You have been called to ministry (*Ephesians 4:1; 1 Peter 2:9*).
- You have been gifted for ministry (*1 Peter 4:10*).
- You have been given authority to minister (*Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:20*).
- You have been sent to minister (*Colossians 4:17; Romans 10:15*).
- You must prepare yourself for ministry (*Ephesians 4:1, 11-12, 1 Peter 1:13,14*).
- Your church needs ministers (*1 Corinthians 12:27; Matthew 9:36-37*).
- You are responsible for your ministry (*Romans 14:12*).
- You will be rewarded for your ministry (*Colossians 3:23-24; Matthew 25:23*).

Ministry is using what God has given you to serve Him and the needs of others!

VISION AND CHURCH PLANTING

Introduction: Vision is not optional for a spiritual leader. Leadership begins with vision. The vision toward which you lead people must not be a vision of your own making. It is a vision God gives you.

Scripture: *Proverbs 29:18, Acts 16:9*

What is vision?

Vision is a clear, mental picture of a preferable future communicated by God to His chosen servant leader. It is based upon an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances.

No vision – No leadership
No leadership – No new churches

God shares His vision with leaders. As a leader, you may wish to ask for people's input, but ultimately the vision must come from God.

Eight Acts of Visionary Leadership

- 1. Understand the concept.** Vision is defined as developing a final picture of the end to which God is leading you. Vision becomes the base upon which strategy and plans are developed. This results in a plan of action that people can put into practice and evaluate.
- 2. Make the vision yours.** As a leader, you must put yourself on the line every day to see His vision for His people come to life.
- 3. Pass it around.** Share the vision, make it real, practical, and alive for those you lead. Realize that the vision is most effectively caught by example and through relationships, not by mass presentations. People are more likely to buy into the vision when they have an intimate meeting with the visionary—or when they know someone who has wholeheartedly embraced the vision and become an evangelist for it.
- 4. Sell the vision.** Your ability to lead depends in part on your ability to attract people who will invest in the vision. Your desire is for others to join you in the fulfillment of the God-given vision.
- 5. Put the vision into action.** Your responsibility as a leader is not only to identify, explain, and sell the vision, but also to ensure that it becomes a reality. Put the vision into action for the right reason—not to gain jewels in your crown, but to know the joy of making a positive difference in the world by reaching the lost and beginning a new “body of Christ.”
- 6. Refine the vision.** The vision usually outlives the visionary. The core elements—the heart—of the vision will not change. What may shift somewhat are some of the less central elements of the focus.

7. **Reinforce the vision.** An effective leader is one who will reinforce the decisions of the people to choose the vision as their focus. This means continuous encouragement.
8. **Live the vision.** You must realize that a leader is called to a higher standard of performance than are the followers. This means that radical obedience of the leader brings pleasure to God.

Church Planting Strategy

Introduction: The church is like a field, and the church planter is the sower of seed and harvester of grain (*Isaiah 61:3*). The church planter harvests workers from the harvest for the harvest.

For more information, see the section entitled, *Church Planting Training*.

Scripture: *Matthew 24:34; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 10:1-17; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; Acts 10:1-8; Acts 11:13-18; Revelation 7:9; Revelation 14:6-7*

It has been God's intent from the very beginning for those who know Him to declare Him to the rest of the world (*1 Chronicles 16:23-36*).

- Among the nations.
- Among all peoples.
- Among the families of the nations.
- All the nations.
- All the people.

Jesus wanted to make sure that His disciples understood their task (*Matthew 28:18-20*). All authority belonged to Jesus. He had the right to give the Great Commission. He had the right to command His disciples. We are obligated to follow.

- We are to go to all people groups.
- We are to make disciples of all people groups.
- We are to baptize the disciples.
- We are to teach obedience regarding everything Jesus has commanded us.

The New Testament Pattern

- New Testament church planter evangelism focused on households (*John 4:47-53; Acts 16:13-15*).
- Households are baptized (*Acts 16:23-34; Acts 18:8*).
- Household conversions seem to be the norm (*2 Timothy 4:19; Acts 10; Acts 16:15*).
- Households appear to have been the first churches (*Mark 5:1-20; Acts 8:3; Acts 14:27; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15*).

We would do well to follow Jesus' example in ministry.

Multiplication Stage

Jesus sent His disciples out to extend the kingdom of God to all people groups through church planting (*John 20:21-23; Matthew 28:19-20*). This church planting ministry began after persecution scattered the disciples all over the Roman world (*Acts 8:1-7*). Church planting became a deliberate strategy when God called Barnabas and Saul to take their first missionary journey (*Acts 13*).

Beginning a New Church

- **Start with the vision.** It comes from the Lord.
- **Gather the people into groups.** It is easier to group them and win them than it is to win them and then group them.
- **Saturation evangelism.** Use every possible gospel presentation method.
- **Spiritual conviction.** Pray for the Lord of the harvest to begin His harvest.
- **Conversion occurs.** Allow each individual to respond to Christ as the Spirit leads.
- **Baptize new believers.** This should take place soon after conversion.
- **Disciple new believers.** Use the Bible as your guide or manual.
- **Identify leaders.** Let the leaders be called out from the group.
- **Train leaders.** Use a practical “hands on” or “on the job” method.
- **Look for New Testament characteristics to appear** (*Acts 2:42-47*).
- **Believers recognize they are church.** The believers see themselves as church and recognize the New Testament characteristics that make them church.
- **New churches begin to reproduce themselves.** Churches start churches—churches multiplying themselves.
- **A church planting movement develops.** A rapid reproduction of churches takes place.

5-5-5 MODEL FOR REACHING YOUR COMMUNITY FOR CHRIST

Part of your task as a leader and as a church planter is to lead the new congregation in reaching their community for Christ (*Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15*). One way to share that vision, and at the same time set some concrete goals for the new church, is to use the “5-5-5” model of missions.

5-Member Circle

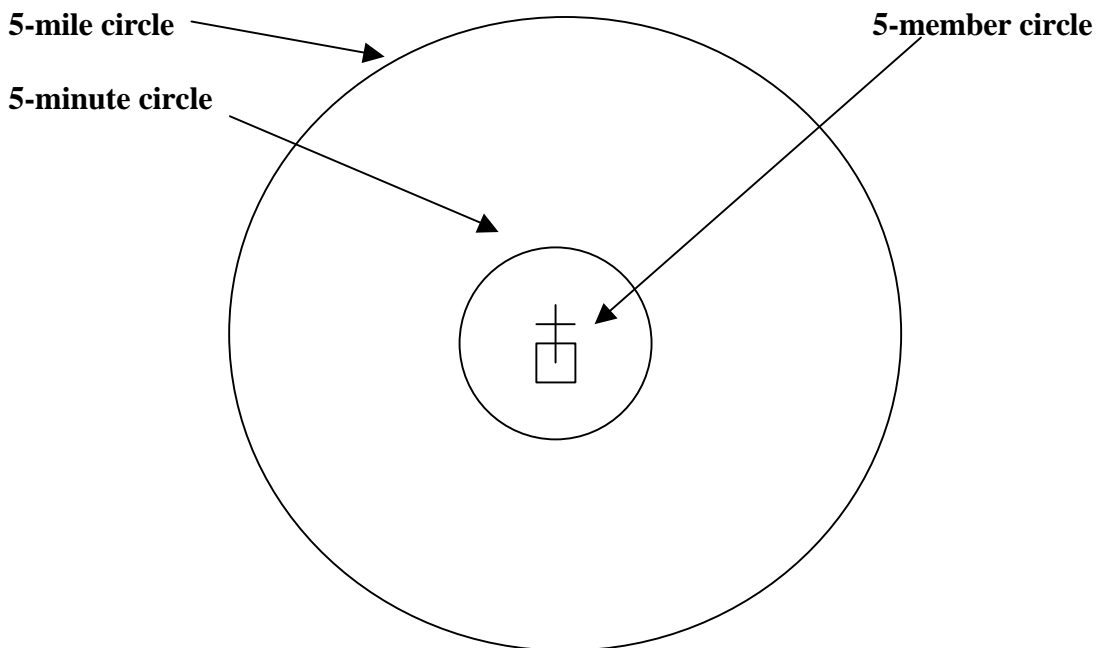
The 5-member circle is a group of 5 people that you are personally discipling in the Christian life. You and each member of the new church should try to win and disciple 5 people, who will in turn win and disciple 5 people, etc. This circle of 5 will serve as a mutual care group, a learning group, and an outreach group. You should begin now to pray that God will bring 5 men into your life that you are to teach (2 *Timothy 2:2*). Because of the intimate nature of this circle of disciples, it is best for men to disciple men, and for women to disciple women.

5-Minute Circle

The 5-minute circle represents your new church’s harvest field. Take a map of your city and pinpoint the location where the new church meets. Now estimate how far an average person can walk in 5 minutes (let’s say, 5 blocks). Draw a circle with a radius of 5 blocks, with the church’s meeting place in the center. This will give your church a mental image of their focus for evangelism. Now you can lead your church to testify, begin evangelistic Bible studies, and do door-to-door visitation within this circle, knowing that anyone won to Christ can walk to church in less than 5 minutes.

5-Mile Circle (or 5-Kilometer Circle)

The 5-mile circle is a way of allowing your new church to envision its mission field. Using the same map that shows your church’s 5-minute circle, draw a circle with a radius of 5 miles (or kilometers), with your meeting place at its center. Now show on the map the location of any other evangelical churches you know of within the circle. This will allow your church to see areas where there is no church, and where your church can plan to start a new church.



CELEBRATION

Introduction: An important part of maintaining the fellowship and vision in the body of Christ, the church, is celebration. This is not the celebration of personal feats, but celebrating God's work in the health and growth of the body, and the church's ever-deepening commitment to the growth of His Kingdom.

Scripture: *Luke 10:1-24; Romans 1:7-13; 1 Corinthians 1:4-10; Ephesians 1:15-21; Colossians 1:3-8; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4; Philemon 1:4-7; Philippians 1:3-6.*

Celebration will include:

- Recognition of God's leadership in the church (*1 Corinthians 1:3-6*)
- Encouragement of believers (*1 Thessalonians 1:3-4, 7-8*)
- Recommitment to the vision of the church (*Philemon 1:6*)

The church must set aside time, as did Jesus in *Luke 10:17-24*, to hear reports from the members about the wondrous things that God has carried out because of her obedience. While celebration may take on many forms – i.e., a worship service, or a time of testifying in a retreat setting – the leaders must remember that the focus is on what the Father has done, not what they have done. Celebration will focus on God's victories, encouraging the members, and focusing on God's plan for Kingdom growth. Celebration will not be an acknowledgement of a finished task, but rather a joyful, humble recognition of the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Father's rule over His church, and a renewing of the zeal for the church's mission.

EVANGELISTIC BIBLE STUDIES

Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* at the end of this section as you prepare and lead the Bible studies.
Refer back to *How to Study and Teach the Bible* for more information.

