

# Basic Biblical Discipleship

Guidance for Growth in God's Word

## Lessons 7-10

*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of  
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be  
glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

2 Peter 3:18

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# Lesson Seven: The Word of God, Part One

## What kind of book is the Bible?

We are greatly privileged to have an absolute written authority from God Himself – the Bible. Apart from the scriptures we would not know who Jesus Christ is or what He has accomplished on our behalf. This lesson is designed to help us understand what kind of Book the Bible is and how it is active in our salvation.

### I. The Bible is the Word of God

The Bible contains the very words of God and those words are pure and absolutely reliable.

- A. The word of God is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:15-17, Proverbs 30:5-6).
- B. The words of scripture have been preserved to every generation (Psalm 12:6-7, 119:160, Matthew 24:35, Isaiah 40:8).
- C. The words of scripture are never to be altered or removed by men (Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:5-6, Revelation 22:18-19).
- D. The written word of God is even “more sure” than an audible voice from heaven (2 Peter 1:16-21).
  - This means that all doctrines and experiences must be judged by the infallible standard of the Bible.
  - The Bible *alone* is the believer’s final authority in all things.

## II. The Bible is the Greatest Book Ever Written

- A. It is unified. Though the Bible is like a library (with 66 books) it is still one Book. It was penned by 40 different writers over a period of about 2,000 years, and yet it never contradicts itself.
- B. It is prophetically accurate. One of the greatest proofs of inspiration is fulfilled prophecy (Isaiah 46:10). From the rise and fall of kingdoms, to the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, no other book on earth is able to tell the future with absolute accuracy and one-hundred percent fulfillment.
- C. It is scientifically accurate. The Bible speaks of “the circle of the earth” (Isaiah 40:22), which hangs “upon nothing” (Job 26:7). It speaks of underwater sea currents (Psalm 8:8), wind currents and the water cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:6-7), and even the laws of physics (Hebrews 1:10-12). All of these things were written in scripture thousands of years before they were discovered by “modern science”.
- D. It is historically accurate. The Bible is a book of history before it is a book of religion. There are a great deal of secular historical sources, as well as archaeological discoveries that provide evidence of the historical accuracy of the Bible.

- E. It is honest. The Bible does not avoid the faults and failures of its most important characters. We learn of the successes and failures of men like Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Peter. Man alone would never write a book that so fully condemned his own race.
  
- F. It is indestructible. No book has ever been so hated and yet so widely distributed. Emperors and dictators have sought to destroy it and scholars have attempted to discredit it, but without success. It is the most widely published book in the earth's history.

### **III. The Bible is the Seed of the New Birth**

- A. It is the agency of the new birth (1 Peter 1:23, James 1:18, 21).
  
- B. It is the source of true faith (Romans 10:17).
  
- C. It is the vehicle of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 1 Peter 1:24-25).

Apart from the scriptures, we would not know who Jesus Christ is. In order for a man to be saved he must believe what the Bible says about his sin and God's Son.

## Lesson Seven Questions

1. According to Psalm 12:6-7, who is responsible for preserving God's pure words?
2. In 2 Peter 1:18-19, what is the written word of God "more sure" than?
3. List four features that make the Bible the greatest book ever written.
4. In what ways is the Bible active in salvation?

## Memory Verses for Lesson Seven

Work hard this week at committing the following Bible verses to memory. It may help to use a note card system and to write them out over and over again. Meditate on the verses as you memorize them.

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

# Lesson Eight: The Word of God, Part Two

## What is the role of the Bible in my day-to-day life?

The Bible not only reveals the way of salvation, it provides an absolutely authoritative standard for living. It is impossible to live the Christian life and grow spiritually apart from the influence of the scriptures. This lesson is intended to give you a basic knowledge of how the Bible should serve to guide your every day life.

### I. The Word of God Provides the Believer with Nourishment

Scripture is often likened to food (Job 23:12, Jeremiah 15:16). As you can see below the Bible provides every believer with a well-balanced spiritual diet.

- A. Water (Isaiah 55:10-11, Ephesians 5:26) - Essential to maintain life.
- B. Bread (Luke 4:4) - The most basic source of nourishment.
- C. Milk (1 Peter 2:2) - The lightest food.
- D. Meat (1 Corinthians 3:1-2, Hebrews 5:13-14) - The heaviest food.
- E. Apples (Proverbs 7:2, 25:11) - Strengthens against sickness.
- F. Honey (Psalm 119:103) - Sweet to the taste.

