



# 100 Days

B I B L E   S T U D Y

**OFFICERS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

Building Christian leaders, families, fellowships...*for a lifetime*

## Foreword

These notes are not in any way intended to be read instead of the Bible, but are written as an aid to Bible study. You may use them as a daily devotional, or as a more thorough Bible study.

If full value is to be obtained from them, it will be necessary to look up the various references and really study the subjects, and not merely read them. Although the notes are divided into 100 individual studies, there is no need to feel tied down to various divisions. For instance, Studies 44 and 52 contain enough material for several day's work. On the other hand, it will be helpful to consider the general outlines of Studies 90 and 95 at one reading.

When reading, a practical help is to ask yourself, "Is there for me today..."

- A command to obey?
- A prayer to echo?
- An example to follow?
- A promise to claim?
- A gift to accept?
- A sin to avoid?
- An ideal to obtain?
- A truth to believe?
- A lesson to learn?
- A warning to heed?

Almost always one or more of these questions will be applicable. You will find it helpful to pray about these points in your own life, and as you pray for others (it is helpful to keep a daily list), pray about these points for them, too.

# 100 Days

## BIBLE STUDY

*compiled by*

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### **Editions**

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Captain Arthur Smith, Coldstream Guards, was Adjutant of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, from 1921 to 1924. During that time he realized the need for a book to help Gentlemen Cadets understand their Bibles. He therefore compiled “100 Days” of which over 120,000 copies have been printed, and which has been translated in whole or in part into several different languages.

Suggestions for the improvement and development of “100 Days” are welcomed by the OCU/AFCU.

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### **Bible Version Abbreviations used in 100 Days**

AV—Authorized Version  
NIV—New International Version  
RV—Revised Version  
RSV—Revised Standard Version

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## SECTION A ::: CHRISTIANITY

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### Day 1. Christianity and Other Religions

*Romans 12*

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Today's chapter is just "Christianity." Christianity differs from other religions in four chief respects.

**a. Christianity is based on love: God seeks man.**

Other religions are based on fear: man seeks God. See Study 74.

**b. Christianity starts where other religions end.**

The latter concern themselves much with man's efforts, throughout life, to reach the standard required by the deity he worships. Christianity starts when man accepts the free salvation made available by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Thus man at the outset is reconciled to God and—his sin having been pardoned (see Studies 10-18)—he is accounted as having reached the necessary standard of righteousness required by God (2 Corinthians 5:21). This is the start of the Christian life, not the end. We work from and not to the required standard.

**c. Christianity and womanhood.**

Christianity puts womanhood in a totally different position from that which it occupies in other religions. Chivalry, courtesy and respect for women, who are described as physically weaker but equal heirs of the gracious gift of life, (1 Peter 3:7, Galatians 3:28) are hallmarks of Christianity.

**d. Christianity has a unique power for good.**

Christianity is the only religion, which, in laying down a standard of life, gives power for man to reach that standard. See Studies 13 and 22. Although creed is the basis of character and conduct (for ultimately a man's actions are the result of what he believes) remember that Christianity is centered in a PERSON and is not limited to a mere CREED. We do not necessarily need to become more "religious," but we do need to become more like Christ. Some men may laugh at "religion," but only ignorant fools laugh at the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ lives today (Hebrews 7:25). Buddha, Confucius, and Mohammed are all dead.

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### Day 2. Man's Need

*Ecclesiastes 6 and 12:8-14*

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A man consists of three parts: The physical—his body; The mental—his mind; The spiritual—his soul.

A “religious tendency” exists in every person, and is evidenced by the fact that man everywhere has some kind of god that he worships. **In fact, man either worships the God who made him, or the god he has made.**

A man, therefore, who only exercises the physical and mental portions of himself, and who neglects God or substitutes a god for the God, is only two-thirds a man, or, to use a slang phrase, is “not all there.” To be a man, no part can be neglected, for each is to some extent dependent on the other two for complete and proportional development. A three-legged stool is most stable if all three legs are the same length. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Study 82.)

In the first part of today’s study we see such “gods” as riches, wealth, honor and worldly prosperity which, though not necessarily wrong in themselves, are of little or no value in and by themselves. They are “Vanity of vanities” (AV), “Meaningless, meaningless” (NIV)—Ecclesiastes 12:8. The conclusion expressed in 12:13 shows clearly that to enjoy the true values in life we must “Fear God and keep His commandments” (see last part of 2 Chronicles 26:5).

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### **Day 3. “Religion” does not satisfy**

*Acts 8:26-40*

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Do not mistake “religion” for Christianity. Some people are “slightly religious” and use their religion as a cloak of respectability, or as a sedative or insurance to quiet the conscience. Others are very religious and yet do not know Christ. Paul was an example (Acts 22:3) and in today’s passage note specifically the words “to worship” in v. 27. The Ethiopian was a religious man. The same verse shows that he was a straight, trustworthy courtier, yet evidently he was not satisfied. Light came when Philip “told him the good news about Jesus” (v. 35). Jesus means Savior; that was what the Ethiopian needed.

“Religion” is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. “True religion” is to put the individual into personal touch with God through Christ, and to maintain that touch. Unless this is achieved, it is a failure.

- Verses 26 and 27. An instance of Divine guidance. No delay in obeying extraordinary orders.
- Verse 31. The Ethiopian was humble enough not to resent the interference of a dust-stained traveler.
- Verse 32. He was reading the very passage in Isaiah most likely to bring him peace (Isaiah 53:7-8).
- Verse 37. (AV) Belief with the heart, not with the head.
- Verse 39. He had found the secret of true joy.

The Angel (v. 26), the Spirit (v. 29), the Bible (v. 32), and Philip were all used in bringing light to the Ethiopian. A man can be “religious,” and go to church, etc., but miss the point that he must go to Christ for *Life*. See John 5:39-40.

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### **Day 4. The World’s Need**

*John 15:1-16*

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God’s standard is more important than the standard of living but causes less concern. Until nations acknowledge the Prince of Peace, wars are inevitable (Isaiah 9:6). Yes, we have neglected God, who alone can put right all that is so terribly wrong in the world today (Jeremiah 2:13).

But we sometimes forget that for this purpose He wants to use us, and if we are to be used by God we must see to it that we are fit to be used (2 Timothy 2:21); in other words, that we are in touch with Him. We must therefore be Christians in fact and not merely in name. Remember that by definition only Christ’s disciples (actual followers) are real Christians (Acts 11:26).

It is our duty “to bear fruit,” and in this connection note verses 4 and 5 (especially the last sentence), and verse 8. Also see Study 73. The Scofield Reference Bible points out that there are three conditions for the fruitful life: cleansing vv. 2-3; abiding (RSV) v. 4; obedience vv. 10 and 12.

It is vital that we get right with God, and that we keep right with Him if our lives are to have any meaning or value (Matthew 7:21). “Not everyone who says...but only he who does the will of my Father.” Obey—abide—abound.

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### **Day 5. Christianity is not selfish**

*Mark 5:1-20*

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Some people say that men attempt to get right with God simply in order to be sure of getting to heaven. If “salvation” ends at that, then indeed it is selfish. But it does not end there. It is only the beginning. It is, in fact, the first necessary step for the man who wants to help others; for how can anyone really be the greatest help to another, if he himself is not right with God? We need “salvation” then, not only because God wants us to have it—and we are disappointing Him if we do not take what He offers—but also to help others. We need it, not so much “in case we die,” but much more “in case we live.” We are “saved to serve,” and that is what Jesus Christ told the demoniac in Matthew 4:19.

Further, a life which contributes (Galatians 5:22-23) to the solution of the world’s problems cannot be selfish, and “risking our lives” is the opposite to “safety first”

(Acts 15:26). Christianity gives purpose to men and women who have everything to live with but nothing to live for.

*See note on Study 70, also John 1:40-41.*

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## Day 6. The Superlatives of Christianity

*Malachi 3:7-10*

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God wants us to put Him to the test, and longs to pour out unlimited blessings on us, and through us to others. But note that the condition is Complete Surrender: “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse” (v. 10). If Jesus Christ is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all. This is the same truth as the first of the 10 Commandments—“You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). See also Luke 14:33.

Look up the following superlative verses:

True happiness ..... Psalm 146:5  
Absolute cleansing..... Isaiah 1:18  
Abundant pardon..... Isaiah 55:7  
Sin conquered..... Romans 6:14  
Life abundant ..... John 10:10  
Glorious freedom ..... Romans 6:18; 8:21  
More than conquerors..... Romans 8:37  
Generously enriched ..... 1 Corinthians 1:5; 2 Corinthians 9:11  
Continuous victory ..... 2 Corinthians 2:14  
All-sufficient grace..... 2 Corinthians 9:8; Romans 5:20  
Complete redemption..... Galatians 3:13; 4:5  
Unlimited power..... Ephesians 1:19; 3:20  
Boundless love..... Ephesians 3:19; Romans 8:35-39  
Peace unbelievable..... Philippians 4:7  
Every need supplied ..... Philippians 4:19  
Real wisdom ..... James 1:5  
Joy unspeakable ..... 1 Peter 1:8

*See also Psalm 13:6, Titus 3:6 and Hebrews 7:25.*

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## Day 7. The Church

*Ephesians 5:15-32*

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To many people “the Church” suggests a religious society administered by Bishops, clergy and ministers. In the Bible the word “Church” or “Ecclesia” means, “called out,” that is, from the bondage of sin (Study 12) into the “glorious freedom of the

children of God” (Romans 8:21). Therefore “the Church” consists of all people, clergy and laity—irrespective of nationality, color, sex, age, denomination or intellectual ability—who (responding to the call) have been “born again” (John 3:3) by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (John 3:7, Acts 20:28). And so all real Christians (as opposed to those in name only) form “the Church” which is “the body of Christ.”

*See 1 Corinthians 12:27-28, Colossians 1:18 and 24.*

You enter the Church through Christ, and not Christ through the mere external ordinances of a religious organization. When a local church is filled with spiritual life and faithfully proclaims a biblical Gospel, then, through repentance and faith, men and women will turn to Christ and the church will become “the Church.”

Remember in regard to ecumenical efforts that the true Church has unity and rejoices in it. We discover this unity when we find a brotherly bond with other real Christians of all sorts of background. Being “all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28) is the real experience of fellowship that should not be confused with union or uniformity. Note “keep,” not “make,” in Ephesians 4:3.

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## Day 8. Moral Courage

*John 2:13-25*

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Because it is hard to live a really Christian life, it is worthwhile. The manliest man who ever lived was Jesus Christ. His manliness is shown by His moral courage as well as by His physical bravery. Today’s passage shows His moral courage. He found men engaged in changing money in a part of the Temple where they should not have been. They were there with the connivance of Annas, the High Priest. There is evidence that they were charging inflated prices for the animal sacrifices, and making excess profit in exchanging money for the temple money with which the sacrifices had to be bought. In any case, they were desecrating His Father’s House, and so our Lord acted as in verses 15 and 16, not caring in the least what the people would think or paying the slightest heed to the risk He ran of being assaulted. Jesus Christ was completely unbound by the customs and public opinion of the day.

We too require moral courage if we are not to be afraid of public opinion. Many men wish they had this quality, but a “wish-bone” can never take the place of a backbone. The service of God is a man’s job; any fool can serve the devil.

*(In Matthew 23:13-33 we see how fearless is our Lord’s denunciation of the religious leaders of the day.)*

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**Day 9. Physical Bravery**

*John 19:1-30*

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Comment seems superfluous: read the passage carefully and note the courageous way in which our Lord went to His death to pay the price of man's sin, with no hint of turning back. Think of the awful pain of so cold-blooded a death, and note that He refused the drugged wine that was usually given to criminals (Matthew 27:34). He knew beforehand the suffering—physical, mental and spiritual—that was coming, and yet never shirked or turned aside (Matthew 16:21-27).

No other story in history can touch that of the crucifixion of guiltless Jesus, who stands out as the supreme example of moral courage, physical bravery and endurance. Those who love the Lord are the disciples of a very brave Man.

Note that in verse 30 we read that “Jesus gave up His spirit,” signifying a voluntary act. Satan did not succeed, for Jesus died as Victor, not Victim.

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**SECTION B::: SIN**

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**Day 10. The barrier between God and man**

*Romans 5:1-21*

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Sin spells death, and is the inheritance of all (v. 12). See also Romans 3:23 and 6:23. To wipe out (the word “expiate,” meaning “to make complete atonement for,” should actually be used) our sins it was necessary for the sinless Son of God to die, as foreshadowed in the Old Testament sacrifices (Hebrews 9:19-28). Justice demands that sin be punished. That punishment is not the result of vindictive anger; it is the proper reaction of God's holiness and His righteous judgment of sin. God's wrath (John 3:36) is not intemperate—it is the calm measured judicial response to willful and defiant hostility against His Divine authority. Sin is selfish, and the Cross is the price God paid for man's selfishness. Sin is so complete a barrier between God and us that the object of our Lord in coming to this earth was to remove that barrier: read Matthew 9:13 and 1 John 2:1 and 2. There is hope for the man who realizes he is a sinner; there is none for any other.

- Separates us from God. \*
- Intoxicates us with temporary pleasure.
- Numbs our sensitivity to God and man.
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*\*See Isaiah 59:2 and the last part of the notes on Studies 14 and 39.*

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**Day 11. The horror of sin**

*James 2:1-13*

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It does not matter what public opinion thinks about sin; it does matter what God says about it. Respectable people are apt to condemn “big sins,” but condone “little sins.” God's standard is clearly shown in verse 10. Note that it does not say that a man who offends in one point has committed every sin, only that he is included with those who are guilty of all. Two men may enter for an examination consisting of six papers. X passes five, but fails in one by three marks. Y fails in all six papers by hundreds of marks. The result for both men is the same: failure.

Another point to be remembered is that the magnitude of the sin has to be considered in connection with the individual against whom it is committed; thus the offense committed by one junior serviceman striking another is very much less serious than that of striking his commanding officer. There is no such thing as a small sin against a Holy God (See Psalm 51:1-4).

God detests all sin (do we?), but He loves the sinner (Deuteronomy 25:16, Luke 16:15). An inadequate estimate of the seriousness of sin leads to an unworthy idea of salvation. A useful prayer is, “Lord, keep me sensitive to sin.”

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**Day 12. How sin came**

*Genesis 3:1-24*

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Today's passage tells us how sin came into the world, and the story is usually known as the “fall of man,” which brought spiritual death. Note the sequence—doubt (v. 1), denial (v. 4), defiance (v.6), defeat. That Adam's sin has affected mankind ever since is shown by Romans 5:12 and 17 and Galatians 3:22. The sin of Adam and Eve was communicated to all mankind and has infected and corrupted man's nature ever since. Man is therefore born spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1, Psalm 51:5, Genesis 6:5, Jeremiah 17:9). Compare Genesis 5:3 with Genesis 1:26. Sin perverts man's will (1 Samuel 8:6, 7 and 19), darkens his understanding (Romans 1:21, Ephesians 4:18), defiles his conscience (1 Corinthians 8:7), and depraves his sensibility (Colossians 3:5).