SESSION 1

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about God's Plan for You
Scripture: *John 3:16-18; John 10:10-11; 1 John 5:13; John 14:1-6*
Memory Verse: *John 3:16*
Live the Word: Answer this question: "Would you go to Heaven if you were to die tonight?" Pray and ask God to make His will for your life clear to you.

SESSION 2

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about your Problems
Scripture: *Romans 3:23; Romans 1:18-2:2; Romans 6:23; Romans 3:9-18*
Memory Verse: *Romans 3:23*
Live the Word: Ask God, in prayer, to examine your heart and to reveal all your sins to you. Ask Him to cleanse you and be the Lord of your life.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

- Who are the persons involved?
- What happened?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it take place?
- Why did it happen?
- What is the main lesson or teaching?
- What does this passage teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Man? Satan? Sin? Salvation? Church? The Christian life? Other spiritual questions?
- What questions do you have about this passage?
- Is there an example I am to follow?
- Is there a sin I am to avoid?
- Is there a command I am to obey?
- Is there a promise I am to claim?
- Is there a change I must make in my life?

SESSION 3

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about Forgiveness
Scripture: *Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:14-17; Romans 5:1-11; 1 John 1:7-9*
Memory Verse: *Romans 5:8*
Live the Word: Confess your sins to Christ and ask Him to forgive and cleanse you.

SESSION 4

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about your Relationship to Jesus
Scripture: *Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 10:1-12; Acts 26:20; Acts 3:19; Acts 16:30-34*
Memory Verse: *Romans 10:9-10*
Live the Word: Ask Jesus Christ to come into your life and save you. Tell someone about it!

SESSION 5

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about Faith
Scripture: *Romans 3:22-28; Philippians 3:7-14; James 2:19; Matthew 7:21; John 11:25-26*
Memory Verse: *John 11:25*
Live the Word: Examine your life and see if you are placing your faith in things other than Jesus Christ. If so, repent of them and place all your faith in Christ alone.

SESSION 6

Topic: What the Bible Teaches about Fellowship
Scripture: *Acts 2:37-47; Hebrews 10:19-25; Ephesians 5: 25-29*
Memory Verse: *Acts 2:41-42*
Live the Word: Once you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, you should follow His example by being baptized and becoming part of a nearby church, that is, a local body of other baptized believers.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?

PROFILE OF A NEW BELIEVER

Assume you have just led a person to Christ. He has just finished saying “amen” in a prayer of faith, and is getting up off his knees. What comes next? Where do you go from here?

First, you will want to begin the initial follow-up plan found in the section *Initial Follow-up Visit*. It is critical that a new believer begin to understand as much as possible about his new life in Jesus. Spend time with him rejoicing over this new life. This is the most important event in anyone’s life, a life-changing event, one which has altered eternity for him and those around him. But having rejoiced with him, **don’t walk away!** Having assisted in this spiritual birth, it is now time for spiritual nurture. Many new believers or “babes in Christ” are quickly forgotten, uncared for, unfed, and unloved. They are led to choose and pray for salvation, and then abandoned before they receive their first meal or care!

Begin now with spiritual nurture.

Why? To direct and set the course for his obedient worship of the Lord.

How? Give a little information and ask for obedience to the information shared.
Obedience to Christ is not taught as much as it is modeled.

Who is a new believer?

He is a babe in Christ, born again, indwelt and led by the Holy Spirit, a child of God.

What does a new believer know?

He doesn’t have all the answers, but he can obey what he knows. What he knows is that he has become a child of God. He should share that with others. He has just made the most important decision in his life and has experienced an eternity-changing event. He is not the same person he was yesterday.

Who are a new believer’s friends?

All or most of his friends are probably not Christians, so at this moment he is still closer to those who are lost than he will ever be again in his life. He has an opportunity NOW to tell his friends and family naturally of the momentous change in life, purpose, and faith in Jesus Christ. Help him know how to do that, which will lead to sharing his new faith. He knows more about Christ now than all or most of his friends. That makes him an expert to them! Help him understand his experience and decision, and then help him (in obedience to Christ—as his brother) obediently share this new faith with those he cares most about. Above all, **don’t** tell him to wait! Mistakes he makes as a new believer will be growth experiences just as they were for you.

Obedience is more important than lots of knowledge.

This is a critical truth for you to understand. Most models and methods of new believer development are knowledge centered. Jesus’ approach was obedience centered.

Paul’s first missionary journey displays Paul’s willingness to quickly pass on the core of the gospel for maturing Christians, entrusting them to the Holy Spirit, and forming new groups of worshipping believers (a church). Paul also designated leaders in each church and stayed

in touch with the group for ongoing instruction and guidance. What did he do to establish them in their faith and corporate worship of the Lord? (Read *Acts 14: 21-22*.)

His letters, though written to maturing fellowships of Christians, still related the core of the gospel. New believers don't need to be overloaded with a lot of detailed doctrinal information at the beginning. They need to know some basic beginning information, and they need to obey what they know. Obedience is the way of growth and strengthening. Jesus commanded: "Teach them to obey all things I have commanded you" (*Matthew 28:20*). We must not interpret that to mean, "Teach them all things before they can obey."

Life in Christ can be compared to a tree. If you cut down a tree you will find that it is made up of rings or successive layers of the same substance layered over and over. The more layers there are, the stronger and more mature the tree is. The core beliefs taught to a new believer are the same beliefs followed by a mature believer. There are no "secret" doctrines or beliefs given to a mature believer that are not given to a new believer. Like a tree, it is just that there are more layers, a filling out of those same beliefs and more experience and obedience which gives a fuller and more mature spiritual life.

Core Beliefs

So what are the basic core beliefs that a new believer needs? Surely they include the following truths listed in three sections.

Jesus is Lord.

Review the gospel to firmly establish the new believer. The new believer needs to learn, repeat, and apply these truths. Possible actions of **obedience** are: share, witness, and teach the truths to others and be baptized. In other words, understanding and claiming these truths by faith for himself, and sharing them with others.

Worship, follow (obey) and learn from Him.

Learn how to worship Him, who is both Master and Lord. This section involves teaching some skills such as self feeding, conversing with the Father, serving others in Jesus' Name, a new identity within the people of God, sharing the gospel with others, as well as changing attitudes about submitting and suffering for doing good. Possible actions of **obedience** are: reading the Bible daily, praying daily alone and with others, serving others, forming or leading or being part of a group of God's people, sharing the gospel with others, and more.

Build on the foundation of Jesus.

You must believe that faith in Jesus is a lifestyle, not a passive knowledge. Building is a part of maturing. We build for God's glory while knowing that we are the temple of God. Therefore, we are to live holy lives to bring glory to Him. We are not "mere men." A possible action of **obedience** is following the Spirit's leadership in holiness.

These obedience lessons are built around the following passages of Scripture.

1. Jesus is Lord.

- The gospel (*1 Corinthians 15:1-5*).
His death for our sin, burial, and resurrection.
- The one true God in Christ Jesus has come to save you (*Acts 17:24-31*).
He is Creator, Master, and righteous God.
- Salvation for you and all unbelievers (*Romans 10:8-15*).
Into your heart and out of your mouth, telling others.

2. Worship Him, Follow (obey) Him, and Learn from Him.

- The Word, spiritual sacrifices (*1 Peter 1:22 to 1 Peter 2:23*).
Praise, submitting, serving, and praying
- The people of God, witness, and suffering with Jesus (*Hebrews 13:15-18*).

3. Building on God's Foundation. (*1 Corinthians 3:9-17*).

God's foundation, our labor upon it, God's temple, and the Holy Spirit.

Important Ideas to Remember

1. It is a mistake to teach information-based discipleship, with little obedience required (catechism classes, new believer classes). If information-based development is followed, it:

- Depersonalizes the maturing process (kind of like an orphanage approach).
- Teaches the new believer that he can't do anything, but asks him to sit, listen, and learn.
- Inundates him with information and standards to which he can't progress, and he hasn't been asked to obey, except in generic terms.
- Slows down the reproductive cycle of new Christians and often sterilizes them so that they never reproduce.

2. Great care needs to be taken before sending the new believer to an existing fellowship.

- When we win someone to the Lord, we are prone to send him to an existing fellowship of believers. So we send him to just any church, whether he will be cared for and given an opportunity to grow or not. If he goes to an existing larger fellowship he is usually welcomed, accepted, taught, and seated. A new believer is seldom if ever given anything to do. In the midst of much more mature believers, he may feel weak, immature and helpless. He may be given some menial task, but in matters of faith (sharing the gospel, teaching his friends about Jesus, teaching someone how to pray, gathering his family as a spiritually maturing believer), he gets the idea that he must mature more before proceeding.
- The new believer needs to be given immediate opportunities to put his new-found faith into practice as soon as possible. Many new believers can witness to and gather friends and family into a group of worshipping believers, and become a church. If there is an existing church that will allow the new believer to obey the commands as they are being taught, then encouraging the new believer to join an existing

congregation is appropriate. However, if no church exists that can do this, then the new believer should be encouraged to be a part of, or start, a new work.

- 3. It is not necessary to fully explain every detail of each Scripture passage.** Don't attempt to answer all at once all the questions a passage may raise, thus trying to teach everything in it to the new believer. There is much in the passages listed. The new believer needs the framework found in the passages, but not everything in the passage is needed at this time. Do your own Bible studies on the passage. Practice teaching, but it is best practiced with a new believer. You can come back later and add more layers to the framework, but don't get too far ahead of his level of obedience.
- 4. Avoid the temptation to emphasize the negative.** Keep your teaching positive. If you load the believer with "don'ts" you will be developing a legalistic new believer. Remember, a new believer's obedience is not about keeping rules. It is about keeping his faithfulness in living a life that honors Christ.

BASIC BIBLE STUDIES FOR ALL BELIEVERS

How to Study and Teach these Lessons

Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* found at the end of this section to help you prepare, learn, and teach the truths from God's Word. You can make a photocopy of the question page and write your answers and notes on it, or you can refer to the question page while writing your answers and notes on a separate piece of paper or in a notebook where you keep all your Bible study notes. Remember that you will not necessarily find an answer for each question in every passage of Scripture that you will read and study as you teach new believers.

If you have any other questions, refer back to the section *How to Study and Teach the Bible*.

Sample Lesson

The first session has been done to show you how to use the study questions.

SESSION 1

Topic: A Review of the Gospel
Scripture: *1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Acts 17:24-31; Romans 10:8-15*
Memory Verse: *Romans 10:13-14*
Live the Word: Share the gospel message with someone.

Who are the persons involved?

Christ, Paul, and the 12 disciples

What happened?

Paul tells us what it means to be saved and that Christ is the only true way of salvation. Paul was responding to the many messages that were being presented that did not teach that Jesus Christ was the only way to salvation. So that the first Christians would understand and know the truth, Paul teaches in very simple words what it means to be saved and how someone is saved.

Where did it take place?

Not important for this study.

When did it take place?

Paul is speaking to the early Christian church after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. The miracle of Pentecost has already taken place. The gospel is spreading to many new places.

Why did it happen?