Imagine sitting down to a feast made up of all the different foods to which the word of God is compared. Now imagine sitting down to such a feast and starving to death! The only way that the Bible nourishes us is if we partake of it. Spiritual health cannot be maintained apart from the Bible.

## II. The Word of God Cleanses the Believer

*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* John 15:3

- A. While we are forever washed in Christ's blood (Revelation 1:5), we still become defiled by our walk in this world (John 13:10).
- B. It is the source of true faith (Romans 10:17).

It has been said, "The Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible." The word of God serves as a cleansing agent in which we should wash regularly (John 15:3, 17:17, Psalm 119:9, 11).

## III. The Word of God Equips the Believer for Battle

*And take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* Ephesians 6:17

- A. We will be defenseless against spiritual attacks apart from the word of God. Jesus Christ answered the Devil's attacks with scripture (Matthew 4:4,7,10).
- B. The battle concerns our thoughts and motives (Hebrews 4:12).



#### **IV. The Word of God is a Book to be Read and Studied**

Reading and studying the Bible is not like reading or studying a textbook or a newspaper. The Bible is a spiritual book (John 6:63). This means it must be spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:9-16).

- A.** The Holy Spirit is our teacher and guide in Bible study (John 14:26, 16:13-15, 1 John 2:27). None but the author of any given work is perfectly qualified to interpret its content.
- B.** The Bible is a self-defining, self-interpreting book. We discover its meaning by comparing scripture with scripture (1 Corinthians 2:13).

#### **V. The Word of God Must Be Applied Personally**

- A.** The foremost key to Bible study is obedience to the word (John 7:17)
- B.** God did not give us the Bible just to fill our heads with knowledge (1 Corinthians 8:1). The word of God is intended to make us godly (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- C.** Understanding everything is not what is primarily important. There are some things you may not be prepared to understand (John 16:12). Be patient; God will show you these things when you are ready. The most important thing to remember is to put into practice what you *do* understand (James 1:22-25).

# Lesson Eight Questions

1. List two ways in which the Bible keeps the believer healthy.
2. Who is our foremost teacher and guide in Bible Study?
3. How does the Bible define and interpret itself?
4. What is the most important thing to remember in learning, reading, and studying the Bible?

## Memory Verses for Lesson Eight

Work hard this week at committing the following Bible verses to memory. It may help to use a note card system and to write them out over and over again. Meditate on the verses as you memorize them.

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.* 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* Psalms 119:9

# Lesson Nine: Prayer

## What is the role of prayer in my fellowship with Jesus Christ?

Communication is an important part of any healthy relationship. This is true of our relationship with God. This communication is two way. When we read the Bible, God speaks to us. When we pray, we speak to God. Prayer is our direct communication to God and it is an important part of spiritual growth. This lesson is intended to provide you with a basic understanding of the discipline of prayer so that you might maintain an open line of communication with God.

### I. Prayer is Possible through the Lord Jesus Christ

- A. The Creator of the universe desires fellowship with you. He is willing to listen when you speak and answer you personally.
- B. This is only possible through what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross (Hebrews 10:19-22).

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14-16*

- C. This means that you can go directly to God through Jesus Christ when you pray (1 Timothy 2:5).
- You do not have to be in a particular place (like church) and you do not have to have pray through a mediator (like a priest or a saint). You can speak directly to God through Jesus Christ.

## II. Four Different Types of Prayer

*I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;*  
1 Timothy 2:1

- A. Supplication – This is an earnest, specific request; asking God to “supply” a need that you have (Phil 4:6, ex. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Matthew 26:36-44).
- B. Prayer – This is simply you talking to God. You do not have to be asking for something to speak to the Lord. He wants to hear from you at all times.
- C. Intercessions – This is when you pray for others. Do not just focus on your own needs. Prayer is a ministry that every believer should have. See Romans 1:9, Hebrews 13:18, 1 Samuel 12:23.
- D. Giving of Thanks – This is thanking God for who He is and what He has done for you (Psalm 100:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

## III. God Works in Our Lives Through Prayer

Prayer is not about changing God’s mind to conform to your will, but it has great power to change our hearts to conform to His.