*The fact that evil is in the world will be denied by none. WHY it was allowed to enter is more difficult to understand. We must remember, however, that Adam and Eve were given free will (in this man differs from the animals), and that had this not been so man would be characterless and unable voluntarily to give love. He would thus have been unable to keep the greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:37). Because man has free will, he must choose between the path of sin and the path of righteousness, in fact between life and death, between Heaven and Hell.*

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### Day 13. How “Sin” and “Sins” differ

Romans 8:1-17

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Because of Adam’s fall, we inherit a sinful nature. It is not our fault. Just as a garden is weedy by nature, so are we sinful by nature. It may help to differentiate between this nature of sin—and sins, the result of that nature. This is clearly brought out in 1 John 1, where the word “sin” is used in verse 8 and “sins” in verse 9. In our passage we see how to deal with “sin” (verses 1–11) and “sins” (verses 12–17). The point is important, because if we do not want to commit “sins,” the only remedy is that of receiving a new power with which to conquer that tendency. We must put off the old self with its sinful nature and put on the new self, controlled by the Spirit. (Ephesians 4:22-24, John 3:7)\*

Read today’s passage, remembering that God’s plan of salvation goes to the root of the matter, that is, deliverance from our sinful nature. With the new nature we can conquer sin not by victory over it but by being dead to it, and so experience salvation from sins—their guilt, their attraction, their power and their shame. See Romans 6:11. Dying to self and being submissive to God (Jesus in John 4:34 and 12:49) is at the very heart of living as a Christian. We will discover that self likes to get back on the Throne of our lives, so we will constantly have to remind ourselves that Jesus is King and submit ourselves to Him.

\*See note 13 on “Regenerate” in Study 100.

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### Day 14. What sin is

Romans 3:23

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The following is an extract from the note to Romans 3:23 in the Scofield Reference Bible. “Sin is:

- **Transgression**, an overstepping of the law, the divine boundary between good and evil (Psalm 51:1, Luke 15:29—where the Greek word, *parerchomai*, means to come or to go over, or beyond). Note that the NIV, produced after Scofield, uses *disobey* where the AV uses *transgress*.
- **Iniquity**, an act inherently wrong, whether expressly forbidden or not (Psalm 51:9, where the Hebrew word, *avon*, literally means perversity; Romans 1:21-23).
- **Error**, a departure from the right (Romans 1:18; 1 John 3:4).
- **Missing the mark**, a failure to meet the divine standard (Daniel 5:27; Romans 3:23).
- **Trespass**, the intrusion of self-will into the sphere of divine authority; a

falling aside—the Greek word, *paraptoma*, means a false step or blunder. (Ephesians 2:1).

- **Lawlessness, or spiritual anarchy**—the denial of God’s right to be God and to exercise His authority (1 Tim 1:9).
- **Unbelief**, an insult to Him Who is the Truth (John 3:17-20; 14:6; 16:9).

Sin originates with Satan (Isaiah 14:12-14), entered the world through Adam (Romans 5:12), was and is universal (Romans 3:23), Christ alone excepted (1 Peter 2:22), incurs the penalties of spiritual and physical death (Genesis 2:17, Ezekiel 18:4 and 20, Romans 6:23), is only put away by the sacrificial death of Christ (Hebrews 9:26, 10:17, Acts 4P:12), availed of by faith (Acts 13:38 and 39).

Sin may be summarized as threefold:

1. **An act**: the violation of the revealed will of God.
2. **A state**: absence of righteousness.
3. **A nature**: enmity toward God.

A flock of sheep looks white until seen against the whiteness of snow; then the difference is apparent. There is little conviction of sin today, because there is too little sense of the holiness of God. (Habakuk 1:13.)

Note the following contrasts:

Sin is darkness (John 3:19)..... God is Light (1 John 1:5)  
Sin is death (Romans 7:13)..... God is Life (John 1:1-4)  
Sin is enmity (Romans 8:7)..... God is Love (1 John 4:8)

## HOW TO GET RID OF SIN

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### Day 15. The Philippian Jailer

Acts 16:25-34

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The phrase “Are you saved?” is apt to irritate. Yet it is a fact that men do want to know how they can be saved: i.e. how they can be “born-again” from spiritual death into life. They may—and do—put it differently. They wonder how they can overcome temptation, how they can get victory over self, how they can get true satisfaction.

The Philippian jailer wanted that something, and he expressed it thus, “What must I do to be saved?” (v. 30). The reply is as true now as it was then, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” Jesus’ reply to a similar question (John 6:28-29) is precisely the same! Notice the jailer wanted to know what he could DO. People think that by their deeds they can get to heaven. It is not a question of what we do but of what God has done (Study 71). Even an earthly inheritance

need not depend on merit; how much less the heavenly. Salvation is the gift of God's grace, not the achievement of man's effort.

Believe IN is a much stronger phrase than believe ABOUT (which only suggests mental assent). It means heart-trust and hence acting on your belief in a Person. Acquiescence with the mind is of little value unless response with the heart and life follows. "Do not merely listen to the word...Do what it says" (James 1:22). If you want to go to Washington and you see a plane in Los Angeles headed for Washington, mental assent is not enough. You must act on your belief and get on the plane.

*Note that the salvation of the jailer spread to his family (v. 31) and his entire household believed (v. 34).*

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## Day 16. Naaman

*2 Kings 5:1-19*

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Leprosy is used in the Bible as a picture (or "type") of sin and a leper is "as one dead." Note the following:

- **Naaman was a great man**, BUT he was a leper (verse 1). X may be a great man in many ways BUT he is a sinner. Elisha treated Naaman as a leper (verse 10) who happened to be a great man, whereas Naaman wanted to be treated as a great man who also happened to be a leper (he was not humble).
- **Naaman had his own cure** (verse 12), and men today have their own ideas as to how to get rid of their sin. His cure was similar to the real thing, externally, but lacked the internal reality of spiritual power. It also pandered to his pride. This is a common contrast between merely "religion" and true faith.
- **If a cure had depended on some hard work, or dramatic act**, Naaman would evidently have complied (verse 13). The commonplace nature of the cure was beneath his dignity. The simplicity of the method of getting rid of sin is the difficulty with many. See Study 55.
- **Eventually he repented** (see Acts 3:19) and in spite of his anger, in spite of his pride, in spite of his own ideas—when he went and washed in the river Jordan he was cured (verse 14). A definite act of faith was required—an act of submission to God. "I know" (verse 15) contrasted with "I thought" (verse 11). Open confession of God (verse 15).

You may have laughed at "religion" in the past, you may have thought that "getting saved" was all nonsense, you may have sinned terribly, or you may be very respectable (like Naaman); nevertheless, you need to claim the one and only remedy made available by the Savior when He shed His blood on the Cross to atone for man's sin (Revelation 1:8, 7:14). This atonement is the basis of the

Christian gospel.

*Note the contrast in Romans 6:23 between wages (what you earn from Satan) and gift (what you accept from God, see 2 Peter 2:15, wages of wickedness). When you receive the free gift of salvation (Romans 5:15-16) not only are your sins forgiven, they are also forgotten. Note the superlative phrases in Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 38:17, 43:25, Jeremiah 31:34, Micah 7:19, Colossians 2:14.*

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## Day 17. The Bronze Snake

*Numbers 21:1-10*

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Verse 9—"When he looked...he lived." Snakes had bitten these people; we have been bitten by sin. No effort to make them better was needed, except the effort to look. No effort to make us better is needed, except the effort of faith to look confidently to Christ on the Cross, where love and justice meet (John 3:14-16). The people did not understand how looking at a bronze snake could cure them; we may not understand how looking to Christ on the Cross can cure us. The cure is not less effective because we do not understand it (see note on Study 52).

The bronze snake was "dead" and impotent. So Christ on the Cross, having become sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21, John 1:29) died that sin in us might be rendered impotent. He was made sin but not sinner.

It may be noted that God did not deal with the situation by removing the snakes (which would not have cured those already bitten), but by providing a remedy. God has provided a remedy for us in the Atonement, i.e. the death of His Son. If we reject this remedy, we make His death a failure as far as we are concerned (Isaiah 45:22, Hebrews 2:2-3, 12:2)!

The Israelite bitten by a snake was as good as dead. When he looked at the snake of bronze he practically started a new life, i.e. was born anew ("born again" John 3:3). We look to be saved; we gaze to be sanctified (2 Corinthians 3:18).

When a man is born again he has new desires, new tastes, a new outlook, a new power, and it comes by the simple act of taking God at His Word (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Let us then look in simple faith at Christ on the Cross:

- The height—"But I when I am lifted up...will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32).
- The depth—"He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a Cross" (Philippians 2:8).
- The width—"God so loved...that He gave His only...Son, that whoever

believes in Him should...have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Grace (God's undeserved love for us) has revealed Someone who loves us so much as to have made Calvary possible, but who hates sin so much as to have made Calvary necessary. GRACE may be thought of as an acronym for God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

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### **Day 18. Mephibosheth**

*2 Samuel 9:1-13*

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David's action to Mephibosheth is typical of what God desires for us. Note the last sentence of verse 13: he came to the King's house as he was, "crippled in both feet." So God wants us to come to Him, with all our lameness. He does not require us first to be made one degree better than our complaint. Having come, we shall "eat at the King's table like one of His sons." Our Lord wants to take away our lameness (our innate inability to walk uprightly) and give us His love and holiness that leads to righteousness and real prosperity. Christ wants to be 100 percent to you. He desires and deserves nothing less than 100 percent of you. Hand your whole life over to Him, Who has bought it (1 Corinthians 6:20, Proverbs 23:26, Matthew 11:28-30). An act of faith (conversion) followed by a life of faith; a crisis followed by a process.

*Read the preface to Section F on the subject of Service.*

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### **Day 19. The Resurrection and Ascension**

*Mark 16*

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One can never emphasize the Atonement too much, but one can emphasize it too exclusively. Remember that the Resurrection and Ascension were the completion of the Crucifixion in that they turned apparent defeat into victory. Christ's sacrifice for sin would have been no victory if it had ended in death, for that is where sin ends. The Resurrection cannot be divorced from the death of our Lord, for the two together with the Ascension made complete the victory over sin and death.

The Resurrection of our Lord was a proof of the all-sufficiency of His Atonement for sin, and of its acceptance by God. The life of a true Christian is just as much a witness to the resurrection as to the Crucifixion. Historically the fact of the Resurrection is proved conclusively, for many hundreds of contemporaries were prepared to vouch for its truth with their lives (1 Corinthians 15:4-6, 12-22).

Some reject the Resurrection because they do not believe in the supernatural. But the true scientific method is to examine the facts and then form a theory, not first

form a theory and then deny the facts.

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### **Day 20. Knowing, not hoping**

*1 John 5:1-21*

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One sometimes hears the opinion expressed that it is impertinent and presumptuous to say that one can KNOW one is "saved." We know because God says so in John 3:16, 36; 1 John 5:13. Although feelings are sometimes a reliable guide, we know because of faith in what He says rather than in feelings that may wax and wane with the sort of day we have had or how long it has been since we last ate! Your standing, or position, depends on being born again by faith; your state, or condition, depends on your keeping close to God. Besides, it is impertinent to doubt God's Word on so fundamental a point. See Study 6 and John 9:25.

We need stability, assurance and certainty in an uncertain world of change. And so the certainty of today's passage is noteworthy. "Know" appears in verses 2, 13, 15, 18, 19 and 20. Verse 12 is quite definite and coupled with John 6:37 leaves no room for doubt. Search the Bible through and you will find no doubt expressed anywhere except by the devil. In so doing remember that in many cases where the word "hope" appears (as in Colossians 1:27, Titus 1:2, 2:13, 3:7 and Hebrews 6:11) it is a certain hope, and does not admit of doubt.

*See also 1 John 2:3, 3:5 and Luke 1:4.*

The hope of true Christianity spells confidence and it is noteworthy that, on three occasions when this word appears in 1 John, the confidence is centered on God; vv. 2:28, 3:21, 5:14 (where assurance = confidence!). Scriptural "hope" combines desire and expectancy and is an unfulfilled certainty. A Christian should have humble assurance, not arrogant cocksureness.

*Note in Hebrews 6:11, "Hope made Sure," in Hebrews 10:22, "Full Assurance of Faith" and in Colossians 2:2 "Full riches of Complete Understanding."*

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).*

## SECTION C :: HOW TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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### Day 21. The Holy Spirit—a Person

*Acts 2:37-47*

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John 14:16-17 and 26 tell us that the Holy Spirit has been sent and is intended actually to dwell in us (1 Corinthians 3:16). In verse 38 of our passage reference is made to “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” He is a Person whom we can claim to ourselves to dwell in our hearts by faith and to keep us from all known and voluntary sin. Faith and obedience are the two conditions governing the gift of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:14, Acts 5:32), and obedience is the key to holiness (1 Peter 1:14,22).

It is worth noting that the Bible uses three prepositions to describe how the Holy Spirit relates to us; they are “with,” “in” and “upon.” The Holy Spirit comes to be with us (John 14:17) to give us sufficient spiritual understanding to grasp the Gospel message of salvation (1 Corinthians 2:14). He comes to be in us (John 14:17) when we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus (Romans 8:9, Philippians 1:19). He comes upon us (Acts 1:8) to empower us for service. If ever we are in doubt as to our experience of the Holy Spirit being all it could be or should be, we can always approach our Heavenly Father in simple faith (Luke 11:13) and ask.

The word “He” in John 15:26, 16:8 and 13 shows that the Holy Spirit is a Person. Thus, the indwelling Holy Spirit gives us guidance in practical matters of life and conduct, often using the Bible to reveal God’s will. He will guide us a step at a time, just as a motorist finds the right road by following the signs stage by stage.

The same Greek word is used in John 14:16 and 1 John 2:1, being translated “Comforter” and “Advocate” (“one who speaks to the Father in our defense” NIV) respectively. The word “Holy” comes from the same root as the words “whole” and “healthy.”