Paul was explaining why salvation in Jesus is the only way, and how one is saved. The Bible teaches that there is only one way to the Father and salvation. That is belief and faith in Jesus Christ. The early Christians were hearing many different teachings and ideas. Paul wanted to be sure they knew the truth as taught in the Bible.

What is the main lesson or teaching?

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, the only true way for salvation and eternal life. Although there are those who worship other gods, Jesus is the Son of the One and only True God. If we confess with our mouths that Jesus is the Son of God and believe in Jesus, then we will be saved. This is the basis of our faith and is foundational for all other teachings in Scripture.

What does this passage teach me about God?

He is the only one and true God of the entire world. It is every Christian's responsibility to tell others the good news of this salvation message. It is important to know how someone is saved, but it is more important that we tell our family and friends.

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

Jesus is the only way for us to receive salvation. He is the Son of God who died and was raised from the dead and returned to His Father in heaven.

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

No direct teaching in these passages.

What does this passage teach me about man?

Man is lost and has a need of the Savior. Sin separates us from a relationship with God. It is only through faith in Jesus Christ that man can be saved.

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

No direct teaching in this passage.

What does this passage teach me about sin?

Sin is the characteristic of man that can only be overcome through forgiveness from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. The wages of sin is death. Jesus is the only answer for eternal life.

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

Salvation is only found in Jesus Christ. This is all man needs to be saved from sin and an eternity without God. No matter what others may say, salvation is found only in Jesus Christ.

What does this passage teach me about church?

Church is a group of people who have been saved from sin and have placed their life and faith in Jesus Christ. It is the church's and each Christian's responsibility and work to take the gospel to all those who have yet to receive the Good News. If the church is not telling the good news that Jesus saves, they are being disobedient to God. A healthy church baptizes new believers and starts new churches.

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

We as believers need to be telling others about faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible commands us to share our faith with others as often as we can.

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

There is life after death. We all have a choice as to where we will spend eternity. It will either be in heaven with God or in hell separated from God.

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

I am to follow the example of Paul and be sure all people I know hear the gospel message and know how to be saved.

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Not telling others about Jesus Christ.

Is there a command I am to obey?

The command to tell my family, neighbors, and others about how to find salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Once I have received the free gift of salvation there is no one who can take it away from me, nor can I lose my salvation because of sin.

Is there a change I must make in my life?

Look for opportunities to tell others about faith in Jesus.

SESSION 2

Topic: Worship the Lord; Follow the Lord; Learn from the Lord
Scripture: *1 Peter 1:1 – 1 Peter 2:3; Luke 10:25-28*
Memory Verse: *Luke 10:27*
Live the Word: Grow in love by the study of and the obedience to the Bible.

SESSION 3

Topic: Spiritual Sacrifice
Scripture: *1 Peter 2:4-5; Hebrews 13:15-19; Romans 12:1*
Memory Verse: *Romans 12:1*
Live the Word: Pay particular attention to praise, submission, service, and prayer at church and at home.

SESSION 4

Topic: Fellowship and Witness
Scripture: *1 Peter 2:6-12; Matthew 28:18-20*
Memory Verse: *Matthew 28:19-20*
Live the Word: Teach or disciple someone in what you have been learning.

SESSION 5

Topic: Suffering

Scripture: *1 Peter 2:13-25*

Memory Verse: *1 Peter 2:20*

Live the Word: Bless someone who has mistreated you, or ask forgiveness of someone whom you have wronged.

SESSION 6

Topic: Building on God's Foundation

Scripture: *1 Corinthians 3:1-23; Matthew 7:24-27*

Memory Verse: *1 Corinthians 3:11-15*

Live the Word: Practice maintaining an awareness of God's presence with you at all times.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?

ACTS: CHURCH AND CHURCH PLANTING

At the beginning of the study of Acts you should point out the structure of the book. Note that *Acts 1:8* can provide an outline for the entire book.

Acts 1-7: the “Jerusalem” section

Acts 8-12: the “Judea and Samaria” section

Acts 13-28: the “ends of the earth” section

Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* at the end of this section as you prepare and lead the Bible studies.

Refer back to *How to Study and Teach the Bible* for more information.

SESSION 1

Topic: Acts and the First Church

Scripture: *Acts 1:1-14* (verse 8 as outline); *Acts 2:1-41*; *John 14:15-17*;
Matthew 28:18-20

Memory Verse: *Acts 1:8*

Live the Word: Be baptized if you have not yet done so.

SESSION 2

Topic: A Living Church Grows

Scripture: *Acts 2:41-47*; *Matthew 26:26-28*; *1 Corinthians 11:23-33*

Memory Verse: *Acts 2:42*

Live the Word: Take the Lord’s Supper with other Christians.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

- Who are the persons involved?
- What happened?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it take place?
- Why did it happen?
- What is the main lesson or teaching?
- What does this passage teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Man? Satan? Sin? Salvation? Church? The Christian life? Other spiritual questions?
- What questions do you have about this passage?
- Is there an example I am to follow?
- Is there a sin I am to avoid?
- Is there a command I am to obey?
- Is there a promise I am to claim?
- Is there a change I must make in my life?

SESSION 3

Topic: Preaching and Persecution
Scripture: *Acts 3:1 – Acts 4:4*
Memory Verse: *James 2:14-17*
Live the Word: Serve or minister to someone.

SESSION 4

Topic: “They Had Been With Jesus”
Scripture: *Acts 4:5-33*
Memory Verse: *Acts 4:31*
Live the Word: Pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit to witness boldly.

SESSION 5

Topic: Giving
Scripture: *Acts 4:34 – Acts 5:13*
Memory Verse: *James 1:27*
Live the Word: Help someone less fortunate than yourself.

SESSION 6

Topic: Worthy to Suffer
Scripture: *Acts 5:14-42*
Memory Verse: *Acts 5:41-42*
Live the Word: Proclaim Jesus as Lord to someone who does not know Him.

SESSION 7

Topic: A Faith Worth Dying For
Scripture: *Acts 6:1 – Acts 7:60*
Memory Verse: *Revelation 3:10*
Live the Word: Pray that God will give you boldness to proclaim His name, even if it means death.

SESSION 8

Topic: Preaching the Word
Scripture: *Acts 8:1-40; Romans 6:1-11*
Memory Verse: *Acts 8:4*
Live the Word: Identify and pray for a community that has no witness.

SESSION 9

Topic: The Damascus Road
Scripture: *Acts 9:1-31*
Memory Verse: Verses used to share your testimony
Live the Word: Prepare and memorize your testimony.

SESSION 10

Topic: Every Nation, Every Tribe, and Every Tongue
Scripture: *Acts 9:32 – Acts 10:48*
Memory Verse: *Acts 10:34-35*
Live the Word: Pray for those of other nations who have not heard the gospel.

SESSION 11

Topic: Prayer and Prison
Scripture: *Acts 11:19 – Acts 12:24*
Memory Verse: *Acts 12:5*
Live the Word: Pray for those who are in prison for their faith.

SESSION 12

Topic: The Call to Missions
Scripture: *Acts 12:25 – Acts 13:52*
Memory Verse: *Acts 13:2-3*
Live the Word: Pray for God to call someone from your church as a missionary.

SESSION 13

Topic: Strengthening the Souls of the Faithful
Scripture: *Acts 14:1-28*
Memory Verse: *Acts 14:21-23*
Live the Word: Have leaders appointed for your church.

SESSION 14

Topic: God's Wisdom
Scripture: *Acts 15:1-34*
Memory Verse: *Proverbs 13:10*
Live the Word: Make a list of people you can trust for counsel on spiritual matters.

SESSION 15

Topic: God Leads; I Follow
Scripture: *Acts 15:35 – Acts 16:40*
Memory Verse: *Proverbs 16:9*
Live the Word: Seek guidance from the Lord regarding where or to whom you should witness.

SESSION 16

Topic: The Plumb Line of Truth
Scripture: *Acts 17:1-34*
Memory Verse: *Acts 17:11*
Live the Word: Search the Scriptures daily.

SESSION 17

Topic: Do Not Keep Silent
Scripture: *Acts 18:1-28*
Memory Verse: *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*
Live the Word: Identify one or two people with whom you can relate closely in your Christian walk and ministry.

SESSION 18

Topic: Teaching that Teaches Others
Scripture: *Acts 19:1-41*
Memory Verse: *2 Timothy 2:2*
Live the Word: Be faithful in passing on what you learn.

SESSION 19

Topic: Mentoring
Scripture: *Acts 20:1-38*
Memory Verse: Review *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*
Live the Word: Identify one or more people you can take with you when doing ministry.
(See *Acts 20:4*)

SESSION 20

Topic: Not Ashamed of the Gospel
Scripture: *Acts 21:1 – Acts 22:30*
Memory Verse: *Romans 1:16*
Live the Word: Share your testimony with someone.

SESSION 21

Topic: Authority and Obedience
Scripture: *Acts 23:1 – Acts 24:27*
Memory Verse: *Romans 13:1*
Live the Word: Pray this week for the governing authorities.

SESSION 22

Topic: The Power of your Testimony
Scripture: *Acts 25:1 – Acts 26:32*
Memory Verse: *Acts 26:17-18*
Live the Word: Share your testimony with someone.

SESSION 23

Topic: God's Protection
Scripture: *Acts 27:1 – Acts 28:31*
Memory Verse: *2 Timothy 4:2*
Live the Word: Thank God for the protection He provides in your life.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?

CHURCH PLANTING TRAINING

One of the most important truths you can communicate to new believers is the urgency of the task of evangelism and church planting. Time is important. The notes for sessions 1 and 2 are a good place to get started on this idea. The notes for all of the lessons are simply to help you as a leader communicate some ideas which have been proven in church planting experience over the years. Don't allow the notes to take the place of the Bible study, but use them as illustrations as the opportunity arises.

**Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* at the end of this section as you prepare and lead the Bible studies.
Refer back to *How to Study and Teach the Bible* for more information.**

SESSION 1

Topic: God's Eternal Purpose, Part 1
Scripture: *Isaiah 49:5-26; Acts 26:20*
Memory Verse: *Isaiah 49:6*
Live the Word: Pray for unevangelized peoples every day this week.

SESSION 2

Topic: God's Eternal Purpose, Part 2
Scripture: *2 Peter 3:3-12; Revelation 7:9-12; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8*
Memory Verse: *2 Peter 3:9*
Live the Word: Identify a specific unevangelized people group to pray for on a regular basis.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

- Who are the persons involved?
- What happened?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it take place?
- Why did it happen?
- What is the main lesson or teaching?
- What does this passage teach me about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit? Man? Satan? Sin? Salvation? Church? The Christian life? Other spiritual questions?
- What questions do you have about this passage?
- Is there an example I am to follow?
- Is there a sin I am to avoid?
- Is there a command I am to obey?
- Is there a promise I am to claim?
- Is there a change I must make in my life?

Teaching Notes:

God's plan in *Acts 1:8*

- Jerusalem and Judea
- Samaria (national minorities)
- Ends of the earth (globally, more than 20 percent have no access to the gospel)

There are more people alive today who have not received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord than there have ever been before. Tomorrow there will be even more. If you care about people's eternal destiny, then you know why we place so much emphasis on speed. Or to put it another way, why we are eager to present the gospel to everyone who has not heard.