- A. Prayer admits a dependency upon God. It serves to draw us close to Him, so that He can prove His sufficiency for every need (Matthew 6:8, Psalm 50:15).
- B. Prayer is the way that we cast all our care upon the Lord (1 Peter 5:7).
- C. Prayer provides us with God's peace in our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:6-7).

#### **IV. Principles for Proper Prayer**

- A. Pray constantly (1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1, Romans 12:12).
  - We should develop a lifestyle of communicating with God. Our first reaction to any trial or success should be to go to God in prayer.
  - We should make time for extended seasons of prayer (Matthew 6:6), but God can hear our prayers at any time and in any place (Nehemiah 2:4)
- B. Don't pray just to impress others (Matthew 6:5).
  - Public prayer can be a help to others (1 Corinthians 14:15-16, ex. John 17), but we must remember that prayer is talking to God.
- C. Don't use vain repetitions (Matthew 6:7).

- Your prayer does not need to be expressed in special religious terminology.
  - Prayer is not religious, it is relational.
- D.** Talk to God as you would talk to a loving Father (Matthew 6:9, Galatians 4:6-7).
- E.** Pray in Jesus' name according to the will of God (John 14:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-24, 1 John 5:14).
- This involves more than just tacking Christ's name onto the end of a prayer. It has to do with praying consistently with His character and for His glory.
  - We know the will of God and the character of Christ from the word of God. Therefore, we should pray consistently with the word of God.
- F.** Be assured that even when you struggle in prayer, God knows your heart and the Holy Spirit is praying with you and for you (Romans 8:26-27, Jude 20).

## **V. Hindrances to Prayer**

Prayer is one aspect of our fellowship with God. Oftentimes when other areas of our fellowship are not in order, it will hinder our prayers. Below are some common hindrances to prayer.

- A.** Not asking (James 4:2).
- B.** Asking with selfish motives (James 4:3).
- C.** Asking without faith (James 1:5-7).

- D. Unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18, Isaiah 59:2).
- E. An unforgiving heart (Matthew 6:14-15).
- F. Bitterness toward your spouse (1 Peter 3:7).
- G. Insensitivity toward God's word (Proverbs 28:9).

## VI. God Answers Prayer

*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* Matthew 21:22

*Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* Mark 11:24

*And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.* 1 John 5:15

These prayer promises are to be read and applied in light of the conditions and hindrances to prayer already mentioned. What is clear from these passages is that God really does answer the prayers of His people. He does not always answer them in the manner or the timing that we expect. Sometimes his answer is "No". Time will often reveal why God has answered a certain way, just as a child comes to understand why his parents did not give him everything he asked for.

## VII. Some Thoughts and Tips that Might Help

- A. Pray first. Begin everyday by talking to God.



- B.** Listen carefully. While God will not speak to you in an audible voice, we can experience two-way communication with God through prayer and Bible-reading if we will be attentive to the leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit.
- C.** Pray with others. There is something special about corporate prayer (Matt 18:20). Praying with other believers will be a great help to your prayer life.
- D.** Keep a prayer list. It will help you to pray more consistently if you have a list (or multiple lists) that help you to remember specific needs.
- E.** Keep a journal. Sometimes it is helpful to record prayers and answers to prayer that can reinforce your faith that God is listening.

## Lesson Nine Questions

1. How do we have access directly to God in prayer? Provide scripture.
2. List the four different types of prayer.
3. In what way does God often change us through prayer?
4. What does it mean to pray in Jesus' name?
5. List seven hindrances to prayer found in God's word.
6. Does God always answer our prayers? Does He always answer them the way we want or expect?

## Memory Verses for Lesson Nine

Work hard this week at committing the following Bible verses to memory. It may help to use a note card system and to write them out over and over again. Meditate on the verses as you memorize them.

*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*

Psalms 66:18

*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* Philippians 4:6

*Pray without ceasing.* 1 Thessalonians 5:17

# Lesson Ten: The Church

## What is my relationship to the church?

The local church is at the center of God's program for this age. God's plan for every believer is best fulfilled in connection with a Bible-believing local church. The purpose of this lesson is to give you a basic understanding of the doctrine of the church and to help you see the importance of the local church in your personal relationship with God.

### I. What is "the Church"?

The word "church" means "a called out assembly". It is not a physical building (Acts 14:27) or a denominational organization. This word is used in two ways in the New Testament.