Humble in our Walk with God ..... Micah 6:8  
Obedient to the Will of God ..... Matthew 6:10  
Loyal to the Word of God..... Titus 1:9, Revelation 22:18-19  
Yielded to the Work of God..... Romans 6:13

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### Day 22. The Holy Spirit—a Power

*Acts 4:1-22*

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The teaching of Christian ethics is of little value unless we have power to live Christian lives. Peter had power because he was “filled with the Holy Spirit” (verse

8). We see from verse 20 that Peter and John were impelled to preach “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2) and risen. Threats, public opinion, open hostility held no fears for these “unschooled, ordinary men” (verse 13). The result is told in that verse. It is not necessary to have a scholarly education to be a power for God. God grant that men may be able to say of us, “We took note that they had been with Jesus” (Ephesians 5:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The power of the Holy Spirit should be felt in our lives in a very practical way. God never gives us tasks equal to our power. He gives us power equal to our tasks. The following words reveal the work of the Holy Spirit:

Access to God.....	Ephesians 2:18
Adopts .....	Romans 8:15
Brings to remembrance.....	John 14:26
Boldness.....	Acts 4:31
Counselor.....	John 14:16
Dwells.....	John 14:17
Deposit.....	Ephesians 1:14
Energizes .....	I Corinthians 12:7-11
Fellowship .....	Philippians 2:1
Freedom.....	2 Corinthians 3:17
Guides .....	John 16:13
Gentleness.....	Galatians 5:23
Helps.....	Romans 8:26
Holiness .....	Romans 1:4
Inspires.....	2 Peter 1:20-21, 2 Timothy 3:16
Intercedes .....	Romans 8:26
Justifies .....	1 Corinthians 6:11
Knowledge .....	1 Corinthians 12:8; 2:12
Leads .....	Romans 8:14
Live by .....	Galatians 5:16 & 25
Manifests Himself for our good.....	1 Corinthians 12:7
New life .....	Romans 7:6
Oneness.....	Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 2:2
Peace.....	Galatians 5:22
Patience.....	Galatians 5:22
Power.....	Romans 15:13 and 19, Acts 1:8
Quickens (Make Alive).....	1 Peter 3:18, Romans 8:11
Renews.....	Titus 3:5
Rebirth.....	Titus 3:5
Reveals .....	1 Corinthians 2:10, Ephesians 3:5
Sanctifies.....	1 Corinthians 6:11
Strengthens.....	Ephesians 3:16
Seals.....	Ephesians 4:30

Self-discipline .....	2 Timothy 1:7
Teaches .....	John 14:26
Testify .....	John 15:26, Romans 8:16
Understanding .....	Isaiah 11:2, 1 Corinthians 12:8
Victory .....	1 John 4:4
Wisdom .....	Ephesians 1:17
Yields fruit .....	Galatians 5:22
Zeal .....	Romans 12:11

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## Day 23. Sacraments (“The means of grace”)

*John 6:47-66*

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OCF, being interdenominational, must not attempt to lay down any particular view about the two sacraments instituted by our Lord—holy communion and baptism. Therefore, the notes on these subjects are brief. Brevity does not, however, imply unimportance, for such “means of grace” have a definite position in all Christian denominations. It will not be amiss to issue a warning that there is a danger of any religious ceremony becoming “a form of godliness but denying its power” (2 Timothy 3:5). Do not let ritual take the place of reality. A sacrament is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual reality”—no good can come simply from that which is outward and visible alone. Loyalty to one’s spiritual heritage, of whatever denomination, has its place and much is to be gained from enjoying your church’s fellowship and supporting its services. But mere Churchianity is not Christianity. See verse 63. It is the spirit and was given before the Lord’s Supper was instituted. Baptism and confirmation may be likened to a check which requires personal endorsement before the cash can be received. There is no virtue or merit in the rites by themselves.

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## Day 24. Baptism

*Matthew 3:1-17*

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Verse 15: The Lord Jesus received the baptism of John for repentance, as an act of righteousness on His part, emphasizing that He took His position on earth as man. Although He thus received a rite that signified the confession (verse 6) and repentance (verse 11), both necessary in the case of man seeking God, He was baptized not “to fulfill all repentance” but “to fulfill righteousness” (Hebrews 4:15, Luke 13:3).

Baptism by immersion as an adult, as administered by the early Church, was a visible act signifying death to sin, burial of the old life and resurrection of newness of life (Romans 6:3-4). Baptism by sprinkling as an infant followed by confirmation (which is the custom in some branches of the Christian church), was

seen as a parallel to the Jewish initiation rite of circumcision, carried out on the 8th day, which was followed by adult initiation, at about the age of 12, into the full participation in the Passover meal. Colossians 2:11 and 12 draws the two pictures of circumcision and death/resurrection together.

Christian baptism thus differs completely from John’s baptism (Acts 19:4-6). Note that water baptism and baptism in the Holy Spirit were recognized as part of Christian initiation (Acts 2:38) along with repentance, faith in Christ and incorporation in the local family of Christians (Acts 2:41-42 and 1 Corinthians 12:13, which is better translated “baptized in one Spirit” since the Holy Spirit is never spoken of as one who baptizes).

It cannot be stressed too strongly that the efficacy of Christian baptism depends solely on the repentance and faith of the individual (Acts 2:38); see how John the Baptist insisted on real repentance not mere submission to the rite (Luke 3:7). The following show how belief with the heart is connected with the Sacrament: Mark 16:16, Acts 8:36-37, 18:8, 19:4.

For completeness, John the Baptist’s reference to Jesus “baptizing with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:11) foreshadows both the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian first seen on the Day of Pentecost (see Studies 21 and 22) described as being baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), and Judgment. Jesus will be our Judge (John 5:27) and that judgment, where we will be exposed to the consuming holiness of God Himself (Hebrews 12:29), will reveal the substance of how we have spent our lives (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). The fire of the burning bush (Exodus 3:2) signified God’s presence, as did the Pillar of Fire (Exodus 13:21).

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## Day 25. Holy Communion

*Matthew 26:26-30*

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The simplicity and naturalness of holy communion is greatly emphasized when we remember that the first Lord’s Supper was a continuation of the Jewish Passover Feast (itself an act of remembrance of the redemption of the first-born, Exodus 12:14-27, at which words very similar to those in verse 26 and 27 were used). The fact that the holy communion is a feast in memory of our Savior’s death is brought out in Luke 22:19 where we are told to perpetuate it as such by the command, “Do this in remembrance of me.” In obedience to this command we remember:

- a. Our justification through His death..... Romans 3:24-25
- b. Our identification with His death..... Romans 6:2-6
- c. Our sanctification ..... Ephesians 1:3-4
- d. Our union with Christ..... John 15:5 and 15
- e. Our communion with one another..... 1 John 3:14

Further, we are taught by Paul to associate these thoughts with the one outstanding approaching event, our Lord's coming again—1 Corinthians 11:26. So in the Lord's Supper, as we offer the “sacrifice of thanksgiving” (Psalm 116:17, Hebrews 13:15), we look:

- **Back**—to the Cross, in commemoration of a Savior Who died for us.
- **Forward**—to His coming again, in contemplation of a returning Savior.
- **Up**—to be fed by Him, the living Savior.
- **In**—to Him, our life and our indwelling Savior.
- **Around**—to those who share with us the one loaf and the one-cup.

In our use of language concerning Holy Communion, we need to be careful to distinguish between Old Testament priesthood, the unique priesthood of our Lord Jesus, and the priesthood of all believers. The Old Testament priesthood had to offer regular and frequent sacrifices for the people's sin and for their own. In sacrificing Himself once for all, Jesus has done away with the need for any further such sacrifice (Hebrews 5:1; 7:11-16, 26; 8:3; 10:10-14); to suggest otherwise is to deny the efficacy of Calvary. The priesthood of all Christians (1 Peter 2:5 and 9) reminds us that we are privileged to represent God to men (evangelism) and men to God (intercession). The only sacrifices we can offer are ourselves (Romans 12:1), everything that might hinder our growth in faith (Philippians 3:7-8), our time and effort in helping others (Hebrews 13:16) and supremely the unreserved worship and praise from the deepest recesses of our hearts (Hebrews 13:15).

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### Day 26. Our Armor

*Ephesians 6:10-20*

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If an army is to be efficient, it must be equipped and trained in all its arms and departments. The same applies in the Christian warfare. Satan is implacably opposed to God and to those who put their trust in Him (Genesis 3:15, 1 Peter 5:8, James 4:7, 1 John 4:4). Today's passage may be summarized by the statement that three essentials for a true Christian are:

1. Bible: Verse 17 ..... Study, rather than read, your Bible (Hebrews 4:12)
2. Prayer: Verse 18 ..... Pray, rather than “say your prayers.”
3. Witness: Verses 13-16 ..... By your life and by your lips (See Study 46)

Bible study and prayer are no good unless we live out a Christ-like character in our everyday job. Our failure here will mean that others will reject Christ. A parallel may be found in the human body, which to be kept in healthy condition requires air, food, rest and exercise. These correspond respectively with prayer, Bible study, medication and Christian work (including consistently living the Christian life). A man without air dies of asphyxiation in about twenty minutes, without food after some days, without rest he is gradually worn out, and without exercise he may

waste away from sheer weakness.

*Note that the armor is chiefly for the front: a Christian must not turn his back (for an important excerpt, see 1 Corinthians 6:18, together with Genesis 39:12). Of the six pieces of armor mentioned, all are for defensive action only, except the “Sword of the Spirit,” which is both for offensive and defensive use (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). See note on Study 89.*

## HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

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### Day 27. What the Bible claims for itself

*Psalms 119:9-16*

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A man who designs a new machine takes the very greatest care to issue a handbook to ensure that it is understood and operated correctly. The more delicate and complicated the machine, the greater the care in compiling the handbook.

No instrument is so wonderful or so beautifully designed as man. It is inconceivable that the “Designer” has allowed the handbook—i.e. the Bible—dealing with His creation to be inaccurate, or lacking in any necessary detail. We may take it then that the Bible is wholly trustworthy, and is entirely sufficient for God's purposes, i.e. revealing God to man, and bringing man to God.

Let us see what the Bible claims for itself:

Its inspiration by God .....	2 Peter 1:19-21; Galatians 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13
It is a weapon .....	Ephesians 6:17
It detects secrets .....	Hebrews 4:12
It is powerful .....	Hebrews 4:12
It offers food .....	1 Peter 2:2; Psalm 119:103
It protects from error .....	Mark 12:24
It protects from sin .....	Psalm 119:11
It offers guidance .....	Psalm 119:105
It is life-giving .....	John 6:63
It gives success in God's service .....	Joshua 1:7
It is permanent .....	1 Peter 1:25
It brings hope .....	Romans 15:4

See John 1:1 and 14. Christ is the Living Word, the Bible is the written Word;

the two go hand in hand. Just as a word is that by which man expresses himself, so Jesus is the expression of God to man. In a sense, He is God's last word to man (Hebrews 1:1-3). Jesus is both Messenger and Message. Heed the warning in Mark 7:7,9,13; it is all too easy to rationalize away God's clear revelation and commands. In the history of the Christian church, as in the history of the Jews, many unhelpful traditions have been added to or have subtracted from the biblical revelation provided for us by Almighty God.

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## Day 28. Our Lord and the Scriptures

*Luke 4:1-13*

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Our Lord's Temptation came just after He had received special blessing (Luke 3:21 and 22)—we will often experience temptation at a similar point in our lives. Jesus overcame the devil by the intelligent, accurate and honest use of the Scriptures, a weapon available for all true Christians. How easily the Lord Jesus might have used “clever arguments!” But the simple authoritative Bible statements are more effective than all arguments. He answered Satan by the words, “It is written...” quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:13 and 6:16 respectively.

It is interesting that Satan's final temptation involves misusing words of Scripture (from Psalm 91:11-12). Satan is a legalist and is fully aware of the authority of the Word of God (James 2:19) but he takes a verse out of context and makes it a pretext. Because there is no truth in him (John 8:44), he cannot “correctly handle the Word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). This is a salutary reminder to us always to seek the help of the Holy Spirit when we read our Bible; He is the one “who will lead us into all truth” (John 16:13) because He is the Spirit of Truth.

*See note on Study 58.*

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## Day 29. Interdependence of the Old and New Testaments (1)

*Exodus 20:1-17; Mark 12:28-31*

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Many consider that, whereas the New Testament teaching is applicable to the present day, the Old Testament is not of much practical value. It may be stated emphatically that, although the New Testament may be more easily understood, those who place little value on the Old Testament deprive themselves of a treasure house of spiritual insight and understanding.

The chief point it is hoped to emphasize in today's study is the interdependence of the Old and New Testaments. The one is not complete without the other. The Commandments in Exodus are negative in character; they set the standard, and offense against them was punishable “under the law.” They set the external

boundaries within which God intends man to live safely and fully. But when Christ was revealed to mankind, emphasis was laid on the positive rather than the negative; the internal rather than the external. The positive command in the New Testament to “love one another” does not cancel the Old Testament commandments, but whereas the latter were “standards of the law” they now become tests of the life, and also promises to those who seek to walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:4; 8:8-14).

Again in the old covenant God said, “You shall” and “You shall not,” setting external limits on behavior. In the new covenant the Lord says, “I will move you to follow my decrees. . . and keep my laws” because what is pleasing to God is now written on our hearts and minds—internally at the source of our thoughts and actions (Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 10:16). The indwelling Holy Spirit (“God's secret agent”) is the One who prompts our living in a way that is unnatural to man's fallen nature but natural to his redeemed nature. Philippians 2:13 says, “...it is God (i.e., the Holy Spirit) who works in you to will (i.e., to prompt us to desire to live in a way pleasing to God) and to act (i.e., to bring the Spirit-given desire into action) according to his good purpose.”

The Old Testament points to Christ; the New Testament radiates from Christ. The New is in the Old concealed; The Old is by the New revealed.

There are certainly some difficult passages in the Bible. Don't tackle them first. When you eat a herring you first take the simple flesh before you tackle the bone. So with the Bible: consume the tender meat first, then tackle the bones. Such food is sufficient, suitable, satisfying, strengthening, sustaining and sure. Accept all that you can of the Bible by reason, and accept the remainder by faith.

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## Day 30. Interdependence of the Old and New Testaments (2)

*Exodus 12:3-11, 18-21; Hebrews 9:11-15*

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The interdependence of the Old and New Testaments is brought out again today by seeing that the Passover is a picture of Christ our Redeemer (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19):

- **The lamb must be established as without blemish.** So our Lord's life was lived under constant scrutiny that established him as without blemish (Luke 11:53-54; John 8:46; 14:20; 18:38).
- **The lamb thus tested must be put to death** (John 12:24; Hebrews 9:22).
- **The blood must be applied.** This equates to accepting salvation by personal faith, and refutes the universalism theory that all men are automatically saved (John 3:36; Romans 3:22; 1 Corinthians 10:16).
- **The blood, thus applied, without anything in addition,** constituted a

perfect protection from judgment (Romans 5:10; Hebrews 10:10-14; 1 John 1:7).

- **The feast typified Christ the Bread of Life**, answering to the memorial supper (Mark 14:22-24; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). To observe the feast was a duty and a privilege, but not a condition of safety.

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### Day 31. Interdependence of the Old and New Testaments (3)

#### *Multiple verses*

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For today's reading look up the following verses in the New Testament, which among many others refer definitely to the Old Testament. If you have a good study Bible you should also be able to find the cross-reference to the relevant Old Testament passage in each case. Note how Jesus Christ and the Old Testament are indissolubly connected.