If churches do not reproduce more quickly than population growth, then we are losing the race the Lord has set before us. Once the lost die without Christ, there is no chance to save them. If we are to have any hope of making a serious impact on lostness, it will require a rapid multiplication of churches. Starting new churches slowly as we have done in the past does not even keep up with population growth. We must rapidly increase the rate of church growth if we are going to save as many as possible.

There is a false way of thinking about quality and speed. Most of the time the assumption is that faster implies weaker or inferior. This is not necessarily the case. One major reason for this presupposition about faster meaning weaker is our view of discipleship. Many people believe that "discipleship" is a body of knowledge to transfer rather than patterns and processes to practice and pass on.

Where did we get this idea? Maybe from *Matthew 28:19*: "Teaching them..." But it doesn't stop there. It says, "Teaching them to obey..." which is a pattern. Certainly knowledge is involved, but it is not primary. The gaining of knowledge will last a lifetime, but the pattern of obedience should be practiced from the first day a person believes and becomes a follower of Christ.

The Chinese have a saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." In Latin America someone could say, "Give a man a bag of tortillas, and you feed him for a day. Teach him to grow corn, and you feed him for a lifetime."

If we view discipleship training as just teaching what the Bible says, then it divides the believers in a church into believers who know what the Bible teaches and those believers who obey what the Bible teaches. How did Jesus do it? He sent His disciples out to minister from the beginning, that is right after He called them to follow Him. How did Paul do it? Did he plant a church and stay around for years before letting them stand on their own feet? He never stayed anywhere for more than a few weeks except in Corinth (18 months) and Ephesus (3 years).

Let's look at Paul's first missionary journey. After spending a few weeks at each city and leading a few to the Lord, how did he lead all those new churches? He didn't! Read *Acts 14:21-23*.

Paul did not have time to tell the people everything they needed to know about Christ and their new life in Him. He did, however, have time to model patterns of obedience for them. How do you interpret Scripture, feed on the truth of Scripture, and apply Scripture to life? How do you relate to one another as fellow believers? How do you pray and hear from the Holy Spirit? There are only a few basic processes by which we grow in our faith. If Paul could communicate those through modeling, then he could entrust the new churches into the Lord's hand with confidence. Yes, he followed up and checked back with them, but he did not coddle them. He was not overprotective.

As you read Paul's epistles, think about how many times Paul said to follow his pattern. For example, how often he said to see how others did or did not follow his pattern. First Thessalonians is a good example. The speed at which you start new churches does not make them good or bad churches. It is how you teach new believers to obey Scripture that is important.

Reaching this world for God will require rapid multiplication of new churches. In most places in Latin America, it takes many years to start one church. The cycle begins with a Bible study in someone's home. Then the Bible study gathers a few new members and becomes a mission. After more time, new believers are added to the mission. In many cases, the day comes when the mission wants to become a church. Unfortunately, it is at this point that requirements not found in Scripture are presented as a list of things that must be done to become a church. These requirements can include such things as a building, a minimum number of members, a seminary-trained pastor, and much more.

Nowhere do you find requirements such as these in Scripture. This entire process of becoming church can take 5 to 10 years. At this growth rate we will never give everyone the chance to hear the salvation message!

In the book of Acts, the Bible teaches us the first church added new believers daily. They met in many places including homes and were still called church. Certainly our goal should be no less than this. In this study we will learn what the Bible teaches about church and how to start new churches at a rate that will allow every man, woman, boy, and girl an opportunity to know how they can believe and live a new life found in Jesus Christ.

Note: The following suggestions can be spread out over the course of the next 25 lessons.

Suggestions for Rapid Church Planting

- **Immediately place local believers in leadership positions in planting a church in a pioneer area.** This is one way to significantly increase the number of new churches. If this is not done, it could take years for local believers to view themselves as competent to replace someone from outside who may have significantly more training or experience. This has been a forty-year process for a church that was planted by a foreign missionary and still has not found "suitable" local pastoral leadership. This church has been without a pastor for three years since the church planter's retirement. When believers are never

given a chance to grow and lead from the beginning of a new church start, then they soon believe that only someone from outside the church can come in and lead. Churches like this do not reproduce themselves; thus, they stop the spread of the gospel.

- **Leadership training is done primarily on the job.** This is another leadership issue that can seriously affect the reproductive rate. The use of multiple leadership formats enables the church to stay ahead of the growth curve, as extra leaders are always available to start new churches. With this method of leadership training, sending people away to a seminary is avoided and greatly shortens the necessary preparation time for leaders.
- **Gospel saturation** is another factor that can only help the rate at which people come to the Lord. Read *Romans 10:14a* and *2 Corinthians 9:6*.

When the tide comes in, all the boats in the harbor rise. Spiritually speaking, exposing large numbers of people to the truth of the gospel will help the tide of the Holy Spirit to come in, changing people and the society. If large numbers of people are being exposed to Scripture, then you will accelerate the work. Read *Hebrews 4:14* and *Isaiah 55:11*. God will honor His word. It will have an effect on people's hearts and lives.

- **Model and communicate the idea that the discipleship process is just that—a process.** This is another way to increase the speed of reproduction of new churches. It is not a body of information to transfer, but a pattern of living and relating to God, His Word, and His Body, the church. This is a pattern that can be modeled and learned in a short period of time, enabling a lifetime of ministry and growth. This view of discipleship will enable and require new believers to very quickly be productive in ministry themselves. It brings every believer into a fruitful life of obedience from the very beginning rather than causing new believers to be a burden on more mature believers who must disciple them for years before the new converts can begin to minister themselves.
- **Conduct evangelistic Bible studies and initial follow-up discipleship Bible studies on a daily basis rather than a weekly basis.** Let's assume you have planned a twelve-session Bible study for evangelism and a twelve-session Bible study for immediate follow-up discipleship. If these were taught on a weekly basis, they would take a total of twenty-four weeks. They would only take four weeks if they were done on a daily basis. This is a savings of five months in the church planting process. That can be the difference in tens of thousands of churches over ten or fifteen years!

There are additional advantages to having daily studies. First of all, it emphasizes the importance and urgency of the topic. In the discipleship phase particularly, it is a well known truth that the period of time that elapses between conversion and follow-up is a major factor in the probability of whether or not the person will follow through on their new commitment. The one drawback is that in the discipleship studies there is often a level of homework including Scripture memory that would be difficult to compress into a daily time frame. However, some of this material could be postponed until after the initial follow-up period. The corresponding gains in terms of immediate confirmation of

one's decision more than outweigh the disadvantages that would come from slightly delaying some of this discipleship material.

In some urban societies particularly, there are those who claim that people would never be able to have time for daily studies. They overlook the fact that they are asking for a limited period of time—a few weeks—whereas the disciples would have to set aside several months of one session per week if a weekly approach is used. But in these same highly intense, competitive and busy societies, people routinely take out large chunks of time for business training and other items of importance to them. If someone is highly motivated and serious about their commitment, he or she can make time for daily studies for a brief period.

- **Place an emphasis on the responsibility of sharing the gospel, obeying Christ's command of taking the Gospel into all the world.** This is another opportunity for increasing the pace of church planting. We have the message of life for dying people--the cure for the deadly disease that those around us have contracted. We have lifeboats at the scene of a shipwreck. If this urgency is clearly communicated in word and action by the church planters, the new converts will naturally catch it. It is obvious in areas where the gospel is not readily available. This urgency and desire for reaching out to those who have not yet heard the truth becomes part of the initial way of thinking of the church. It will become characterized by boldness in sharing the gospel gladly.
- **Emphasize sharing the gospel along existing lines of relationships.** Certainly the new converts need to share with those whom they do not know. However, the gospel always travels faster along existing lines of relationship. No opportunity should be missed for the quick evangelization of family and friends.

These are but a few of the possible ways to speed up reproductive cycle without harming the quality of the fruit. This is an important matter that should receive constant attention and thought.

SESSION 3

Topic: Horses and Mules

Scripture: *Luke 13:6-9; John 15:1-8*

Memory Verse: *John 15:5*

Live the Word: Ensure whoever you are teaching is teaching others.

Teaching Notes:

God's plan for populating His creation depends on reproduction. Throughout the ages people have realized that bearing children was a sign of good health and blessing from God. Having many children and grandchildren has been a sign of honor. The same thing is true spiritually. God's plan for populating His Kingdom depends on reproduction. Bearing spiritual children, new believers, is a sign of good spiritual health and blessing from God. Having many spiritual children and grandchildren is a thing of honor. This is true for individuals and for churches. Churches can reproduce just as believers can reproduce.

Horses and Mules: Consider the following lesson from life in the country. Mules are sterile. They are a hybrid, a cross between a horse and a donkey. They cannot reproduce another mule. Horses, on the other hand, do reproduce other horses. “Horse” churches are churches that reproduce. “Mule” churches do not.

We cannot allow fear of planting mules (churches that don’t reproduce) to prevent us from planting any churches at all. It is far better to plant a mule church than no church at all! Fear of doing it wrong can lead to paralysis that is a fatal error. A mule is a victory, albeit a smaller victory than a horse (a reproducing church). It is far better to plant a mule and learn from the experience and try to do better next time. There is no harm done by planting a mule church. The mule church will not become the rule because it will not reproduce. You can try again in another place and do better next time.

Once you get a horse church it will multiply, and it will become the rule because the horse churches will very quickly outgrow the mule churches in terms of total number of believers. Almost any way of planting a church is better than not planting a church at all. However, nothing significant is ever achieved without taking risks. There is no risk greater than the risk of trying a new idea. If the situation does not change, unreached people groups will remain unreached, and millions will die and enter a Christ-less eternity. No possible alternative is a greater evil than this. The greatest risk of all in our situation is not doing anything different. We must not fear making mistakes, because the mistakes can be no worse than the current situation.

SESSION 4

Topic: Resources are in the Harvest / Priesthood of the Believer
Scripture: *Luke 8:4-15; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Acts 19:8-10; 2 Timothy 2:2*
Memory Verse: *1 Peter 2:9*
Live the Word: Tell of God’s greatness to someone who does not know Him.

Teaching Notes:

As Christians, we are all ministers. We are all preachers who are to bring others to God so they too can be preachers. We are all seed that has been harvested and are to be planted, so we can reproduce and bring about an even greater harvest.

If you are working among an unreached people group, the chances are that the greatest church planters, the most effective church planters among your target group in two years, are people who are not yet even believers today. The most effective church planters two years from now will be people who will be won, perhaps, in the next few months. The resources are truly in the harvest.

If we fail to plan for that and fail to recognize that fact, we are condemning the results to be relatively meager. No unreached people group can afford to rely primarily on outside workers for evangelism and church planting. Outside workers are necessary to get a work started, but once it is started, it must be carried out and carried to completion by members of that target group—or it is destined for failure.

We must never forget that the resources are in the harvest. A wise farmer does not buy seed year after year. He keeps some of his best grain to plant the next year's crop. A farmer recently told a missionary that he had seen families allow their children to starve rather than allow them to eat the next year's seed corn. Those families believed in this principle. Do we?