- A. The universal church is made up of all saved people everywhere (Hebrews 12:22-23).
  1. This is the church which Christ founded (Matthew 16:18).
  2. The universal church constitutes the spiritual body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:23, 27, 30, Col 1:18, 24).
  3. An individual becomes a part of this body through the baptism of the Holy Spirit when they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13).

4. Membership in a local church has no bearing on one's membership in the body of Christ. It is entirely possible to be a member of a local church and still go to hell, if you have never been saved.
5. There are three primary pictures for the church in the New Testament:
  - a. A Body – Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 – Illustrating unity.
  - b. A Building – Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Pet 2:4-8 – Illustrating indwelling.
  - c. A Bride – 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:22-32 – Illustrating intimacy.

**B.** A local church is a group of believers gathered in a specific geographical location (Hebrews 10:25).

1. It is important to understand the truth about the universal church. However, the vast majority of the more than 100 references to the “church” in the New Testament are references to a local assembly.
2. Every member of the universal church should be a member of a local church.
3. Whatever we might learn about the body of Christ from the New Testament is best experienced within a local church.

## **II. What is the Purpose of the Church?**

In Acts 2:41-47 we get a description of the practice of the early church. The church has some distinctive purposes in the word of God.

**A.** The foremost role of the church is to teach the word of God (Acts 2:42, 4:2, 5:21, 42, 6:4, 11:26, 18:11, 20:20, 28:31).

- 1.** The first priority of the local church is the perfecting of the saints and this is carried out by the teaching of God's word by gifted men within the church (Ephesians 4:11-12).
- 2.** This teaching takes in "all the counsel of God's word" (Acts 20:27).
- 3.** This will include the teaching of truth, as well as the correction of error (2 Tim 3:16-17).

**B.** Another purpose of the church is corporate prayer (Acts 1:13-14, 2:42, 3:1, 4:23-24, 6:6, 12:5, 12, 13:1-3, 16:16, 20:36).

**C.** The final purpose of the church is worship (John 4:20-24, Philippians 3:3). This will include the observance of the ordinances such as baptism and the Lord's Supper. Worship is associated throughout scripture with sacrifice and the church has spiritual sacrifices that it is to offer.

- 1.** Souls (Romans 15:16) – Soul-winning and missions is the responsibility of the church.

2. Your Body (Romans 12:1-2)
3. Money (Philippians 4:15-18, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
4. Praise and Thanksgiving (Hebrews 13:15, Acts 2:47)
5. Doing Good (Hebrews 13:16, 10:24-25)

### III. Where Do I Fit into the Church?

- A. Every believer has a part to do in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:14-27).
  1. Each member has a different function (v. 14-20).
  2. No one member can function alone (v. 21).
  3. Each member's part is important (v. 22-24).
  4. A properly functioning body operates as a unit (v. 25-27).
  5. The body principle is best practiced in a local church setting. One thing every believer *can* do, is be in faithful attendance (Hebrews 10:25).
- B. Grow in your relationship to the Lord, learn what your strengths and gifts are, and make yourself available to the church leadership to lead or participate where you are needed most.

#### **IV. What if I Don't Have a Church or Have to Move to a New Location?**

Being in a good local church is critical. Finding a good Bible-believing church to be a part of should be a priority. Here are some tips for finding one:

- A.** Seek the Lord for wisdom and guidance (James 1:5).
- B.** Look for evidence of evangelism and outreach (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15).
- C.** Make sure the leadership believes the word of God and encourages the people to read and study it for themselves (Titus 1:9, 2 Timothy 2:15).
- D.** Look for a church that ministers to one another's needs.
- E.** Look for a church that is engaged in worldwide missions.



# Lesson Ten Questions

1. What does the word “church” mean?
2. What are the three primary pictures for the church and what is the lesson communicated by each picture?
3. Briefly explain the difference between the universal church and the local church.
4. List the three purposes of the church listed in this lesson.
5. How does the New Testament church worship God?
6. List three lessons that can be learned from First Corinthians 12 where the church is compared to a body.

## Memory Verses for Lesson Ten

Work hard this week at committing the following Bible verses to memory. It may help to use a note card system and to write them out over and over again. Meditate on the verses as you memorize them.

*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* Hebrews 10:25

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:* Ephesians 4:11-12