- Matthew 1:22-23; 2:23; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:17, 19; 15:7-9; 22:36-40; 24:37-39; 27:9-10
- Mark 10:6-9; 12:26-36
- Luke 4:18; 24:25-27, 44-45
- John 6:45; 19:36-37
- Galatians 3:13
- 1 Peter 2:6-8

Now observe how the writers of Acts and the Epistles also relied on the Old Testament for their authority and explanation of Christian truth:

- Acts 13:47
- Romans 4:13; 9:33; 11:26-27; 13:9; 15:12
- 2 Corinthians 6:2; 8:15
- Galatians 3:10-14; 5:14
- Hebrews 11
- James 2:8-23
- 1 Peter 3:20
- 1 John 3:12

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### Day 32. How to Study the Bible (1)

#### *Joshua 1:1-8*

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Joshua is commissioned for definite service. In order that he may carry out his work efficiently, he is ordered in verse 8 to take the Bible as his guidebook.

Seven practical rules:

1. Approach the Bible as a sinner in the attitude "what wrong can it find in me?" NOT "What mistakes can I find in it?" (Psalm 139:23-24; 119:160).

2. Study the Bible with the intention of obeying it, and of applying its teaching to your everyday life. (Ezra 7:10).
3. Study it with an open mind, and without preconceived ideas; what we think is often different from what God says (Isaiah 55:8-9). Avoid the mentality that rejects what it does not comprehend or which challenges its moral conduct.
4. Study it prayerfully (Psalm 119:18), for we shall only understand the Book as the Holy Spirit reveals it to us (1 Corinthians 2:14).
5. Study it humbly (Psalm 25:8-9; Isaiah 66:2).
6. Study it honestly (2 Corinthians 2:17; Luke 24:25; John 5:46).
7. Study it expectantly (Isaiah 55:11).

*See Appendix A.*

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### Day 33. How to Study the Bible (2)

#### *Joshua 24:14-28*

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Verses 19 and 20 seem wrong! But study the Bible intelligently. We know from Joshua's life how keen he was that his people should serve the true God. Verses 14 and 15 are great words from the Commander-in-Chief. How, then, can verses 19 and 20 be right? Joshua was somewhat of a psychologist, and he knew that the very fact of "taunting" the people would make them all the more determined to serve the true God. Human nature likes being put on its mettle, and Joshua's action is not unlike that of the schoolboy who "dares" a schoolmate to commit some crime. Verse 21 shows that it had the desired effect.

Another example showing the necessity of the use of our intelligence may be found in the verse, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling. . ." (Philippians 2:12), which by itself suggests that salvation depends on our own efforts. But the next verse continues, "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." The teaching, then, is in accord with the remarks on Studies 70 and 71, the point being that our "efforts" are to be directed to allowing God to work in us. There can be no "working out" by us, until there has been a "working in" by God.

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### Day 34. How to Study the Bible (3)

#### *Mark 12:18-27*

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Remember that one verse on any subject may give the truth from only one angle. We need to study more widely if we are to know all that God has revealed on a particular subject in the "Word of Truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Do not just select "pleasant passages" (Isaiah 30:10).

Today's study contains an excellent example. The Sadducees (19) quoted from Deuteronomy 25:5 yet the Lord Jesus tells them that they do not know their Bibles (24, 27) and goes on to reveal the full truth about the subject.

A further example may be taken from the following verses: Romans 3:10 and the last sentence of Colossians 1:28 seem quite contrary (see Colossians 1:22). Again in Philippians 3:15, Paul says that some Christians are "perfect" ("mature" in the NIV). However, in verse 12 we read that Paul was "not...already perfect" (using in this verse the perfect tense implying "perfectly perfected").

These verses are interdependent, not contradictory. The truth is that our "natural state" (see Study 12) is sinful; but at once, when we claim Christ's death as having "redeemed us" personally, God sees us as perfect in relation to His law. The written code that was against us was blotted out at the Cross (Colossians 2:14; Revelation 1:5). Now we must "press on" to "take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me" (Philippians 3:12-14). Only thus shall we continually be "being perfected," until finally in the future state we are "perfectly perfected" (1 John 3:2). A child may be born perfect, and yet all his life he is growing and maturing in body and mind while never reaching absolute perfection. Ditto spiritually. This illustration breaks down, of course, in old age because of the decline in physical powers and sometimes in mental powers.

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### **Day 35. The Parable of the "Soil"**

*Luke 8:4-15*

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In this parable we see the different ways in which men respond, or fail to respond, to the Gospel. However faithful the work of the sower may be, or however excellent the quality of the seed (see verse 11), a great deal depends on the nature of the soil. Hence the emphasis of the parable is upon human responsibility in relation to the Divine message.

Here are four types of hearers: (a) the indifferent (12), who fail to accept the Gospel at all because of the activity of the devil; (b) The emotional (13), who after making a superficial profession of faith, quickly fall away owing to the fickleness of the flesh; (c) The divided (14), who, while receiving the message and showing signs of spiritual life, are all the time entangled by the hindrances and temptations of the world (Hebrews 12:1); (d) The obedient (15), who defeat the devil by keeping the Word, overcome the world by bringing forth fruit, and master the flesh by doing this with patience.

Note the different word used concerning the good ground. Remembering, "the seed is the Word of God" we find that they:

- "Understand it" = ADMIT it is God's Word (Matthew 13:23).

- "Accept it" = SUBMIT to its teaching (Mark 4:20).
- "Retain it" = COMMIT it to memory (Luke 8:15).
- "Bear fruit" = TRANSMIT it by displaying its beautiful work (Luke 6:44-45).

## **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT PRAYER**

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### **Day 36. The Prodigal Son**

*Luke 15:11-32*

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"Give me" (verse 12) becomes "make me" (verse 19). Our first idea of prayer is usually that of asking God to give us something. As a primary conception of prayer this is absolutely right in one respect, i.e. asking for that which can only be received as a gift (Romans 8:32, Ephesians 2:8-9, James 1:17). The prayer "make me" is, however, bigger, for it implies that we are willing to let everything go for Christ's sake; it also includes the prayer "give me," for in the process of our being made it will be necessary for us to accept the gifts that God desires to shower upon us. The prodigal son learned a great deal between verses 12 and 19. Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness.

It is only as the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray (Luke 11:1) that our prayer will have power and be a joy to us.

A Christian on his knees sees more than a philosopher on tiptoe. God delights to answer prayer (Isaiah 65:24).

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### **Day 37. When to Pray**

*Daniel 6*

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The command in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 shows us that prayer is, among other things, an attitude. It is obviously impossible always to be actually speaking to God. Daniel fulfilled the command "pray continually," for his life was a life of prayer; he was always in touch with God.

We may learn much from his life. Note specifically:

- Daniel 1:8 ..... "Resolved."  
1:12 ..... His boldness and faith that God would not fail him.  
2:19-23 ..... He gave all the glory to God.  
5:17 ..... He did not crave for earthly gifts.  
6:5 ..... His faith permeated every aspect of his life.  
6:10 ..... He had regular times of prayer.  
6:21-23 ..... His trust in God was rewarded.  
6:28 ..... He prospered.

In Nehemiah 2:1-6 there is a case of sudden prayer when in need. “Praying continually” includes “in all circumstances” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Prayer is communion with God, and we can pray anywhere at any time.

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### Day 38. Unanswered Prayer

*Matthew 7:7-11*

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There is no such thing as “unanswered prayer!” Some requests are not answered because they are not prayer, others because we do not fulfill the conditions (such as not “cherishing sin,” see Study 40; and lack of faith, James 1:5-7). In other cases we do not recognize the answer perhaps because it is the opposite of what we want. This, too, cannot be real prayer, because it was not according to His will (1 John 5:14; James 4:3).

An example: a child sees a sharp knife on the table and asks his father to give it to him. The loving father answers that request by putting the knife out of the way. It is fortunate that God knows what we need; whereas we only think we know what we want (Philippians 4:19).

We are apt to think God should answer our prayers by saying “Yes.” We forget He may say “No” (2 Corinthians 12:8-9), or “Wait” (Elijah in James 5:17-18 referring to 1 Kings 18:41-46, especially note “seventh time” in verse 44). *Ask with expectancy, seek with persistence, knock with assurance.*

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### Day 39. The Lord’s Prayer

*Matthew 6:9-15*

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“Our Father.” The supreme example of prayer opens with words that emphasize God as a loving Father, and us as His children. He is in Heaven; Heaven is where God lives enthroned in glory—and yet we have access to Him at any moment (Hebrews 4:16). The sequence of our Lord’s Prayer teaches us to begin with worship; that the interests of the kingdom come before merely personal interests; that we must accept the Father’s will, whether to grant or withhold; that personal petitions should mainly concern present needs, leaving the future to the Father’s care and love (See note c. in Study 97).

We cannot pray “Your will be done” unless we mean to apply it to our own lives. Many must plead guilty, after saying “Your will be done,” to adding (perhaps unconsciously) “provided Your will is the same as my will.” The will of God is not an evil to be endured, but a blessing to be acquired.

The cry of our Lord on the Cross in Matthew 27:46 suggests that when the Lord

Jesus “was made sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21) the all-holy God had to turn His face away, as He could not look on sin. Jesus therefore knew what it was to be God-forsaken in order that we might never know it. This is the only occasion when any recorded prayer of our Lord began with the words “My God;” in all other cases He addressed His Father.

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### Day 40. Hindrances to Prayer—Sin

*Psalms 66*

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Prayer is like radio communication: we can only transmit and receive if we are tuned in to God’s “frequency,” and our equipment is in order. Not only sin, but also “the cherishing” of sin (Psalm 66:18), and an unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:25-26) are barriers to real prayer. “The harboring of a grudge, the subtle wish for another’s harm, the envy that corrupts the heart—these attitudes always prove impassible barriers to spontaneous prayer,” and break the circuit. Our sin, of whatever kind, jams all transmissions (Proverbs 15:8, 29; Isaiah 59:2).

Lack of complete surrender, and not being unreservedly willing that God’s will be done, are hindrances to real prayer and communion with God. What a contrast to the extraordinary submission displayed by Jesus (Matthew 26:39). Also notice verses 10-12. Prayer here consists of “telling God all about it,” our experiences, our feelings, etc. It is all very natural—just like a child telling its father, in fact. The psalmist thinks of the hard time he has had, but it was worth it, as the last part of verse 12 shows. He knows that God uses even the worst trials to develop spiritual sinew and muscle. Only in extremity can God’s reliability be fully experienced; this experience creates a secure platform from which prayers of truer faith may be launched.

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### Day 41. Hindrances to Prayer—Anxiety

*Philippians 4:1-7*

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The sense of the first clause of verse 6 is, “Do not be full of care for anything.” We must, of course, be careful, but the trouble is when our care turns into anxiety. The same teaching is found in Matthew 6:34, which should read, “Don’t be over anxious about tomorrow.” Anxiety or worry often indicates lack of faith, lack of trust; these are not Christian characteristics, and in view of Romans 8:28 should not be. See Daniel 3:16. Luke 12:22 urges a spirit of confidence, not an attitude of carelessness.

Compare Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. If you worry you do not trust; if you trust you do not worry. If you find prayer hard, read a passage from the Bible first; note especially the promises there and allow God to speak to you, and then speak to Him.

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**Day 42. Hindrances to Prayer—Lack of “thought-control”**

*Philippians 4:8-23*

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Augustine said, “An evil thought passes your door first as a stranger. Then it enters as a guest. Then it installs itself as master.” As we think, so we live.

Psychology teaches us the enormous importance that our thoughts have upon our lives. The connection between the command in verse 8 to “think,” and the command in verse 9 to “put into practice” is obvious.

How often our prayers are spoiled because of wandering thoughts. “The glorious freedom of the children of God” (Romans 8:21), must include freedom from wandering thoughts. In the matter of concentration some may find it helpful to pray aloud even when alone. Another hint—if tired, try praying while standing up.

A man is not what he thinks he is; but what a man thinks, he is. (Proverbs 16:3; 23:7; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

Sometimes distracting thoughts are a spiritual attack. In these circumstances it is worth making a note of things that come to mind and praying about them. If they are responsibilities that you have, pray that you will be conscientious and efficient; if they are temptations, pray that you will be guarded and protected from sin; if irrelevancies that the Lord would grant you clear thinking. In this way, you turn distractions into prayerful victory.

Another practical point is to keep a list or lists of people for whom you want to pray. This may be categorized by those you wish to pray for daily, those you wish to pray for on a particular day of the week and such like. In praying for Christian organizations, such as OCF, use the publications as a prayer reminder.

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**Day 43. Hindrances to Prayer—Lack of sincerity**

*Mark 9:17-29*

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Verse 29 would be better understood if it read, “This kind does not go out except through hard work in prayer, which costs the pray-er something.” Our sincerity can be judged by the effort we put into prayer. We get an insight into what prayer meant to the Lord when we read how much it cost him in Luke 22:44.

Bartholomew was persistent. Mark 10:46-48. See Colossians 4:12-13.

Note in today’s study that lack of faith (verses 17, 20) was a hindrance to prayer. See Hebrews 11:6-11; James 1:6-7.

“Let your words be few” (Ecclesiastes 5:2) shows that quality is more important than quantity.

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**Day 44. Hints on Prayer**

*Nehemiah 1:4-11*

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- Realize its importance, remembering how Jesus Christ Himself found it absolutely essential for His life on earth. Think of it also as a privilege, and expect an answer.
- Before praying, wait a moment in silence and realize the wonder of what you are about to do. Remember God is more ready to hear than you are to pray; also that He understands you far better than you do yourself.
- Prayer is “talking to God.” Be absolutely natural, and share with Him your plans, your work, your leisure, your feelings and your concerns. Tell Him what you have done during the day as you would a friend. Remind God of His promises and claim them.
- Think of prayer as a method of co-operation with God. Someone has written, “Prayer is not groping after God. Prayer is opening up the life to Him. The prayerless heart is fleeing from God. Finding God is really letting God find us, for our search for Him is simply surrender to His search for us.” Prayer is not trying to persuade God to do what He has not intended, but is a method of enabling God to do what He would but cannot do unless we are in accord with His will. “Pray and Obey.”

**Include in your prayers:**

- Meditation .....reflecting on God, his Majesty and His love (Psalm 111).
- Adoration .....the worship of God (Psalm 96:9).
- Confession.....confession of sin to God (1 John 1:9).
- Intercession .....pleading for others (Exodus 32:30-32).
- Petition .....personal requests (Daniel 2:19).

Read the Bible and pray first thing each day (Psalm 5:3). Some will find it helpful to read and pray before getting dressed, so that if anything is hindered or hurried, it will be the dressing.

**Old Testament prayers make a helpful study:**

Exodus 33:11-23, 1 Samuel 2:1-10, 2 Samuel 7:18-29, 1 Kings 8:22-53, 2 Kings 19:14-19, 1 Chronicles 29:10-19, 2 Chronicles 20: 5-12, Ezra 9:5-15, Psalm 51, Daniel 9:3-19

## HOW TO BE A WITNESS FOR CHRIST

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### Day 45. Expect a “rough time”

*Matthew 10:16-42*

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In the earlier part of the chapter we read of the orders given by our Lord to the twelve disciples when sending them forth to proclaim the imminence of God’s kingdom: to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cleanse the leper and to drive out demons. (Note from verses 9 and 10 that they were to be independent of earthly help. Note also that preaching and “doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil”—Acts 10:38, were all part of the same mission.) Luke 10:1-24 tells how Jesus launched a second mission of a similar kind, this time with 72 rather than 12 workers. Our commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is of a similar kind.