In *Luke 8:4-15* Jesus tells the parable of the sower. He says the seed that fell in good soil brought forth one hundred-fold. With this rate of fruitfulness, if there are two harvests each year, then starting with a single grain, after four years you could have enough rice to feed every person on earth for an entire year. This illustrates what God can do spiritually through faithful servants.

SESSION 5

Topic: Bible Based
Scripture: *Psalms 19:7-11; Isaiah 55:6-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 2:1-3*
Memory Verse: *2 Timothy 3:16-17*
Live the Word: Study the Bible more intensively every day this week.

Teaching Notes:

Bible study patterns are important because every believer has to be a productive contributor to the task if it is ever going to be finished. Every member needs to reproduce. If Bible teaching becomes a passive activity, that lack of obedience will lead to disobedience in Biblical application. That will doom the movement. Most people will not ever take the initiative or even consider becoming an active witness of their faith if they are constantly being a passive recipient in their spiritual life. This means that everyone needs to contribute to the discussion and take part in the application portion of the study.

SESSION 6

Topic: Obedience, Part 1
Scripture: *James 1:21-25; John 14:15, 21; John 15:1-17*
Memory Verse: *James 1:25*
Live the Word: Identify any known areas of disobedience, then confess and repent.

SESSION 7

Topic: Obedience, Part 2
Scripture: *Matthew 5:19; Matthew 7:21-27; 1 John 2:3-6, 1 John 3:21-24, 1 John 5:2-3*
Memory Verse: *1 John 2:3*
Live the Word: Identify how you can be obedient to God.

Teaching Notes:

Obedience to Scripture must be the measure of success. This establishes the Bible as the authority rather than the leader or teacher. This helps protect the movement against personality cults or theological deviations creeping in over several spiritual generations. It doesn't hurt that Christ's commands include the task of taking the gospel to every person and every people group. Obedience to those commands results in tremendous fruitfulness. Knowledge is not enough. The demons have proper doctrine but have not submitted

themselves to the lordship of Christ (see *James 2:19*). Faith is a relationship of trust that is demonstrated by obedience rather than by correct belief (*James 2:14-26*).

SESSION 8

Topic: Discipline and Accountability, Part 1
Scripture: *Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:1-2, 19-21; Galatians 1:6-7*
Memory Verse: *1 Thessalonians 5:14*
Live the Word: Make right any relationship problems with fellow Christians.

SESSION 9

Topic: Discipline and Accountability, Part 2
Scripture: *1 Corinthians 5:1 – 1 Corinthians 6:8*
Memory Verse: *Romans 12:18-19*
Live the Word: Make right any relationship problems with non-Christians.

Teaching Notes:

Accountability is a part of church life. We must practice church discipline—and not only for sins of commission, but also for sins of omission. If someone is failing to make disciples, for instance, he should be approached to see if it is a spiritual problem, or if he simply needs to be better equipped.

Small groups or small congregations provide the intimate setting required for effective accountability. It is hard to hide in the crowd if your group is not extremely large. This helps assure involvement by every member. It also helps keep the leadership task do-able. It provides a measure of security as well. It helps establish a community that is a true spiritual family with a high sense of mutual concern.

If you have an accountability relationship with a church leader, you also need to constantly ask about the obedience and fruitfulness of the church he is leading. This is an important facet of his own accountability since he is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church.

SESSION 10

Topic: Prayer
Scripture: *Ephesians 6:18-20; Matthew 5:43-44; Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 18:1-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*
Memory Verse: *Matthew 6:9-13*
Live the Word: Spend extra time in daily prayer this week.

Teaching Notes:

Prayer is an indispensable part of the Christian life and Christian ministry. The best way to teach prayer is to model it. Be a person of passionate, frequent, and faithful prayer. Demonstrate in your life prayer that is God centered and others focused.

It has been said, “When men work, men work. When men pray, God works.” Jesus Himself saturated His ministry with prayer. There has been no significant growth or progress in the

church that was not accompanied and fueled by prayer. Prayer enables us to know God's will and do God's will. Prayer changes us and changes the world. Prayer is a major weapon in the spiritual battle we are engaged in.

SESSION 11

Topic: Participative / Shared Leadership

Scripture: *1 Corinthians 12:4-12; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Romans 12:3-8*

Memory Verse: *1 Corinthians 14:26*

Live the Word: At your next church service, ensure everyone gets an opportunity to contribute.

Teaching Notes:

Leadership is important. Church leaders do not necessarily need to be highly trained and educated pastors. Requiring formal education would severely limit who could serve as a leader. This would only add requirements not found in Scripture. Note that the only issue not related to character, but to ability in the letters to Timothy and Titus that outlined the requirements for pastors, was the ability to teach. Having full-time, paid, professional leaders will slow down church multiplication. It will require large congregations capable of supporting such leaders with a salary. Much of the time, energy, and resources would then be consumed by maintaining the existing church rather than outreach. This level of professionalism is unnecessary for typical home groups.

Having multiple leaders share responsibility within each congregation is also important. A careful reading of the New Testament clearly indicates this was the biblical pattern. Paul always worked with one or more partners whenever he did ministry. Jesus always sent His disciples out in pairs (*Luke 10:1*). Church planters always appointed multiple leaders in the churches they planted (*Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5*). This helped reduce the load on any one individual, making it possible for people to serve in this manner on a volunteer basis. It also reduced the requirements on what it took to be a leader.

Multiple leadership also helps prevent an artificial distinction between clergy and laity, encouraging all members to be involved in ministry. For leaders, their primary ministry is equipping the other members of the church to do the ministry of building up the church. Having multiple leaders enables leader preparation to be handled on-the-job for the most part through mentoring and modeling. Perhaps most importantly, it provides a ready supply of "extra" leaders that could be used to lead new churches locally if the mother church grows too large, or start new churches in some other place. It also provides insurance in times of persecution in case a church leader is imprisoned.

SESSION 12

Topic: Leaders as Servants

Scripture: *Matthew 20:20-28; John 13:3-17*

Memory Verse: *Matthew 20:25-28*

Live the Word: Serve whomever you teach this week.

Teaching Notes:

Servant leadership is a topic that is difficult to overemphasize. It is very different from anything we see in government, education, religion, or anywhere else outside the church. Because of the power of modeling, authoritarian leadership seems to be the pattern people naturally gravitate toward. Do whatever you can to avoid modeling or practicing such leadership. Be a servant. Follow the leadership example of Jesus. He came to serve.

SESSION 13

Topic: Leaders as Equippers
Scripture: *Ephesians 4:1-16*
Memory Verse: *Ephesians 4:11-12*
Live the Word: Equip for ministry whomever you teach this week.

Teaching Notes:

A leader serving as an equipper of others is another role or function that is not common in the world. This is one way leaders can be servants. Ministry is for all members of the church, not just those with the most training or experience. All members have spiritual gifts through which they can and should minister. Leaders must equip the members to minister effectively. Equipping other leaders is intimately connected with planting new churches. New churches cannot be planted unless new leaders are equipped.

SESSION 14

Topic: Man of Peace
Scripture: *Luke 10:1-20*
Memory Verse: *Luke 10:2*
Live the Word: Pray for the Lord to reveal to you a person of peace to whom you can start to witness this week.

Teaching Notes:

Locating a person of peace whose heart God has prepared is a proven way to begin new churches. Such a person can serve as an advocate in the community. Often his family, friends, and neighbors will come to the Lord as well. This person and those to whom he or she relates can form a new church.

Also note that it is more effective to group unbelievers and win them than to win individuals and group them. It is often very difficult to win individual converts, disciple them, and then try to form them into a new church. It is often far more effective to group them either based on pre-existing relationships such as family or friends, or based upon common interest or experience. If people can be exposed to the gospel in groups, it somehow lessens the fear of letting those people know they have converted. Often individuals will make their decision only in a one-on-one setting in persecuted environments, but it will still help them feel free to meet with and witness to others if they were exposed to the truth in a group setting.

Instead of winning a person to the Lord and then having that person tell his family and friends, why not locate someone who seems to be open to the gospel and have him get his family and friends together before he becomes a Christian? A low-key witness in the group

setting can go a long way toward diffusing suspicion and distrust among family members later. It may open up some tremendous possibilities for witness to them. If you are witnessing in such a setting, be sure to submit to the family authority. This usually means you should focus much of your attention on and direct the conversation to that authority figure, especially when it comes time for a decision to follow the Lord.

If an individual does become a Christian apart from their family, help him get his family relationships right as part of his early steps in following the Lord. Guide him to ask forgiveness for past actions or attitudes that were not right towards his family members. Help him seek reconciliation with family members with whom he has strained relationships. Guide him to submit to family authorities. These actions will help cement his decision and will serve as a testimony to his unsaved family members.

SESSION 15

Topic: New Converts Mean New Churches and New Leaders

Scripture: New Believers: *Acts 2:46-47; Acts 5:42; Acts 20:17-21*
New Leaders: *Acts 14:21-23*

Memory Verse: *Acts 5:42*

Live the Word: Look for an opportunity to start a new church this week, possibly in the home of the person of peace from last week.

Teaching Notes:

This was the pattern followed by Paul (*Acts 13:13 – Acts 14:23*) even when he was only in an area for a short period of time. This pattern of churches meeting in multiple homes within the same city, which showed up in Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Rome, also bears out this pattern.

Often opportunities for starting new churches are missed because of people's usual patterns with new converts. Frequently, the usual pattern is to incorporate new believers into existing churches. This should not be our normal response. The usual pattern should be to start new churches whenever you get new converts. There are exceptions when a church is very new or very small, but as a general rule every opportunity should be taken to begin new churches. This can be done in several ways:

- By immediately assisting the new converts to pursue the conversion of friends and family members by sharing their personal testimony.
- By dividing an existing church and sending some of the members (including whoever led them to the Lord) to join the new convert or converts to form a new church.

Studying church growth around the world reveals two constant patterns.

- Smaller churches grow faster than bigger churches.
- Newer churches grow faster than older churches.

This is one good reason to seek to start as many new churches as possible rather than incorporating new converts into existing churches.

Christians will have a greater impact on an unbelieving world if there are large numbers of smaller churches rather than just a few large churches. There is a place for churches of all sizes, but never forget that smaller churches can reproduce faster and more often than larger

churches. Larger churches tend to think more of maintaining themselves rather than starting new work.

Every person has a limited number of significant relationships they can actively maintain. Think for a moment about how many significant local relationships you have with unbelievers as opposed to Christians. There is a tendency to saturate ourselves with relationships with other believers. This is compounded in large churches or old churches. Our relationship set begins to stagnate in those situations.

Your usual way of thinking should be that new believers are not put into existing churches, but are part of churches formed because of their conversion. This was evidently the pattern in the New Testament. Even in places that had many believers, they did not primarily meet as a large group, but met daily in homes.