If we are true disciples, we, too, must witness for Christ (see verses 32 and 33). We must be prepared to be “hated” (22); our “testimony” will not be popular, in fact it may result in conflict rather than in peacefulness (34)—nevertheless (if genuine and not “holier-than-thou”) it will be respected even by those who appear outwardly opposed, and respect is greater than popularity. We must be ready to let anything and everything go if need be (39). There is very definitely a “cross” to be born (Galatians 5:11), and this cross must be taken up voluntarily (Matthew 16:24). The following verses also show that we shall get a rough time: John 15:2, John 15:18 (in this verse the word “world” might be translated “world system” which we know to be under the power of the devil (John 12:31, John 16:33, 1 John 3:13, 2 Timothy 3:12). The fact that it is hard makes it all the more worthwhile. Christ does not promise an easy passage; He does guarantee a safe arrival. Make a definite stand early in your career. It will save a lot of trouble.

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### Day 46. Witness by lip and by life

*Romans 10:1-13*

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Although it is more important what a man is than what a man says, “confession with the mouth” (9) must find its place in the life of a true Christian. This does not necessarily mean preaching or giving an address (though it may), but it does mean that we must not lose God-given (rather than man-made) opportunities to say a word which will show our fellow officers and subordinates what a difference God makes in our lives. Many a young officer can testify that he or she has experienced real joy after taking an opportunity of quietly and simply “acknowledging God.” Definite work, such as taking a Sunday School class or assisting with a troop of Scouts, will be invaluable to you.

Failure to “confess Christ” is bound to result in lack of joy. What we do and what we say must agree. May it never be said of any of us, “Your life speaks so loudly

that I cannot hear what you say” (Matthew 12:34). Note that Jesus is described as being “powerful in word and deed” (Luke 24:19); we are encouraged to be the same so that He receives the glory (Colossians 3:17). See also 1 Peter 2:15.

Live the effects and preach the cause. Finally see 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17.

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### Day 47. Example and Influence

*1 Timothy 4:11-16*

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Three facts about our example may be emphasized. (1) Our fellow officers, surprisingly and usually secretly, expect us to maintain a very high standard, in fact it may be said that they are disappointed if we lower it. (2) We are watched far more than we think. (3) Remember the encouragement and help that bold and sane witness for Christ may be to others, particularly those on the fringe of faith or early on in their Christian life.

Read verses 12 and 15 again; our responsibility in the matter of our example is great. (See also Mark 9:42; Romans 12:5; 14:7-8, 13; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13.) For instance, go to church every Sunday. In this you must give consideration to your Service church as your first choice (see note 1, Study 98).

In Daniel 3:28-29 the great king Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the example of his servants Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

One of the greatest factors in successful witness is efficiency and professionalism in our daily job (see note on Study 85). A Christian life is the only “Bible” that many men read. Professing Christians are either living “Bibles” or living “libels” of the name of Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). Let your witness be natural rather than forced.

Remember, too, that our place of witness is in our everyday work. 1 Corinthians 7:20 can be seen as urging officers not to leave the Service and take up other (seemingly less-demanding) work unless very definitely guided by the Holy Spirit. If God has placed us as a witness and an ambassador for Him in a military setting, that is where He wants us to serve Him, even if there are evident drawbacks and sacrifices. Any sacrifice we may have to make for Him is nothing compared with His sacrifice for us (1 John 4:10); it will also be rewarded out of all proportion to our true desserts (Colossians 3:23-24).

It is a tremendous privilege to be chosen “as a signet ring” (Haggai 2:23) and to serve as ambassadors for our Master (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20).

Do your best to back up your chaplain, and avoid at all costs a spirit of unkind

criticism. Recognize his official position. Sympathy, prayer and practical support for his work will be invaluable to him and to you. His job is not an easy one.

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### Day 48. Courage

Acts 5:17-32

Study 22 dealt with the secret of boldness, i.e., the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Courage is a key quality in a man or woman of God (Joshua 1:6-7; 23:6; Proverbs 28:1; Ezekiel 2:6; 3:9; Acts 4:29; 23:22; 1 Corinthians 16:13, Philippians 1:20 and 27-28; 2 Timothy 1:7). In Acts 4:13 we find that it was the boldness of Peter and John that attracted the attention of their opponents.

We may test our love for the Lord by our boldness and courage in serving Him. A practical question that often arises is how far we should push ourselves forward in “witnessing for Christ.” It may be helpful to remember the following:

- Our efforts should be from love rather than from a sense of duty. Love is the only universal language.
- Take opportunities rather than make them (they are often there, but we don’t see them because we are not living close enough to Jesus Christ).
- God is more willing to use us than we are to be used.
- Be natural and avoid the use of “pious phrases.”
- Be sympathetic; try to understand the other person’s point of view, where it is sound and where it is flawed.
- Quote the words of the Bible rather than the words of man. (Isaiah 55:11). Give facts, not views.
- Don’t give the impression of feeling superior. Adopt the attitude, “I am by nature no better than others, though I may be different.” Admit your failures (Phillipians 2:3).
- When being sidetracked onto a secondary issue, seek to move back to the “higher ground” of a Bible statement such as the specific words of Jesus. Promise (genuinely) to discuss the secondary issue later, explaining that until the primary matters have been dealt with they cannot be properly resolved.
- When we feel that we are going out on a limb for God, where we are stripped of all comfort and support, we are actually moving deeper into the protective embrace of our Lord. We are at our strongest and most effective when we are utterly dependent on Him alone (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- Only by giving can we keep: only by using can we increase (1 Kings 17:8-16).

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### Day 49. Tact

Luke 12:13-21

In yesterday’s study emphasis was laid on boldness; today on tact. In the presence of “many thousands” of people (Luke 12:1) someone takes the opportunity of trying to settle a family matter (v.13). Had the Lord allowed Himself to deal with this detail, He might have found Himself involved in a dispute in which there would have been jealousy and ill feeling. Tactfully He ignores the detail, but in verse 15 deals with the principle instead. Note the irony of His choice of words mirroring the challenge issued to Moses (Exodus 2:14).

Note that the fact that He was tactful did not make Him less direct. We must avoid making tact an excuse for shirking or for being ambiguous. For instance, never be satisfied with talking about religion. Talk about Jesus Christ. It is our responsibility to tell people whether they listen or not (Ezekiel 2:7). Spiritual fishermen are not made in a day; it may take some years to learn how to present the “bait” yet keep out of sight ourselves.

A lot of harm has been done by tactlessness, and the trouble is that many people, who do and say tactless things, think they are tactful! Don’t bother about the other man’s tactlessness. Consider whether you are always tactful and show sanctified common sense (Daniel 2:14). Note how submission to God and respect for others go together in 1 Peter 3:15.

Claim the guidance of the Holy Spirit as in verses 11 and 12.

*“Let your conversation be always full of grace...” (Colossians 4:6).*

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## SECTION D ::: SEPARATION

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### Day 50. Saul’s incomplete obedience

1 Samuel 15:1-26

Verse 14. If Jesus Christ were to appear to you in person, would He have any cause to say to you, “I told you to go and totally destroy all that has been hindering you in your spiritual life. You profess to have done this, but ‘What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?’” Note in verse 9 that Saul only spared “the best of the sheep and cattle,” etc., and yet these very things proved the hindrance. Many men have acted similarly in refusing to destroy utterly those worldly things that are on the borderline of being “questionable.” A

good rule is to draw a line and a margin, and keep to the safe side of the margin and only cross it when led by the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:23).

What a feeble excuse in verse 21! What a lesson in verse 22! Implicit obedience to God is essential. Incomplete obedience is disobedience and no rationalization or excuse will alter the fact. In failing to obey God implicitly, Saul was placing his views and his wishes above God's—that is a fair definition of rebellion!

There was a single root to Saul's failure—a flawed view of God. This resulted in a flawed view of himself (verse 12). He was more concerned with honoring himself than honoring God and fearful of the people God had given him to lead (verse 24). Who do we fear most? "The fear (reverential awe) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). Scofield's note on Exodus 8:26 is very much to the point. "The compromises proposed by Pharaoh are those urged upon Christians today. They say in effect: 'Be a Christian if you want to, but don't be a "narrow" one (i.e., stay in Egypt). Invariably it ends in world-conformity, world-pleasing, and seeking the world's money for God'" (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

A worldly Christian is a double failure: he is no match for the devil and no credit to Christ. If you try to get the best out of both worlds, you will end by getting the best out of neither. The truth about the rich young man in Mark 10:22 was not so much that "he had great wealth," but that the wealth had him! There are some who know the price of everything, but the true value of nothing. Contrast, in Luke 18, the poverty of wealth (24) with the wealth of poverty (28). The worldly person's pleasure is based on self-seeking; the Christian's joy comes from self-forgetfulness.

There is a danger in "giving up" various activities because other Christians disapprove of them. Such abstention often results in a man-made bondage (very different from the liberty of the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3:17). The secret in solving the problem is to pray honestly, "Your will be done." (See notes on Studies 39 and 57, also Luke 14:33; Hebrews 5:8; 11:25-26; Colossians 3:1-2; Isaiah 1:19.)

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### **Day 51. The "World"**

*John 15:15-25*

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James 4:4 contains a blunt statement of fact. As far back as Exodus 33:15-16 and Leviticus 20:24, we find that followers of God are a "separated people." Verse 19 of today's study tells us we have been "chosen out of the world," i.e. we are to be set apart from worldliness. John 17:15 is no contradiction, but confirms the point: we are to remain in "the world" (i.e. to carry on with our jobs) but avoid the evil around us. IN the world, but not OF it (Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; James 1:27; 1 John 2:15-17).

Note Hebrews 12:1—Of course, throw off the sin, but we are also to throw off the weight. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (AV) reads, "Abstain from all appearance of evil," which says a great deal about our integrity and the linkage of our integrity to our credibility as witnesses for our Lord.

Remember that there is "the weaker brother" to be helped or hindered (*see note on study 47*).

### **The following principles are suggested with regard to worldly things to be avoided:**

- Anything that would displease the Lord Jesus Christ, hurt His cause or harm another.
- Anything that dulls our spiritual vision, or spoils our communion with God; any place where we feel Christ would not take us; any friendship that is unhelpful (2 Corinthians 6:14).
- Anything that lessens our love for the Bible and prayer.
- Anything doubtful (Romans 14:23). Certain things may not be wrong in themselves, but they are not the best; they may be "permissible" but not "beneficial" (1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23).

### **Two excuses are often offered:**

1. I must go in for worldliness (read this book, watch this film, get drunk, etc.) before I can condemn it—I must see for myself what it is like. But you don't drink poison to see its effect.
2. I must remain in or go into "the world," so that I may have greater influence on my friends there. That is what the devil always says. Very plausible; it may be your honest opinion (be honest with yourself and God), but is it God's will? Further, how many people have you really been able to help in this way? How many have you spoken to about Jesus Christ, as opposed to mere "religion" (*see note on Study 49*)?

While the great principle of separation must be honored, beware lest it leads to an exclusiveness that causes division. Balance it with the other great principles of love and of fellowship, which are equally emphasized in the Bible.

## **SECTION E :: DIFFICULTIES AND EXCUSES**

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### **Day 52. "I don't understand"**

*1 Corinthians 2:1-16*

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A finite, (i.e. human) mind cannot grasp the ways of an infinite God (Isaiah 55:8).

Belief does not depend on understanding. Few men understand electricity, but all believe in it. Beware of intellectual pride. The world says, “Seeing is believing.” John 7:17 in the light of John 6:29 tells us that, in Christian experience, “Believing is seeing.” While evidence may be unlikely to produce faith, faith finds plenty of evidence for its confirmation.

Note especially verse 14 which can be put: “The man in his natural state of mind (see Study 13) cannot understand the things concerning the spirit of God, for they seem foolish to human intellect: neither will he ever understand them with human brains, because they can only be understood by God revealing them to his heart.”

Emphasis in the Bible on the importance of the heart is very great. Read the following and note how one might have expected the word “head” instead of “heart” in Genesis 6:5; 8:21; 1 Kings 3:9; 10:24; Psalm 119:11; Proverbs 1:10; 22:17; Jeremiah 24:7; Matthew 13:15; 15:19; Mark 2:8; John 12:40; Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9.

Read Psalm 66:18; Luke 12:34; Ephesians 3:17. Note in 2 Corinthians 4 the contrast between “minds” in verse 4 (blinded by Satan), and “hearts” in verse 6 (enlightened by God).

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### Day 53. An intellectual difficulty

*John 4:1-30*

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Verse 4. “He had to go,” because of that one woman!

Verse 9. Notice how the love and sympathy, which the Lord showed, created a friendly atmosphere.

Verses 10, 13, 14. We hear a lot nowadays of psychology; but this story is the best illustration of psychology there is. The Lord knew that woman and so He spoke of the living water, which should be a “spring of water welling up” (John 7:37-38), in order to make her feel the dryness of her soul. Contact made. Jesus put his finger on the hindrance, SIN (verse 18). Scientific humanism is intellectually impressive but morally powerless.

Verse 20. The woman is cornered and tries to get out of her predicament by talking about religion. She tries to camouflage SIN by raising an intellectual difficulty. While many intellectual difficulties today are genuine, many are hypocritical, and would not exist if they were not convenient. You may deceive yourselves and others, but “God cannot be mocked” (Galatians 6:7).

Verse 24. The keynote of true worship is “in spirit.” It was the love of God plus the conviction of sin plus the revelation of Jesus as the Christ that brought the woman to true worship.

Verse 28. “leaving her water jar”—she had something better. Invest in the unseen (spiritual) which is eternal, not in the seen that is temporary (2 Corinthians 4:18; Matthew 13:45-46).

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### Day 54. Intellect

*1 Peter 3:8-17*

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*Colossians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 1:30; James 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:7.*

From verse 15 we see that followers of Christ should have their reasons why they put their trust in Him. In case any should think from notes on previous studies that the use of our intellect is discouraged, it must be emphasized that our brains are God-given gifts and are very much to be used. But we must “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” if we are to have the “mind of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5; 1 Corinthians 2:16). Remember “sound doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2 John 9).

Similarly, it is not intended to belittle the great benefits of science. Let us be truly thankful for such discoveries as anesthetics. Let us recognize the wonders of television, radar, etc. Such progress merits recognition and gratitude, especially in the light of James 1:17. At the same time, the Christian does not have to be all knowing to be able to share his faith. We do not have all the answers (Deuteronomy 29:29; Ephesians 1:9) because God has not given them to us, but He has given enough for us to live by.