SESSION 16

Topic: Modeling

Scripture: *Luke 9:23; Philippians 3:17-19; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-8; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9; John 13:12-17; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2 Timothy 3:10-15; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 2:21-24; Hebrews 13:7; 2 Corinthians 12:14-18*

Memory Verse: *1 Timothy 4:12*

Live the Word: Pay attention this week to modeling the life of Christ.

Teaching Notes:

In church planting you need to model what you want to see as the result. For example:

- **Participative Bible teaching** needs to be modeled from the beginning. The first time you lead an evangelistic Bible study you need to allow participation. In personal witness you need to do this. Don't use a purely lecture, sermon, or monologue format.
- **Obedience to Scripture needs to be explicitly stated as the norm for believers.** Again, from the first evangelistic Bible study this needs to be a pattern to which the church planter subjects himself and others. The Bible needs to be the Book that demands accountability, a living Book with which to interact.
- **Regular people should be allowed to be leaders.** If you are extremely gifted or well trained, then do your work in such a way that it can be imitated by less gifted and untrained converts. In dealing with unbelievers or with new converts, don't use books to which they don't have access.
- **Small home groups should be used from the beginning,** even before people are converted. It is generally more effective to group unbelievers and win them than to win individuals and then group them. Don't set large groups as the goal or the ideal.

You can see how each of the many characteristics can be modeled from the beginning, even before people are Christians.

SESSION 17

Topic: Training Cycle, Part 1

Scripture: *Acts 20:17-38*

Memory Verse: *Acts 20:32*

Live the Word: Assist whomever you teach in an outreach or witnessing activity.

SESSION 18

Topic: Training Cycle, Part 2

Scripture: *Acts 14:21-23; Acts 18:23; Acts 19:9-10; Acts 20:4; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-8; Ephesians 1:15-16; Colossians 1:3-9*

Memory Verse: *1 Thessalonians 3:7-8*

Live the Word: Help whomever you teach to plan an outreach or witnessing activity to do on his own.

Teaching Notes:

In church planting it is helpful to keep in mind the training cycle: model, assist, watch and leave. Learning to ride a bicycle is a helpful analogy in regard to the training cycle.

- **Modeling:** Typically as a child grows, he will see his parent or other people riding bicycles. This provides a model and gives him a frame of reference for what the activity involves. The parent or another person is modeling.
- **Assisting:** However, that child will not learn to ride a bicycle without getting on the seat himself. When he is old enough and big enough, the parent or some other person will assist that child. While he gets on the seat, the person assisting will often grasp the seat and the handle bars and help the child maintain balance while he learns to pedal and steer. The child gradually learns to how to maintain balance. The parent or another person is assisting.
- **Watching:** Then, the parent will let go of the bicycle. The child will fall and get hurt, but he will get up again, get on the seat, and the parent gets him going and lets go again. The child falls. This pattern continues repeatedly until finally the child is able to maintain his balance and rides successfully. The parent or another person is watching.
- **Leaving:** When the parent is satisfied that the child understands the basic safety rules and can do this by himself, the parent leaves and the child rides on his own, wherever and whenever he wishes. The parent or another person is leaving.

The parent first provides a model by riding the bicycle, then provides assistance by holding the bicycle, then watches while the child rides the bicycle, and then finally leaves. This is an illustration of the training cycle.

Generational markers can often serve as a useful guide in knowing when to change roles.

- **Modeling:** The church planting team models as they plant a church.
- **Assisting:** They change roles after the establishment of the church and take an assisting role. They assist the first generation church in planting a second-generation church.

- **Watching:** After the second generation church is planted, they again change roles and begin watching as the second generation church plants a third generation church with the assistance of the first generation church. Then the first generation church plants another second church.
- **Leaving:** When this takes place the church planting team can transition to start work in a new area, modeling again as they do the work in another first generation church.

This pattern is clearly stated in passages such as *2 Timothy 2:2*. It is implied in other places. One such place was in Ephesus, when Paul was teaching in the school of Tyrannus (*Acts 19:9-10*). Although he was staying in the school, everyone in the province of Asia heard the message. This implies that his students were in turn teaching others who were teaching others. There is no other way the message could have spread so far and wide in such a short period of time.

SESSION 19

Topic: Avoid Creating Dependency

Scripture: *Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5*

Memory Verse: *1 Corinthians 2:4-5*

Live the Word: When you teach this week, ensure you do it in a way that those you are teaching can reproduce.

Teaching Notes:

The best way to avoid creating dependency is to follow the training cycle in healthy ways. You can follow this cycle at any number of levels.

- **Modeling:** At the first level it means you should consciously model good patterns in planting a church.
- **Assisting:** Then you can provide assistance in terms of Bible-based guidance as requested for the first generation of reproduction. Don't give your opinions either. Instead, take questions back to Scripture. Never say, "I think..." but rather, "Let's see what the Bible says about that...."
- **Watching:** Watch from a distance to ensure that third-generation and repeated second-generation reproduction occurs and that biblical patterns are being followed.
- **Leaving:** At this point you should leave in order to begin new work elsewhere and to ensure that dependence does not stunt the growth or hinder the reproduction of the new church-planting movement. At a micro level the same pattern can occur in terms of individual discipleship.

The most difficult step is usually the last one. You must learn to entrust the new converts to the Lord. They are indwelt and guided by the same Holy Spirit you have. They have the same Bible to learn from. You must realize that your continuing presence can actually serve to stunt their growth and maturity. The most common mistake in church planting may be

developing dependence upon the church planter rather than on the Lord. This results from each step of the cycle being mishandled.

- **Modeling:** The modeling is not appropriate because things are done which the new believers cannot imitate.
- **Assisting:** The assisting is of a nature to develop dependence because the church planter does things for the new converts rather than helping them to do it for themselves.
- **Watching:** The observing is laced with the assumption that until things are done the same way as the church planter would do them, they're just not being done right.
- **Leaving:** The criteria for leaving should be that things are done biblically and that reproduction is occurring. What often results is that either the reproduction or the exiting never occurs.

There is a difference between developing leaders who can and those who cannot feed on Scripture themselves. Leaders should continue to grow without being constantly dependent on outside training and guidance.

Starfish and octopus cell groups: This difference may perhaps best be illustrated by the difference between starfish and octopus. Starfish represent cell groups that have leaders who can be self-feeding but are connected. The octopus represents cell groups with leaders who are dependent for ongoing feeding and training in order to grow. If you cut off the leg of a starfish you get two starfish and nothing is lost. With an octopus, if you cut off the leg you get a new leg and the old leg is lost.

With an “octopus” cell group the leadership depends upon the hierarchy to provide regular teaching and structure and authority instead of learning to feed on scripture for themselves. If because of persecution or severed relationships or some other problem, the cell group is separated from whoever is providing the ongoing feeding, it will typically die.

With a starfish, if the head is destroyed, you get as many starfish as there are pieces of starfish. But with an octopus, if the head is destroyed, the octopus is dead. In an octopus cell group, if the leadership is imprisoned, dies, or falls into sin or some other problem, typically the church is seriously damaged or even killed. Whereas there is no problem like that with “starfish” cell groups, because each unit is not reliant on outside support, but is self-sufficient for feeding and growth.

There is one advantage for the octopus. A starfish is simple and non-specialized, whereas the octopus is complex and specialized. A well-organized hierarchy of octopus cell groups which is complex and specialized can provide a myriad of services and opportunities that can never be offered by loosely connected starfish cell groups. They can only meet the simple, basic, straightforward needs, not the highly specialized needs. The authoritative structure in the octopus network of groups enables it to act with greater coordination than is possible with a starfish network of groups.

SESSION 20

Topic: Mentor / Discipleship Chain

Scripture: *Ezra 7:10; Matthew 5:19; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Philippians 4:9; Colossians 1:3-8; 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 18:24-26*

Memory Verse: Review *2 Timothy 2:2*

Live the Word: Check for reproduction of your teaching to the third and fourth generations.

Teaching Notes:

The best way to learn something is to teach it. You will pay better attention when you hear something if you know you will be responsible to pass it on. We not only have a responsibility to obey the Lord, but also to teach others what we have learned. We must teach other believers and preach the gospel to unbelievers. This means that every Christian should be a student, and every Christian should be a teacher for at least one other person.

Many church planting approaches rely on the church planter assuming leadership in the new church at the beginning. This is not a good idea unless the church planter plans to remain with the church. It is far better for the church planter to mentor some of the new converts from the beginning to serve as leaders. Once there are baptized believers in an area, they should be the ones providing the up-front leadership. The church planter models up to that point and then begins to assist through mentoring.

Mentoring involves meeting with the new leaders in order to prepare them to lead when the entire church meets together. The mentor can go over a Bible study with them, pray, teach them a new song or help them write one, model participative leadership patterns, etc. When the church meets as a whole, the mentor may not attend at all or may take a very low profile in the meeting.

Very early on the mentor will encourage the fledgling congregation to begin working toward planting a new church themselves. The mentor assists in this process. After the first reproduction, the mentor will begin to watch in a similar fashion that a parent watches their child fall down when learning to ride a bicycle. The young church will make mistakes. This is certain. When they plant another church and remain true to the Bible, the mentor will need to move on to begin work in another area or return to the home church. He can physically move on after the assisting stage, but he will need to maintain regular contact throughout the watching stage.

A biblical example of someone preparing a leader behind the scenes in this way can be found in *Acts 18:24-26*. Priscilla and Aquila equipped Apollos in this way without taking him out of leadership or correcting him in the church itself.

How a church planter treats new converts is an important determinant in the quality and nature of leadership that arises from among them. Rarely will people far exceed what is expected of them. Treating people as partners leads to the development of independent coworkers; treating them as observers leads to the formation of dependent followers who continue asking for guidance.

One way to ensure participation and maturity development of each believer is to utilize discipleship chains. A discipleship chain relationship is one that takes place outside of the regular church meeting. It is usually a one-on-two discipleship process. It can be one-on-three, but it is preferable to have a one-on-two relationship.

The pattern for discipleship: A more mature believer discipled two others from within the congregation, each of whom discipled two others, who then discipled two others. Each discipling relationship involves mutual accountability for putting into practice scriptural truth that is learned, and teaching what one has learned. This two-fold accountability is extremely important.

In order for this process to work, a person need only be one step ahead of the person whom he or she is discipling. For instance, a believer who has been in the Lord ten weeks can disciple others who have only been believers for eight weeks, who could in turn disciple others who have been disciples six weeks, etc.

This pattern has many advantages over common disciple patterns where one person discipled many, either as a large group or individually. In this common pattern, disciplers are assumed and required to be highly mature and experienced believers. I refer to that pattern as “banyan tree” leadership. The banyan tree is a large tree that continues to put out shoots and roots laterally so that it gradually covers large amounts of ground and has quite dense foliage. Underneath a banyan tree there is no growth of any other kind of plant. The ground is hard-packed mud. This type of leadership does not allow for other leaders to develop. New believers become accustomed to constantly being on the receiving end of teaching. Only a rare few will ever consider themselves to be potential leaders. The few leaders who do exist are extremely experienced and mature. In a bad sense, they are irreplaceable.

A discipleship chain, however, not only allows but also requires the development in maturity of other believers. With a banyan tree type of leadership, newer believers will rarely, if ever, view themselves as adequate to replace their primary discipler. Whereas in a discipleship chain, every believer is required to become a discipler. Even those believers at the end of the chain are expected to teach what they’ve learned to an unbeliever, whether it is a child, a family member, or a friend. The command to make disciples was given to every believer so we need to equip and expect every member to do so.

Mentoring system: A good model for beginning a discipleship chain is the mentoring system where the discipler is mentoring two or three leaders from the group outside of the regular church meeting time. This can also serve as a good way to pass on leadership pointers that may or may not be suitable to teach during a regular worship service. The discipleship chain pattern is not limited in its growth potential as is the traditional model but also develops more mature believers in a shorter period of time than one-on-many systems.

One important thing to remember, however, is that the top or head of the chain needs to have continuing input and equipping from some source. This can partially be provided by a mutual accountability in discipling between or among the heads of other discipleship chains. It can also be provided within a network of groups by regular leaders meetings where more

advanced biblical training and equipping is provided by an outside source. Failure to provide for this ongoing equipping and accountability has resulted in the death of many good churches around the world.

As a rule, a discipleship chain will extend only as far as the local house church or cell. It will not exceed four generations (plus the unbelievers the last generation is “teaching”). When a cell grows to the point of division, the existing chain dissolves and re-forms in the new church. This provides an opportunity for those who are growing quickly or are able teachers to “move up” in the chain.

SESSION 21

Topic: Identifying False Teachers

Scripture: *Deuteronomy 13:1-15; Deuteronomy 18:22; Matthew 23:1-12; Matthew 24:4-14, 23-27; 2 Corinthians 2:17; Galatians 1:8; 1 Timothy 1:3-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3; Matthew 7:15-23*

Memory Verse: *Matthew 7:15-18*

Live the Word: Evaluate any teaching (yours or others) in the church this week to see if it is trustworthy.

Teaching Notes:

In Latin America today, false teachers are a huge problem. Cults are rampant, largely because new church leaders and other new Christians do not know how to interpret and apply Scripture. They are dependent on others to teach and interpret Scripture for them. We must be aware that false teachers will come and learn to identify them so we can resist their teaching.

SESSION 22

Topic: Combating False Teaching

Scripture: *Matthew 7:24-27; Acts 20:29-32; Ephesians 4:14-16; 2 Timothy 3:12-17*

Memory Verse: *Ephesians 4:15-16*

Live the Word: This week seek out the evaluation of others in your own teaching. Request accountability.

Teaching Notes:

The word of God never changes. Learning the Bible and applying its teachings is the best way to combat false teaching. The Bible is more authoritative than any leader. Learning to properly interpret and apply the Bible to your life is how you can remain safe from false teaching. This is why it is so important to teach people to feed on the Bible for themselves. Remember, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

SESSION 23

Topic: Giving
Scripture: *2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15*
Memory Verse: *2 Corinthians 9:10*
Live the Word: Give a generous gift for the Lord's work this week.

Teaching Notes:

In the Old Testament, believers were required to give ten percent of their income for the work of the Lord. Today we have no such requirement but we are commanded to give and to be generous. We should give even more freely and generously to show our gratitude for the grace we have received. Giving of our earthly possessions is a way to reap eternal benefit as we build the Lord's Kingdom.

SESSION 24

Topic: Daily Aspects of Early Church Life
Scripture: *Acts 2:46-47; Acts 5:42; Acts 6:1; Acts 16:5; Acts 17:10-12, 17; Acts 19:8-10; Acts 20:31*
Memory Verse: *Acts 2:46-47*
Live the Word: Make it a point to meet with other believers every day this week.

Teaching Notes:

Our relationship with God is a daily matter. It would seem strange for a married man to only drop by to see his spouse once a week. In our spiritual life we will never develop an intimate relationship with our Creator if we only relate to him on an infrequent or occasional basis.

SESSION 25

Topic: Suffering For A Purpose
Scripture: *Matthew 5:10-12; Matthew 16:24-26; John 12:24-26; Philippians 2:3-11; 2 Corinthians 4:6-18; Hebrews 12:1-11*
Memory Verse: *Matthew 5:10-12*
Live the Word: Spend time rejoicing in prayer this week for the opportunities you had to suffer for your faith this week.

Teaching Notes:

Following the Lord as a disciple is a costly commitment. It will cost us comfort, convenience, ease, and safety. This cost is worth it, however, because of the purpose. The purpose is that the Lord will be glorified. His eternal purpose of salvation to all nations will be accomplished. We will be remade into His image, a new creation, and will live with Him eternally.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?

FAST TRACK STORYING OF THE BIBLE

Introduction: The Fast Track Story is a summary of God's work throughout history. The purpose of this story is to give the new believer a broad overview of the high points of Old Testament history. This can help them put things they learn into perspective. They should attempt to memorize the key historical points in this story and understand how each part fits into salvation history. This story can be used as a witnessing tool since it explains salvation history.

Each person should memorize the story and teach it to others. They should be able to explain who major Old Testament characters are and how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. They should also be able to describe how God is continuing to work and wants us to participate in spreading the good news.

GOD'S LOVE

What I will tell you is real. It is not a legend. It occurred. It is found in the Bible and it is true. It is what is read in the Bible.

At the very beginning God created everything: animals, plants, sun, moon, stars, birds, insects, fish, and man. When we observe nature, we can see that it is wonderful. It is impossible that all these wonders are just simple accidents of nature. Man is the most important of all that God created, because he was created in the image of God. Man can love, think, value, and invent, such as God does it. God created man to have communion with Him and to govern wisely the world that God had created.

Painfully, Adam and Eve rebelled against God. They disobeyed His commandment. They were scared instead of being glad to be with God and tried to hide from Him. However, God continued to love them and made clothes from animal skins to cover their nakedness.

Adam and Eve's children were sinners like their parents. Cain, the oldest, killed his brother Abel because he was envious.

In the course of time, people on earth became more and more evil until God decided to destroy them. He commanded a man to build an ark. Noah did everything just as God commanded him and along with his wife, his three sons and the sons' wives and two of every kind of animals entered the ark. They were saved from the flood that destroyed every living thing and all of mankind.

After the flood, mankind continued sinning again. They didn't want to move to different parts of the world as God had commanded them, but they decided to build a tower that reached to the heavens. They were disobedient and prideful. But God opposed again and confused their language so they would not understand each other. They stopped building the tower, and they scattered all over the world.

Abraham is the father of the Israelites. He loved God and worshipped Him, though his parents worshipped idols before God called him. God tested Abraham's faith. He commanded him to offer his son as a sacrifice. Abraham had confidence in God and obeyed Him, but at the moment of killing his son, God stopped him. God did not want that kind of sacrifice; He wanted complete worship and obedience.

The Israelites became a very big nation. They lived in Egypt and were slaves. God prepared a man named Moses to guide the Israelites from Egypt to Israel. God gave His rules to the Israelites through Moses. These rules are called "The Ten Commandments." The first of these commandments is: "I am the Lord your God...You shall have no other gods before me." These commandments not only are for the Israelites, but for all people of the world, as God is the Creator of everything.

Hundreds of years had passed. The Israelites did like the other nations and did not obey the Ten Commandments. Everyone in the world is a sinner. They disobey God. They don't worship Him. They don't thank God. They don't serve Him. They hate other people. They are covetous. They live lives of anger, gossip, and lies. They are under God's judgment.

Just as God continued loving Adam and Eve though they disobeyed Him, He continued loving the ones who rebelled against Him. God knew that human beings could not save themselves, and that is why He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save us. Though Jesus had been with God since the beginning, Jesus came to the world to be born in a humble home. There was no place for Him to be born, so He was born in a manger. Jesus, God's son was not born in a palace, but in poverty. He was like us but He never sinned. Never! Being God's Son He had the power over demons, sickness, and nature. He taught many marvelous things. The New Testament teaches us about Jesus' life.

Though it is difficult to believe, there were many people who hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him. They plotted to kill Him and even though the judge found Him innocent, they crucified Him on the cross—a torture and death instrument that they used for criminals. They buried His body in a grave. His followers were very sad because they thought it was the end.

After three days, Jesus was resurrected from death! His grave was empty! He appeared to His disciples for a period of 40 days. There was an occasion when more than 500 people saw Him at the same time. After these 40 days, He left this earth and went back to heaven. These days, we cannot see Him with our eyes, but He sees and knows us.

He sent His Spirit to His followers in order that we would have the power to witness and live for Him. The ones who accept Jesus as Savior have the Holy Spirit living in their lives and thus love Him, serve Him, and live for Him. Jesus has restored the communion that was broken when Adam and Eve sinned. That is when sin came between God and man. That is why the ones who believe in Jesus, tell others about their Savior. They go to all nations to tell of the immense love that God has for them. They tell that God wants them to know Him, to love Him, to worship Him, and to thank Him just as He wanted in the beginning.

There is a powerful enemy of men who opposes God. The Bible names him Satan or “adversary.” At the beginning he was a beautiful and powerful angel that God created. But he became prideful and he wanted to be like God. He opposed God and many angels followed him. It was Satan who tempted Eve to disobey God. Satan is the one who has blinded the eyes of men in order that they would not recognize their Creator. Satan wants men to adore him and not God.

We see tests from Satan everywhere. Nations and people hate, covet, destroy, and kill themselves. The Bible says that they are not Jesus’ followers. “They do the will of the spirit that governs in the air (Satan) and encourages the ones that disobey God.”

Jesus Christ said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. Nobody can get to the Father if not through me.” Jesus is the only Savior. Only Jesus can save people from their sins. The Bible says, “Salvation is found in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

You must leave Satan in order to serve God. You have to admit that you cannot save yourself—that you cannot clean your heart. Now, you must accept Jesus Christ as your Savior. Today is the day of salvation.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ will come back to earth and that He will judge people in all nations. Those who have repented of their sins and have accepted Jesus as Savior will be filled with joy. They will be glad to receive Him and will always live with Jesus.

Those who don’t accept Him will be scared of His coming. There will be no place to escape. Who could be safe from this judgment? NOBODY! All who still live in their sins, those who disobey God and reject Him will be cast away to hell, an eternal punishment that has been prepared for Satan and his followers. It won’t be an escape.

My friend, God loves you. He sent His only Son to save you. God wants you have fellowship with Him in Heaven where He is preparing a place for those who accept His Son Jesus as Savior. God offers to forgive your sins and give you a new life if you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior. Are you ready to ask God to forgive your sins and become His son or daughter? Turn back from your sins and seek Jesus. He will hear you and save you today!

CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE STUDIES

When new believers understand the basics of their faith, as they should by this point, it is a good time to give them a broad understanding of Scriptures. It will be helpful for them to have a better understanding of Old Testament foundations through the use of the Chronological Bible Studies. These studies begin in the book of Genesis and continue through the Gospels.

The chronological study of Scripture helps people understand the overall context of Scripture better so they can more effectively interpret and apply it. This will help them get more out of their future Bible studies and be better equipped to help others understand the Bible in context.