There is no greater exponent of doctrine than Paul, but he found the light through heart conversion, not intellectual ability (Acts 9:5). Belief is spiritual consent, not intellectual assent. (Ephesians 1:18).

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### Day 55. “It is all too simple”

*1 Corinthians 1:17-31*

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The simplicity of it all is the difficulty! Look up Matthew 18:2-4. Simplicity is one of the characteristics of the little child. Being child-like does not mean that we are to be childish (1 Corinthians 13:11). See 2 Kings 5:13.

Compare a little child’s attitude of trust and reliance upon an earthly father with our attitude towards our heavenly Father. The God-inspired man wants to be

child-like: the devil-inspired man wants to “play at being god” and gain power. The simplicity of a statement is not a measure of its profundity. “God is love” (1 John 4:8-9) is a simple statement but probably the most profound revelation ever entrusted to mankind.

“Something for nothing” would be a foolish motto for the business firm, but it is an accurate statement in starting the Christian life. Its very simplicity seems so foolish (1 Corinthians 2:14). If your faith is delightfully simple, life becomes simply delightful (Psalm 19:7; 119:130).

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### **Day 56. “I am too weak a character”**

*2 Corinthians 12:1-11*

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There is more hope for the man who honestly feels he is weak, than for the man who thinks he is strong. The weaker we are, the more room there is for Jesus Christ to exercise His strength. The more we allow ourselves to be filled with the strength of Jesus Christ, the less room there is for our own weakness. See note on Study 18. God wants our availability, not our “ability.” Our availability will include whatever natural talents and spiritual gifts He has invested in us but it is implicit that these are exercised under His control.

The last part of verse 10 shows that Paul was only really strong (in God) when he was weak (in himself). It is not a question of our strength, but of God’s: 2 Timothy 1:12; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 6:10. If your knees are knocking with fear kneel on them so that they cannot knock. It is not the direction or strength of the wind, but the set of the sail (our will) and the handling of the rudder (by God) which determines the course of our boat.

In Numbers 13, twelve spies saw the giants. Ten were afraid, with grievous results. Only two trusted God and proved Him greater than the giants.

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### **Day 57. “There is too much to give up”**

*Philippians 3:7-21*

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The devil will always emphasize what we may be called to “give up,” but who can imagine the owner of a rope of imitation pearls not wanting to exchange them for real pearls? The truth is that neither hindrances (such as an unhelpful friendship), nor sinful pleasures (which seemed so enticing) will attract you as before.

Paul gives his opinion in verses 7 and 8. The average man wants a “good time,” congenial friends and peace of mind. Christianity provides these: the imitation products of the world are poor stuff in comparison. Beware of false prophets (1

Timothy 4:8)! It is not the negative “give up,” but the positive “fill up.” (Ephesians 5:18; Romans 13:14).

Satisfaction (the freedom of Christ, Galatians 5:1) causes Separation. That form of Separation, which is mere man-made bondage, never gives Satisfaction. It is better to go straight than to “move in the best of circles,” for a minor deviation of course (1 Timothy 1:6) may well be the start of a major crash.

Note the extraordinary principle of giving in Luke 6:38—“Give and it will be given to you...” Note that God is the most generous giver of all (1 Timothy 6:17). *See also Mark 8:36-37; Psalm 84:11; Luke 18:29-30. See notes on Studies 50 and 51.*

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### **Day 58. “My temptations indicate my wickedness”**

*Matthew 4:1-11*

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Hebrews 4:15 proves that temptation is NOT sin. “You can’t prevent birds from flying over your head, but you can prevent them making their nests in your hair.” Jesus Christ, though holy, has experienced all our temptations. He can sympathize because He understands, and He can come to our aid because He has overcome.

Note the similarity between the temptations in Genesis 3 and those of our Lord in today’s study. In both cases the first temptation was to doubt: “Did God really say?” (Genesis 3:1) and “If you are the Son of God” (Matthew 4:3). In both cases the devil spoke (ostensibly) in the interests of those he attacked. In both cases the temptations were directed against body, mind and spirit (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life (1 John 2:16)). See note on Study 28.

As regards the Lord’s temptations:

- **The first took place in the wilderness**, typical of depression and isolation. Here the devil tried to make our Savior act in His own Divine power, apart from His Father. Note that the Lord Jesus replied, “Man does not live.” He refused to use Divine powers, and insisted on meeting the temptation as a man—in fact, with only that strength available for the ordinary person.
- **The second was to gain acknowledgement and success** by spectacular advertisement: “to lower His standard in order to widen His reach.” Had the Lord thrown Himself down and remained unhurt, thousands might have believed in Him (though some who had witnessed His miracles were among those who plotted His death). “Common sense,” but not God’s plan.
- **The third temptation** was to gain the material at the expense of the spiritual (James 1:12).

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**Day 59. “My temptations are too great to overcome”**

*1 Corinthians 10:1-15*

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Any who feel as above can just cling to verse 13: “A way out” should be translated “a way up out of,” or “an outcome” (Hebrews 13:7)—the outcome being blessing through victory. Couple this verse with Philippians 4:13. It is a help too to remember that we are fighting a defeated enemy (Hebrews 2:14-15). Therefore do not pray, “I hope I shall overcome my temptation. Please help me to.” Psychologically this is unsound. Rather, “I thank You that I can overcome my temptation, because I claim Your strength.” Focus on Christ’s ability, His provision of His power, not on the temptation.

A simple recognition of the truth of 1 John 4:4: “The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world,” ensures victory, even in cases of sudden temptation when there is only time for a one-word prayer—“Jesus” (Acts 4:12). We meet temptation by faith in God: the fight we must put up is to claim that faith which leads to obedience.

When tempted, don’t think, “How can I get out of it?” but “What can I get out of it?” The devil *tempts* us in order that we take a step down: God *tests* us in order that we may take a step up—turning a stumbling block into a stepping stone (James 1:2-4). Thank God for temptation and look on it as an opportunity to claim and utilize this. So, if tempted towards impurity, claim Christ’s holiness; towards anger, Christ’s patience; towards intemperance, Christ’s moderation (Philippians 4:19).

When weighed down by the burden of temptation read Psalm 55:22, where the marginal reading for “cares” is “gift” (i.e. whatever is given to you to carry, you in turn give it to God to carry (1 Peter 5:7). When tempted take the opportunity of blessing through victory (Psalm 84:6). Turn the place of your struggle into a resource (spring of spiritual blessing). You cannot hit the ball unless you are thrown to! Look on difficulties as a vote of confidence from God. Remember Satan is a liar when he tempts you to doubt God’s love, God’s goodness, and God’s faithfulness.

*See 2 Chronicles 20:15; Psalm 91:1-4; Jude 24; Hebrews 2:18*

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**Day 60. “I have failed so often”**

*Romans 7:14-25*

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Only one thing is worse than being knocked down, and that is not getting up again. Remember the boy who, when asked how he learned to skate, replied, “I got up every time I fell down” (Proverbs 24:16; Micah 7:8). Past failure must be due to

something wrong in you. Perhaps it was:

- Playing with sin; see Study 86..... 2 Corinthians 6:17
- Fighting in your own strength..... 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
- The way of temptation ..... 1 Thessalonians 5:22
- Lack of Prayer ..... 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Lack of Bible study..... 1 Peter 2:2
- Not walking close to God ..... John 12:35; 1 John 1:5-6
- Trying and not trusting..... Proverbs 3:5; Nahum 1:7

In today’s passage we read of a man with a dead soul trying to serve a living God. In effect he cried, “Who will rescue me from my ‘dual personality?’” This modern psychiatric phrase is not a new truth! Note that the word “I” occurs 26 times, indicating introspection, in itself a cause of failure. Avoid unhealthy introspection, and instead ask God to search you (Psalm 139:23); be willing to learn your faults. Up to now you may have felt like verses 15 and 24 of today’s study and have given up hope, but God hasn’t. Only worms can’t stumble. The sequence is often: aspiration—high ideals; perspiration—attempt to attain them; desperation—failure to do so; inspiration—the solution of faith.

The following is a free translation of Galatians 2:20: “I have personally identified myself with the death of Christ and therefore my old sinful nature died on the cross. Nevertheless I now live—or rather not I but Christ lives in me; and my ordinary everyday life (in the mess, on board ship, on parade, in the workshop, etc.) is now lived by the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Notice Faith and Failure in Luke 22:31-32.

Officers of the fighting services know the value of high morale, and conversely the terrible effects of low morale. For this reason the devil is happy to have us discouraged. Discouragement after failure is natural and common. Peter, David, Moses, and others in the Bible suffered in this way but they did not let their discouragement overcome them.

If you are suffering from a sense of failure, read 1 John 1:7-9; note in verse 7 the present tense—“is continually purifying;” also thank God He is faithful to forgive, to cleanse, and to forget (Jeremiah 31:34). Look up Philippians 3:13-14 realizing that victory is the right of a Christian. Connect Philippians 4:13 and 2:13. Read Lamantations 3:22-27. Victory is GIVEN not GAINED (1 Corinthians 15:57). Note Romans 7:25. There is no need to live as if a slave to a sinful nature. See Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Peter 2:9. Now Read Romans 8:1-17, which is the antidote to the passage in Romans 7 with which we began.

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**Day 61. “Many Christians are insincere”**

*1 Corinthians 4:1-5*

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The fact that the standard of verse 2 has not been maintained is indisputable, but verse 5, Matthew 7:5; Luke 6:37; Romans 2:1 and 14:13 teach us that we must not be “busybodies” regarding the behavior of others (2 Thessalonians 3:11).

Again, the fact that there are insincere “Christians” is all the more reason why you should become a sincere one! Because one officer sets a bad example and is unworthy of a commission, it does not mean that the system is bad. Because some professing Christians have failed their Master, it does not prove that Christianity is other than the best. There would be no counterfeit coins if there were not real ones. The fact that there are counterfeit Christians therefore proves there are real ones and constitutes a call to you to be a real one.

Jesus Christ has been “let down” by many of His followers: He is also being “let down” by those who refuse to yield themselves to Him. Pay careful attention to the warning in Genesis 6:3 and do not procrastinate. We cannot lightly let spiritual things drift (Isaiah 55:6; Luke 12:20).

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**Day 62. “Christians are narrow-minded”**

*Psalms 1; Proverbs 3:6; Matthew 7:13-14*

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This is partly right and partly wrong. It is right in that a Christian must be narrow-minded in one sense, i.e. in the same sense as Jesus Christ who was narrow-minded about sin. He called it sin. There is a tendency today to call it by less ugly names such as “self-expression.” It is wrong if the term suggests that a man must be narrow in his sympathies. Jesus Christ was the Man who had the broadest sympathies, the largest love and the widest outlook; so should His followers be. Take up the yoke that joins us to Christ who will accompany us along the narrow road (Matthew 11:29).

There is a difference in being narrow-minded and narrow-wayed. The latter is essential (Matthew 7:14). To summarize: there are some things we must be narrow-minded about; there are many things in which we must have wide sympathies. We are to live our lives within the boundaries of God’s will, which others may perceive as narrow-wayed and deprived, yet show the breadth of that love which only comes from God. Fear of being thought narrow-minded, and the worldly desire to be considered a “broad-minded man of the world,” often lead to substituting brass for gold as in 2 Chronicles 12:9-10.

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**Day 63. “Christians are eccentric”**

*1 Samuel 8*

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This is the story of a people who did not want to be thought eccentric or different from other nations. It is true (verse 5) that bad government was the initial cause of the desire of the Israelites to have a king to reign over them, but evidently they thought this was certain to be the solution, for then they would be “like all the other nations.” In spite of warning that their “new order” would not work (10-18) the people persisted in their demand (19-20) and God “gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul” Psalm 106:15 (AV). God’s permission may not be God’s will.

To be thought eccentric by our brother officers really is of no consequence, but common sense rightly tells us to avoid doing things that will give unnecessary cause for criticism in this respect. Keep levelheaded and get on with your job and let your work and your play be improved because of your faith. It is strange that only Christian enthusiasm is put down to mental abnormality! Others’ enthusiasms and obsession with professional advancement or sport is regarded in a different light. The man who is really “ex-centric” is the man whose life is not centered in Jesus Christ. Romans 14:16 (see note on Study 51).

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**Day 64. “I will be laughed at”**

*Joshua 6:1-25*

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*See also Nehemiah 4:1; 1 John 4:18; Hebrews 11:30, 36-38.*

Does it matter if you are? Surely you are big enough to be laughed at. See what the Lord was subjected to in Luke 8:53 and Matthew 27:29-41. Christians who are ridiculed because of their faith are in good company. It is a great honor to be a fool for Christ’s sake (1 Corinthians 4:10), but remember it is possible by our actions (if not in accordance with God’s will) to be fools for the “devil’s sake.” If someone says to you, “Are you the kind of fool who prays?” you may well reply, “Are you the kind of fool who doesn’t?”

**Picture the scene at Jericho:** The inhabitants of that city must have gotten considerable amusement out of the “absurd Israelites” marching round the walls. No doubt they jeered at them, and perhaps they also threw rubbish, etc., at them. But the children of Israel allowed themselves to look like fools, in order to obey God. The result is seen in verse 20, and is confirmed by archaeology. There is great spiritual teaching in this story. If your life is Christ-like in all its ways, men may laugh at you, but they will respect you, and this brings glory to God.

**A practical hint:** When laughed at, enter into the joke; show a sense of humor,

and see the funny side of yourself! If called a “religious maniac” there is always the reply that we have a wonderful Keeper! (Psalm 121:7).

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### **Day 65. False Modesty**

*Exodus 3:1-14; Judges 6:11-15; Jeremiah 1:4-8*

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People often make excuses for not doing any particular work for God. These are of no more value now than they were in the days of Moses, Gideon or Jeremiah. Their excuses were probably partly evasion and partly false modesty. The reply that came from God was in each case more or less the same: “Don’t dwell on your insignificance, but think of My power, for I will be with you.” Even Gideon who was “the least of my family” (Judges 6:15), was able to prove that “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

When anyone has come as close to God as Moses did (Exodus 33:11) then there will be real modesty. We can be too “great” for God to use, but we can never be too weak or insignificant.

God can do nothing great for a life that shrinks from difficulties. The question for us is, “Have we let the Spirit urge us into tasks for which we ourselves have not the capacity except as we rely on Divine wisdom and power? Have we crept out of the challenge of the Spirit on account of the modest estimate of our own ability?” If so, we must suffer the penalty of diminished personal development. No amount of devotional life can make up for a retreat from the difficult tasks in life (Mark 10:27). Don’t apologize for your faith. Launch out boldly; you cannot steer a stationary bicycle!

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### **Day 66. The Deity of Jesus Christ**

*Matthew 1:18-25*

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Jesus Christ was either God or else He was the greatest impostor who ever lived! The statement that He was merely a very good man and a wonderful teacher simply does not bear scrutiny.

Over and over again Jesus said, “I am . . .” Look up the following verses in John’s Gospel: 6:35; 8:12, 23, 24, 58, 58; 10:7, 11, 14; 14:6; 18:5. In each case the Greek is “ego eimi,” “I myself am.” If His statements were incorrect He was a liar, and therefore could not have been “a very good man.” If His statements were true, then He must have been Divine.

We can say in all reverence that the Lord Jesus Christ claimed for Himself more than any man who ever lived, and yet His “egotism” is attractive and not repelling.

Could this be possible if He was not God?

If further proof is needed, it can be found in the fact that the Gospel or good news that Jesus Christ brought to a sinful world has indeed been “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). His message has transformed the most “hopeless cases;” has delivered the worst of men from sin; has “converted” drunkards, prostitutes, and—in some ways the hardest of all—men who are self-righteous and “good” from the world’s point of view. The resurrection of the Lord is also a proof of His Deity (see Study 19, Romans 1:4). One of the greatest proofs of the Deity of Jesus is a really “live” Christian. It is remarkable that our calendar dates from the birth of our Lord.

*Note: It is significant that all four gospels declare the Deity of our Lord—Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; John 1:34.*

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### **Day 67. The Trinity**

*1 John 4 (especially 2, 9, 12-16)*

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Although we cannot understand the mystery of the Trinity, we can believe the fact because there are so many references and examples. For example God (the Father) is Truth (Isaiah 65:16), Jesus is Truth (John 14:6) and the Holy Spirit is Truth (1 John 5:6). A number of times in the Gospels the three Persons are manifested simultaneously (Luke 3:22; 10:21). In the epistles their triune work is explained with respect to salvation (Hebrews 9:14) and to the corporate life of Christians (1 Corinthians 12:4-6—where the Spirit (4), Son/Lord (5) and Father/God (6) are separately mentioned as active in the single overall work of the church). The three Persons of the Godhead satisfy three distinct needs in man who is also a trinity of spirit, soul and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

God the Father is the Majesty we worship. Human need cries out for a God Who is Almighty, and immeasurably bigger than ourselves. He makes faith reasonable.

Jesus Christ His Son is the Friend who walks by our side, holds our hand and sets the example. A friend is one who knows all about us and loves us just the same, and with whom we double our joys and halve our sorrows. He makes God tangible and personal.

God the Holy Spirit is the Power who works in us and enables us to become like Christ, and live true Christian lives. (See Study 73 and Romans 8:9, 13-14). The word sometimes used of the Holy Spirit, “Paraclete” translated “Comforter” (e.g. John 14:15), literally means “One called alongside to help.” He makes Christianity practical.

Do away with one Person of the Deity, and we are left with a “God” who cannot satisfy.

We have three strong enemies against us: the world, the flesh and the devil; but we have three Persons more powerful for us.

- **The Father** is in contrast to the world: 1 John 2:15-17
- **The Son** is in contrast to the devil: 1 John 3:8 (who may be overcome through Him: 1 John 2:13-14)
- **The Holy Spirit** is in contrast to the flesh: Galatians 5:16-17 (RV)

We are promised in Romans 8:31—God for us, 34—The Risen Christ for us, 36—The Holy Spirit for us.

#### **Our salvation is:**

- Designed by God the Father, the Author (1 Peter 1:3-5): i.e. began in the heart of God.
- Operated by God the Son, the Channel (1 Peter 3:18): i.e. procured by His atonement and mediation.
- Applied by God the Holy Spirit, the Agent (1 Corinthians 6:11; Romans 15:16; Philippians 2:13): i.e. produced by His regenerating and sanctifying us.

The Father is the GIVER: the Son is the GIFT. Men do not of themselves think of the Giver or care for the Gift. The work of the Holy Spirit is to show the need of the Gift, the nature of the Gift, the nobility of the Gift; to lead men to want the Gift and to receive God’s “indescribable Gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15).

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### **Day 68. The Bible and Science**

*1 Timothy 6:17-21*

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Many people think that the Bible cannot be trusted, because science has shown it to be inaccurate. Here are a few reasons for thinking differently.

- The conclusions of science are always open to revision, and are constantly themselves, when examined, found to depend on many assumptions which, however seemingly reasonable, may at any time be and often are rendered untenable by further discoveries. Science has not repudiated the key message and teaching of the Bible.
- Many passages exist in the Bible that indicate a knowledge of facts far beyond that of the days when they were written (e.g. the spherical earth—Isaiah 40:22, the fact that day in one part of the world coincides with night in another, the weight and circulation of the atmosphere—Job 28:25 RSV, etc.).
- The historic statements of the Bible are also constantly being proved true, even though long denied in the name of “science.” Recent archaeological discoveries have produced extra-biblical evidence for the accuracy of the

reference to many of the events, customs and persons named in the Bible and have demonstrated the accuracy of the transmission of the text.

- The Bible claims to be inspired of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17); and its numerous fulfilled prophecies bear out the claim. Those who ridicule the Bible today unconsciously adopt the identical arguments spoken of in the Bible 2000 years ago (Psalm 14:1).
- The Gospel is unique in its holiness and power to change lives for good. This we believe to be of God, and above the power of human invention or discovery.

We are therefore prepared to “walk by faith” in this Book, rather than reject it on account of an ever-changing “science” which (however valuable in some ways) gives no spiritual comfort, no moral guidance, and can make only provisional statements upon material matters.

## **SECTION F :: SERVICE**

A man cannot really serve Jesus Christ unless he is right with God. Before commencing the section on “Service,” it may therefore be helpful to quote from a letter written by an officer who, realizing his need, yielded himself to the Lord. In describing how he took the definite step, he writes that the following prayer “helped enormously actually to push me over the line.”

*“Believing that the Lord Jesus Christ died for me,  
I now accept Him as my Savior.  
I ask Him to blot out all my sins,  
I believe that He has done so and I thank Him;  
I mean to trust Him absolutely now and in the future.”*

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### **Day 69. The Necessity for Service**

*Matthew 10:1-16*

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Note the last part of verse 8. Socialism and Communism say, “I must have some of yours.” Christianity says, “You must have some of mine.” It is vitally important for a true Christian to be a “doer of the Word, and not a hearer only” (James 1:22 AV). “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

We are God’s witnesses (Isaiah 43:10; Acts 1:8) and His co-workers (2 Corinthians 6:1). As such we must be “filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18); the tense used implies a continual process. If there is this continual “in-flowing,” there must be a

corresponding “out-flowing.” An African lady once said, “I can’t hold much, but I can overflow lots.” A pond with no outlet or inlet becomes stagnant and brackish; a lake always has an outlet and inlet and is fresh and useful (except the Dead Sea, which is aptly named!). God grant that we may be “lakes” and not “ponds;” if the former we shall make our corner of the world a better place; if the latter we shall not only hinder others, but we shall also eventually dry up altogether. “Intake from God is more important and vital than output by us” (Ezekiel 47:1-12; 1 Corinthians 6:19).

Note the sequence of Romans 6:22. Free from sin—slaves to God—leading to holiness—the result, eternal life. There is room in God’s service for great diversity of gift and method (Romans 12:5-8); varied deeds, all springing from a lively faith (James 2:26).

Remember, “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20; John 15: 16) but note the warning in Deuteronomy 13:1-4 and Matthew 24:24; results are not necessarily reliable indications. *One of the most potent aspects of Christian service is to do our professional work “as to the Lord”* (Colossians 3:23-24).

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## Day 70. The Motive for Service

*John 21:15-17*

The story is told of an Englishman who attended the sale of slaves in a slave-market, where he took pity on one particular slave and bought him. When the transaction was completed he said to the slave, “I have bought you, you can go free.” When the truth of this dawned on the slave he fell down on his knees in gratitude and replied, “I will serve you forever.” This story shows exactly the place that service takes in the life of a true Christian. We do not serve God in order to obtain a reward, but in sheer love and gratitude for what He has done for us (1 John 4:19). “Thanks living” is the best form of Thanksgiving.

A Christian’s life must be one of service; this alone brings real joy (Luke 10:17). See note on Study 75. The phrase, “Whose service is perfect freedom,” is wholly true (John 8:36). So the word “prisoner” in Philemon verse 1, denotes freedom in service. The real slave is the worldly person, chained to this world with its limitations, its passions and its doom.

Today’s study shows love as a true motive of service. (Galatians 5:13-14). The modern translation of 2 Corinthians 5:14 is “Christ’s love compels us;” it should be His love in us responding to God the Father. In Mark 12:41-42 note the quality of our motive decides the quantity of the gift. It is often true that “the last part of a person to be converted is his pocket.” Many Christians tithes, i.e. give a tenth of their money to God’s work, and a definite plan is advisable. See Genesis 14:20; 28:22; Leviticus 27:32; Proverbs 3:9; Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 9:7. Remember

to judge yourself by what you have left, not by what you have given!

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## Day 71. Our “Works”

*Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 3:1-7*

Many men’s belief can be summed up as follows: “If I do my best, lead a good life, say my prayers, read my Bible, and go to church, I shall get to heaven.” In fact they believe a man’s future depends on his own efforts. The following verses show this to be quite wrong: Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5; 2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 11:6; Galatians 2:16.

James 2:14 (see also v. 17) is no contradiction of this: “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?” Our “works” must result from our faith—they are not the way of salvation but the evidence of it. A place in Heaven cannot be earned. We must accept it as a gift. God never sells. He gives. See note on verse 13 in Study 16.

*2 Corinthians 9:8; Romans 8:8; 10:3-4.*

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## Day 72. Half-heartedness

*Revelation 3:14-22*

Our work should be our worship and our worship should be our work. “To worship is to quicken one’s conscience by the holiness of God, to nourish one’s mind with the truth of God, to purify one’s imagination with the beauty of God, to open one’s heart to the love of God, to surrender one’s will to the purpose of God” (Archbishop Temple). Christians are salt and light. Salt is no use in a packet. It must be distributed. To light a street, lamps must be dispersed. Each Christian is a particle of salt and a single light. The less wholesome the environment and the darker the atmosphere, the more the need for salt and light. Note “let” not “make” in Matthew 5:16. See Philippians 2:15.

Half-heartedness never succeeds in business, in the Services, or in any walk of life. Look at verse 16. It is particularly necessary that service men and women be wholehearted in living out the Christian life. 1 Corinthians 10:31 is a good motto. The fact that we are professed followers of Jesus Christ should be an incentive to encourage every worthwhile and profitable activity (e.g. sports) among our men. By so doing we will raise morale and esprit de corps and may well increase our positive influence with them.

Amaziah is a sad example of the failure of half-heartedness (2 Chronicles 25:2, 27). His outlook was too financial, and he forgot that God was able to give “much

more” (verse 9). Learn a lesson too from Jonah who tried to get away from God’s presence—he “paid the fare,” and an expensive one it proved! (Jonah 1:3) The half-hearted man gets no true pleasure either in the world or in Christ (Matthew 6:24; Psalm 119:113; James 1:8).

Support the Chaplains and all who work for the Lord Jesus Christ in the Armed Forces. The service member who is wholehearted in his or her allegiance to God has limitless possibilities. The Christian life is full of surprises; circumstances are divinely controlled. Indeed, “to live is Christ” and to be without Christ is only “to exist.” To get the best out of life, you must put the best into life.

*Philippians 1:21; 3:13-14; Colossians 3:23; Jude 3; Ecclesiastes 9:10.*

## SECTION G ::: THE RESULT OF CHRISTIANITY

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### Day 73. The Fruit of the Spirit

*Galatians 5:13-26*

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Studies 21 and 22 showed the necessity for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are so filled, the result must be apparent in our lives. Is it? Do we bear the fruit mentioned in verses 22 and 23? Think over verses 24 and 25. Also notice “The acts of the sinful nature” (19) as contrasted with “the fruit of the Spirit” (22).

The budding fruit pushes off the old leaves. In the same way, as sins are the fruits of the old nature, so “the fruit of the Spirit” is the visible sign of the new nature (Romans 8:9). It is surprising at first sight that power is not included in the list; but power is not a “fruit of the Spirit,” the Holy Spirit is Power (See Study 22).

See note on Study 4, and note 13 on Study 100. The fruit of the Spirit is character, character that cannot be purchased. Man’s actions are a picture book of his belief. The character disclosed by the fruit of the Spirit is none other than the character of Jesus Himself, for this is our Father’s great ambition for us (Romans 8:29).

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### Day 74. Love

*1 Corinthians 13:1-13; John 14:15*

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The word “love” has a deeper and more definitely Christian implication than the way in which it is often used. It is the Greek word *agape* rather than *phileo* (brotherly love or friendship) or *eros* (sexual love) and it is consistently used in the

New Testament to describe the love of God (e.g. 1 John 4:16—“God is Agape”).

The NIV translation of verses 4 to 8 is: “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.”

Christianity is the only religion based on love. Read again 1 John 4:7-21. This passage is well worth studying (see note on Study 1). Remember that LOVE (self-sacrifice) can never be spelled LUST (selfishness, 2 Corinthians 5:14). “Love is as strong as death” (Song of Solomon 8:6). Fear will preserve love from degenerating into presumptuous familiarity, and love will prevent fear from becoming a servile and cringing dread.

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### Day 75. Joy

*1 Peter 1:1-9*

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Note verse 8. It is impossible to explain the deep joy of a true Christian; it must be experienced to be understood. Those who are not following Christ do not know what real joy is! Look up Acts 16:25; Nehemiah 8:10; John 15:11; James 1:2; 1 John 1:4; Habakkuk 3:17-18; 2 Corinthians 6:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16.

Happiness depends on what happens; Joy is independent of what happens, because it results from a state of mind and not from circumstances. We should “rejoice in the Lord,” even when we cannot rejoice in our circumstances (Philippians 4:4). Christian joy is permanent; earthly pleasure is temporary. The cheap taunt that Christianity is a “kill-joy” affair is untrue. The secret of life is not to do what we like, but to learn to like what we have to do (see Zephaniah 3:17).

“Those who look to Him are radiant” (Psalm 34:5).

**The sequence of service: Jesus first. Others next. Yourself last.**

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### Day 76. Peace

*John 20:19-31*

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*See note 6 to Study 99 “Peace be with you” occurs three times—verses 19, 21, and 26.*

If we are careful for nothing, thankful for anything, prayerful for everything,

the “peace of God,” which truly “transcends all understanding” (and all misunderstanding, too!) will guard literally, “garrison” both heart (seat of the emotions) and mind (seat of the intellect and will)—(Philippians 4:6-7). Though people search for peace through distraction or withdrawal from reality, true peace of mind can only be found in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:14). Peace in Hebrew means wholeness. The peace that Jesus gives (John 14:27) is independent of circumstances; these words were spoken within hours of Gethsemane and Calvary.

The NIV translates Colossians 3:15: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”

The root of our peace within ourselves is our peace with God (Romans 5:1). Peace of mind comes only to those controlled by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:6), in itself a definition of the kingdom of God. The characteristics of the Kingdom of God are righteousness, peace and joy (Romans 14:17). Righteousness and peace always go together in the Bible. Many long for peace but are unwilling to accept God’s righteousness (Romans 1:17). Real trust produces real peace (Isaiah 26:3-4).