When doing a chronological Bible study, it is always a good idea to review where the story fits in the overall framework of the Bible. This includes both how it relates to previous stories and how it ties in with God's eternal purpose and plan in Christ.

It is often helpful to look for themes related to the character of God and mankind.

If you have not already done so, it would be helpful to use the *Fast Track Storying of the Bible* found in the previous section to give the believers an overall view of the Old Testament as they begin these studies.

**Use the *Bible Study Questions Worksheet* at the end of this section
as you prepare and lead the Bible studies.
Refer back to *How to Study and Teach the Bible* for more information.**

SESSION 1

Topic: God, The Creator
Scripture: *Genesis 1:1-27; Genesis 2:2-3*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 1:1*
Live the Word: With your family, name all the things you can that God created.

SESSION 2

Topic: Adam and Eve
Scripture: *Genesis 2:4-25*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 2:24*
Live the Word: If you are married, thank God for your spouse.

SESSION 3

Topic: God Punishes Sin / The Promise to Adam
Scripture: *Genesis 3:1-24*
Memory Verse: *Lamentations 5:7*
Live the Word: Ask God to forgive you of any unconfessed sin today.

SESSION 4

Topic: Cain and Able
Scripture: *Genesis 4:1-17*
Memory Verse: *Hebrews 11:4*
Live the Word: Pray that God would help you reconcile a broken family relationship.

SESSION 5

Topic: God Sends a Great Flood
Scripture: *Genesis 6 – 9*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 9:13*
Live the Word: Retell the story of Noah and the flood to your children and explain what the rainbow means to believers.

SESSION 6

Topic: The Tower of Babel
Scripture: *Genesis 11:1-9*
Memory Verse: *Psalms 94:11*
Live the Word: Find a friend and explain to them why the world has different languages.

SESSION 7

Topic: God Calls Abraham
Scripture: *Genesis 11:27 – Genesis 12:9*
Memory Verse: *Galatians 3:6*
Live the Word: Share with a non-believer how God has blessed your life this week.

SESSION 8

Topic: God Destroys the Cities of Sodom and Gomorra
Scripture: *Genesis 19:1-29*
Memory Verse: *Romans 9:28*
Live the Word: Pray for the salvation of those who are living in sin in your town.

SESSION 9

Topic: Abraham Offers his Son to God
Scripture: *Genesis 22:1-19*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 22:8*
Live the Word: Think about how God has provided for you in your time of need.

SESSION 10

Topic: God Blesses Isaac and Jacob
Scripture: *Genesis 25:19-34; Genesis 27:1 – Genesis 28:21*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 28:15*
Live the Word: This week help a non-believer with a need and share with him or her about Jesus.

SESSION 11

Topic: God Protects Joseph
Scripture: *Genesis 37:1-36; Genesis 39:1 – Genesis 45:28*
Memory Verse: *Genesis 50:20*
Live the Word: Pray that God will use every circumstance in your life to help those who have yet to believe to receive Christ as Savior.

SESSION 12

Topic: God Calls Moses
Scripture: *Exodus 2:1 – Exodus 3:15*
Memory Verse: *Exodus 3:14*
Live the Word: Is God calling you to a special task in your church?

SESSION 13

Topic: God Punishes the Egyptians and Frees the Israelites / The Passover
Scripture: *Exodus 11:1 – Exodus 12:51* (Other plagues: *Exodus 7 – 10*)
Memory Verse: *Exodus 12:51*
Live the Word: Tell someone how God delivered you from trouble.

SESSION 14

Topic: God Frees Israel from Egypt
Scripture: *Exodus 13:17 – Exodus 14:31*
Memory Verse: *Exodus 15:2*
Live the Word: Tell someone how God is your refuge and strength.

SESSION 15

Topic: The Ten Commandments
Scripture: *Exodus 20:1-17*
Memory Verse: *Deuteronomy 6:5*
Live the Word: Memorize the Ten Commandments and repeat them to a friend.

SESSION 16

Topic: The Tabernacle
Scripture: *Exodus 40:1-38*
Memory Verse: *Exodus 40:33*
Live the Word: Share the gospel with someone this week and explain to him or her how works do not bring salvation.

SESSION 17

Topic: The Israelites are Afraid to Enter the Promised Land
Scripture: *Numbers 13:1-3, 17 – Numbers 14:38*
Memory Verse: *Joshua 1:9*
Live the Word: Pray that God will lead you to live without fear of anything.

SESSION 18

Topic: King David
Scripture: *2 Samuel 11:1 – 2 Samuel 12:20; Psalm 51*
Memory Verse: *Jeremiah 33:15*
Live the Word: Ask God to forgive you of any unconfessed sin in your life.

SESSION 19

Topic: Isaiah's Prophecies about Jesus
Scripture: *Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 53*
Memory Verse: *Isaiah 53:6*
Live the Word: If a prophet from the Bible came to your town today, what would he say?

SESSION 20

Topic: Elijah, The Prophet
Scripture: *1 Kings 16:29 – 1 Kings 19:21*
Memory Verse: *1 Kings 18:21*
Live the Word: Tell someone this week's memory verse.

SESSION 21

Topic: Jonah, The Prophet
Scripture: *Jonah 1:1 – Jonah 4:11*
Memory Verse: *Jonah 2:9*
Live the Word: Share your faith with a non-believer this week.

SESSION 22

Topic: The Angel Appears to Zacharias and Mary
Scripture: *Luke 1:5-38*
Memory Verse: *Luke 1:46-47*
Live the Word: Tell your testimony to someone you don't know this week.

SESSION 23

Topic: The Birth of Jesus Christ
Scripture: *Luke 2:1-20*
Memory Verse: *Luke 2:11*
Live the Word: Pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for sending to us His Son, Jesus Christ.

SESSION 24

Topic: Jesus, God's Promise
Scripture: *Luke 2:39-52; John 1:1-34*
Memory Verse: *John 1:29*
Live the Word: Thank God for the truthfulness of His Word.

Prophecies About Jesus

Promise

Isaiah 9:1-2 His works in Galilee
Psalms 110:4 Priest like Melchizedek
Isaiah 53:3 Rejected by the Israelites
Isaiah 11:2 Some of His characteristics
Zechariah 9:9 His arrival in Jerusalem
Psalms 41:9 He is betrayed by a friend
Zechariah 11:12 Thirty pieces of silver were paid
Psalms 27:12 Was falsely accused
Isaiah 53:7 Was silent when accused
Isaiah 50:6 Was spit on and hit
Psalms 69:4 Was hated without cause
Isaiah 53:4-5 Suffered for others
Isaiah 53:12 Was crucified between sinners
Psalms 22:16 His hands and feet were pierced
& Zechariah 12:10
Psalms 22:6-8 He was ridiculed and insulted

Psalms 69:21 Was given vinegar to drink
Isaiah 53:12 He prayed for His enemies
Psalms 22:18 Gambled for His clothes
Psalms 34:20 His bones were not broken
& Exodus 12:46

Isaiah 53:9 Was buried with the rich
Psalms 16:10 Was raised from the dead
Psalms 68:18 Ascended into heaven
Genesis 12:3 Through Jesus came the blessing
promised to Abraham

Fulfillment

Matthew 4:12-16
Hebrews 6:20
John 1:11
Luke 2:52
Matthew 21:1-11
Mark 14:10
Matthew 26:15
Matthew 26:59-62
Matthew 26:62-63
Mark 14:65
John 15:23-25
Matthew 8:16-17
Matthew 27:38
John 20:25-27
& John 19:37
Matthew 27:39-44
& Mark 15:29-32
John 19:29
Luke 23:34
Mark 15:24
John 19:33

Matthew 27:57-60
Luke 24:1-7
Luke 24:50
Galatians 3:14-29

SESSION 25

Topic: Nicodemus
Scripture: *Luke 3:1-18*
Memory Verse: *John 3:16*
Live the Word: Find someone who is afraid to receive Christ and tell him or her the story of Nicodemus.

SESSION 26

Topic: Jesus Heals the Blind
Scripture: *John 9:1-41*
Memory Verse: *John 9:38*
Live the Word: Pray that God will heal someone you know who is sick.

SESSION 27

Topic: The Parable of the Sower
Scripture: *Mark 4:1-20*
Memory Verse: *1 John 2:24-25*
Live the Word: Sow seeds of the gospel by inviting someone to go to church with you.

SESSION 28

Topic: Jesus Calms the Storm
Scripture: *Luke 8:22-25*
Memory Verse: *Psalms 56:3*
Live the Word: Pray that God will calm a storm in your life.

SESSION 29

Topic: Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Man
Scripture: *Mark 5:1-20*
Memory Verse: *Mark 5:20*
Live the Word: This week take a meal to someone who is sick and share that Jesus loves him or her.

SESSION 30

Topic: Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand
Scripture: *John 6:1-15, 25-58*
Memory Verse: *John 6:35*
Live the Word: Feed someone who is hungry this week.

SESSION 31

Topic: The Religious Hypocrites
Scripture: *Mark 7:1-23; Luke 18:9-14 (Also Matthew 23:1-39)*
Memory Verse: *Matthew 23:37-38*
Live the Word: Ask yourself if you are living what you believe and tell others.

SESSION 32

Topic: Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead
Scripture: *John 11:1-44*
Memory Verse: *John 11:25*
Live the Word: Tell someone about a miracle God has done in your life.

SESSION 33

Topic: Jesus Teaches about His Leaving and Sending the Holy Spirit
Scripture: *John 14:15-18; John 16:7, 12-15; Mark 9:30-32; Mark 10:32-34*
Memory Verse: *John 17:3*
Live the Word: Pray that you will serve God in the power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

SESSION 34

Topic: Jesus is Betrayed and Crucified
Scripture: *Matthew 26:47-56; Matthew 27:1-5; John 19:1-30, 38-42*
Memory Verse: *Romans 5:8*
Live the Word: Think about what it means that Jesus came and died for your sins.

SESSION 35

Topic: The Resurrection of Jesus
Scripture: *John 20:1-31*
Memory Verses: *1 Corinthians 15:21*
Live the Word: Tell someone the good news of Jesus' resurrection.

SESSION 36

Topic: Jesus Appears to His Disciples / His Ascension
Scripture: *Luke 24:1-53; Acts 1:1-11*
Memory Verse: *Acts 1:11*
Live the Word: Think about what you would say if Jesus appeared before you today.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS WORKSHEET

Topic: _____
Scripture: _____
Memory Verse: _____
Live the Word: _____

Who are the persons involved?

What happened?

Where did it take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

What is the main lesson or teaching?

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about Jesus?

What does this passage teach me about the Holy Spirit?

What does this passage teach me about man?

What does this passage teach me about Satan?

What does this passage teach me about sin?

What does this passage teach me about salvation?

What does this passage teach me about church?

What does this passage teach me about the Christian life?

What does this passage teach me about other spiritual questions?

What questions do you have about this passage?

Is there an example I am to follow?

Is there a sin I am to avoid?

Is there a command I am to obey?

Is there a promise I am to claim?

Is there a change I must make in my life?