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### Day 77. Patience

*2 Corinthians 6:1-18*

Verse 6. Patience should be a sign of our Christian faith. Note “in purity, understanding, patience and kindness.” The Greek word here is *makrothumia*, which means long-temperedness. Vine says, “Patience is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, is associated with mercy, and is used of God” (Exodus 34:6; Romans 2:4).

Do some people irritate us? Do we “suffer fools gladly?” Remember that the Lord loved those who annoy and irritate us enough to die for them (Numbers 14:18; 2 Peter 3:9). Don’t mistake compromise for patience, or accept a low standard of public opinion about such topics as divorce and the sanctity of marriage. Don’t pride yourself on not being easily shocked. Sin resulted in the death of Jesus on Calvary; may it always shock us.

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### Day 78. Kindness

*Isaiah 42:1-7*

Verse 3. A musician will throw away the bruised reed, as it is not worth repairing; you and I would stamp on smoking flax and extinguish it, as the smell is offensive. But—in parable—it is not so with God. His gentleness is such that He is ready to

renew the reed and to fan the flax into flame. Many men can look back to the time when they were “a bruised reed” or smoldering instead of giving a bright light; the change has been largely due to the gentleness of the Lord Jesus.

Read Luke 6:35 and note that kindness (Greek *chrestos*—good, gracious, kind), a God-like quality founded upon love (1 Corinthians 13:4), is the motivating drive for our salvation (Ephesians 2:7; Titus 3:4) and should consequently mark our dealings with our fellow Christians (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14).

Note the gentle courtesy of Boaz’s manner towards Ruth in Ruth 2. Also in John 8 the gentle dealing by the Lord Jesus with the woman taken in adultery. He loved the sinner while loathing the sin, which He did not condone (verse 11).

*See also 2 Timothy 2:24-26.*

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### Day 79. Goodness

*Luke 10:30-37*

Don’t confuse “goodness” with “goody goody-ness.” We should all “imitate what is good” (3 John 11), but never give the impression, “See how good I am!” The Greek word *agathos* describes that which is good in character and beneficial or beneficent in impact and effect. It is another God-like quality (“Like father like son” has a special significance for the Christian—Romans 8:15).

“Goodness necessitates purity—not a mere conventional morality, but a quality of the heart. Goodness is far removed from things which pollute the heart of man—cringing, meanness, cowardice, indolence, lying, treachery, back-biting, seduction, lust and the like. Goodness engenders love of clean, vigorous, healthy life, and hatred towards all that is destructive of health, all that is corrupt and filthy.”

“Goodness” has been translated in modern language by an inferior word—“generosity.” The Good Samaritan didn’t look too good nor talk too wisely but he showed he had this quality, and it is remembered that his action was for one who was an enemy. Let us examine ourselves to see whether we are as generous and kind as we should be in the everyday things of life. May we be consistently generous and magnanimous, so that good will may find expression in acts and not merely in words.

Test yourself by your attitude towards those you dislike, or those who have wronged you (See note on Study 77). Matthew 19:17; Romans 12:2, 9, 21; Galatians 6:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12.

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**Day 80. Faithfulness***Matthew 9:18-31*

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Faith and faithfulness are the same Greek word, *pistis*. The Christian life is a life of faith—our whole approach to our dealings with God is dependent upon faith; Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith is it impossible to please God. We receive salvation and sonship by faith (John 6:47; Galatians 3:26), we are justified by faith (Romans 5:1), our righteousness before a holy God is by faith (Romans 1:17), we live and grow by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). The linkage between healing and faith is consistent (James 5:15)—it acts as an illustration in the physical realm of what God would usher into our lives in the spiritual realm—wholeness, completeness, integrity.

Faith is unique in being both a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and a Gift of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:9). The fruit of the Spirit is actually more faithfulness than faith—i.e. it is a quality of character that flows outward from inner faith. It parallels the character of God, who is faithful (i.e. trustworthy, reliable, constant, unswerving, loyal). What is true of God is true of His word the Bible—you can literally bet your life on it. It follows that by the inner working of the Holy Spirit our feckless and unreliable character will be transformed as we live day by day by faith so that we too become faithful—the outward indicator of one who is faithful.

Note verses 22 and 29. In order to receive the many gifts Christ offers us we must exercise faith. Easier said than done, but remember that faith in a person simply means trusting that person. The verse, “Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22) has been translated “Rest in the faithfulness of God;” this makes all the difference, for instead of the struggling determination to exercise our faith we can, as it were, lie back in the arms of the Lord Jesus and claim His faith in God for ourselves. Also note the restful attitude underlying the word “remain” in John 15. The branch does not struggle to remain attached to the stem. We ought to hold unswervingly to God’s faithfulness (Hebrews 10:23). Psalm 89 emphasizes this point.

Scotfield writes: “The essence of faith consists in receiving what God has revealed, and may be defined as that trust in the God of the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ whom He has sent, which receives Him as Savior and Lord, and impels to loving obedience and good works (John 1:12; James 2:14-20). The particular uses of faith give rise to its secondary definition: (1) For salvation, faith is personal trust, apart from meritorious works, in the Lord Jesus Christ as delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification (Romans 4:5,23-25); (2) As used in prayer, see 1 John 5:13-15; (3) As used in reference to unseen things, faith ‘gives substance’ to them, so that we act upon the conviction of their reality (Hebrews 11:1-3); (4) As a working principle in life, the uses of faith are illustrated in Hebrews 11.”

Lack of faith hinders God (Matthew 13:58).

Faith is taking God at His Word. As David Livingstone said, “My Master is a Gentleman, Who never breaks His word.” Faith will be educated and increased by studying the Bible. Faith that acts as though it were so, finds it is so. Faith does not need explanation: if all were explained there would be no room for faith.

Our Lord’s promise that all things are possible to those who have faith “as small as a mustard seed” (Matthew 17:20) has been taken to mean that the smallest degree of faith, if it is genuine, will work marvels. But this is proved wrong by experience, which shows that men with little faith can accomplish little. The quality of the mustard seed, that impressed our Lord, was not its actual smallness, but its potential greatness and its capacity for growth. Faith enables the weak to lay hold of the all-powerful One.

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**Day 81. Gentleness***Matthew 18:1-6; Luke 14:8-14*

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“Meekness” is not “weakness.” It is real humility. All truly great men are humble men. Lack of humility, or pride of the wrong sort, has kept many men from God. It takes many forms, pride of position, of wealth, of success, of intellect, of being “full of common sense.” When we come to an end of ourselves, then we are on the threshold of Christianity. Meekness leads to mightiness. In view of Philippians 2:3, avoid the “holier than thou” attitude.

There is, of course, a right kind of pride: for instance, pride in our profession and above all pride in serving God. But this pride should be tempered with humility. Usefulness is not measured by publicity.

If we remember our Lord’s words, “apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5) reliance on ourselves and the wrong kind of pride will disappear.

Psalm 25:9; Matthew 5:5; 2 Corinthians 10:1; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; 1 Timothy 6:11; James 1:21.

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**Day 82. Self-Control***1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Peter 1:6*

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Today’s study makes it clear that “temperance” or “self-control” is not a matter of drink only (Titus 2:12).

We must be temperate in our stories (not exaggerating), in what we say of others,

in the way we spend our money, in our language, in our food, in our leisure, in our work for God, in our bodily comforts, etc. We must submit to self-discipline. We must live balanced lives. The growth of Jesus was balanced—He increased in wisdom (intellectual), stature (physical) and favor (spiritual) (Luke 2:52). See note on Study 2. Times of elation on the mountain top should give us strength for times of depression in the valley. Each is the complement of the other to enable us to live balanced lives. The words “self-controlled” in 1 Peter 4:7 means a well balanced judgment, avoiding extremes. Remember the responsibility of example (Study 47). We must not be so heavenly minded that we are no earthly use. The Fruit of the Spirit is:

- INWARD experience—Love, Joy, Peace
- OUTWARD experience—Patience, Kindness, Gentleness
- UPWARD experience—Faithfulness, Goodness, Self-Control

Read again the note on Study 73, and ask yourself if the fruit is apparent in your own life (Matthew 7:20-23). Religious profession does not of itself necessarily produce real fruit. Note that though the fruit of the Spirit is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit and, like the growing apple, takes time to grow to fruition, 2 Peter 1:5-8 shows how we can cooperate with Him to bring these Christ-like qualities into our lives. Remember that the nine qualities are but a single fruit so we can take no credit if we exhibit some while failing to exhibit others.

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## SECTION H ::: WARNINGS

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### Day 83. Peter

*Matthew 26:31-75*

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Note the sequence:

35. Peter was no doubt quite genuine in his statement, but he was evidently trusting in himself.

40,43. Asleep when he should have been praying (what about that extra five minutes sleep in the morning?).

56. Deserted and fled.

58. At a distance.

70. A simple denial.

72. With an oath.

74. With cursing and swearing.

One other point may be noticed. Peter's action in verse 51 was impetuous (John 18:10 identifies the culprit as Peter). We can learn from it the necessity of having

proper balance and proportion. A sense of humor is helpful in maintaining these qualities, the absence of which often brings discredit to the name of Christ (see Philippians 4:5).

Notice our Lord's tender dealing. Immediately after the denial we read, “The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter” (Luke 22:61). What followed that “look?” “Peter remembered ... and wept bitterly.” In that “look” of our Lord there was surely no trace of the suggestion “I told you so!” In that moment of failure and discouragement Peter must have seen in our Lord's eyes exactly what he needed—love, encouragement and hope. Didn't the Lord see in Peter, as He sees in us when we fail, tremendous possibilities for good through His help? He will never “write off” a repentant “failure” (John 6:37).

Notice also that, after His resurrection, the Lord sent a special message to Peter (Mark 16:7) and He made a special appearance to him (Luke 24:34).

It would be unfair to leave the story without thanking God for Peter's subsequent life; see Acts 4:13, where his witness was to the same people before whom he had denied his Lord. Peter's fall was a stepping stone to higher things. Peter must have been a lovable character; his life makes an excellent study.

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### Day 84. “Swollen Head”

*2 Chronicles 26:1-23*

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Note verses 5, 15 and 16. Uzziah was so pleased with his “power” and so lifted up with pride that he got a “swollen head.” “He went into the temple to burn incense;” it was a good motive, but he was taking the law into his own hands and doing that which in those days was only permissible for the priests (18).

No doubt he thought that he was “as good as” the priests. He didn't have the warning of 1 Corinthians 10:12. Be on your guard against intellectual pride.

Uzziah's sin consisted in going directly into the presence of God. An exactly similar situation may not be possible now, as all was changed when our Lord laid down His life on the Cross. In Matthew 27:51 we read: “The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom,” indicating that there is now direct access to the Father through the mediation of the Son; the normal way would have been a tear from the bottom to the top, but the reversed order shows it was the act of God (Hebrews 10:19, but see also 1 Corinthians 11:27-31).

On the other hand today, many, like Uzziah, attempt to approach God, trusting in their own righteous acts (Isaiah 64:6), instead of in the death of Jesus Christ for sinners (Romans 1:17).

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## Day 85. Efficiency

*Genesis 39:1-6; 20-23; 41:37-46*

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A solemn warning must be given to the Christian who is inefficient at his job. Faith in Christ should make an officer all the more efficient: he can claim James 1:5; he can be free from worry because of Romans 8:28, and he has a motive for all he does in 1 Corinthians 10:31. Wisdom, here, does not mean instant knowledge of the answer to a problem but guidance as to how we should set about dealing with it. Too often a true Christian is presumed (and sometimes found) to be “soft” and to lack initiative.

Inefficiency and incompetence will bring discredit to an officer’s faith. By contrast, we need to understand that failure is one of the common early characteristics of some of the finest leaders in the Bible. Moses set about delivering God’s people from Egypt by killing Egyptians one at a time (Exodus 2:12); after 40 years in God’s staff college (minding someone else’s sheep in the desert), he was prepared and equipped to do it God’s way (Exodus 3). Peter denied Jesus three times but was restored to become one of the pillars of the early Church. “He who never makes a mistake never makes anything.” The key is to learn that when we fail in some task we ourselves are not “a failure,” but failing in tasks is how we learn to improve our performance.

Efficiency is the outcome of the Spirit-controlled life. Joseph is an example of the efficient man. The secret can be found in verses 2, 5 and 21: “The Lord was with Joseph” (see also last half of verse 23). So his master (verse 4) “put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned,” and verse 6: “So he left in Joseph’s care everything he had.” Again in verse 22 we read that he was put in a position of authority because he was efficient. Later on we find Joseph ruling in Egypt. Here he proved himself a far-seeing statesman, a diplomat, with a sense of humor (his method of dealing with his brothers in chapter 42:25-34), and a loving spirit. While striving to do the very best of which we are capable, we should remember that some people have greater ability than others; only one officer rises to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Efficiency cannot be attained in a moment, but faithfulness in details can (1 Corinthians 4:2).

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## Day 86. Playing with Sin

*Genesis 13:1-18; 19:1-4*

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You cannot play with the fire of sin without the risk of being burnt. The story of Lot is an excellent example. Note the sequence: 13:10,11. A selfish choice of worldly possessions.

13:12. Pitched his tent near Sodom—that wicked city.

19:1. Sat in the gate of Sodom.

19:4. Caught by the wicked men of Sodom.

Yet he was a “righteous man” (2 Peter 2:7 and 8), and therefore doubtless did not mean deliberately to have anything to do with that evil city. If a friend had said to Lot after he had made the choice in Genesis 13:11: “You know how very wicked that city of Sodom is; don’t go there, sin has such an insidious attraction,” Lot would no doubt have replied quite genuinely, “Yes, I know Sodom is very wicked, but I have no intention of ever going into the city.” Later perhaps he rationalized his presence there on the basis that he would be a good influence. Subsequent events showed the permanent harm done to his family through their exposure to the values of this sinful society (Genesis 19:5—end).

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## Day 87. False Doctrines

*1 Timothy 4:1-10*

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In addition to the first three verses of today’s Study, 1 John 4:1 tells us that “many false prophets have gone out into the world.” The Bible uses the word prophet for those who spoke on behalf of God, not simply those who claimed to be able to foretell the future. There is a very real problem in not being led astray by the many false “isms” so popular today. There are only two “isms” that are important—Evangelism and Baptism!

### Practical suggestions:

- **Read the Bible rather than books about it**, first asking God to enlighten your understanding. Remember books about the Bible usually contain opinions of men about God and His ways; the Bible tells us what God thinks about man. Read the whole Bible. Don’t discount the value of daily Bible study notes and other commentaries, of course.
- **Beware of any teaching which belittles or does not emphasize the Atonement**, i.e. the death of Jesus Christ for sinners. There is a tendency to say that the death of our Lord was only an example. Justice demanded that sin must be punished; only a sinless Savior could settle the debt (1 Corinthians 15:3; Hebrews 9:22).
- **A useful test of all doctrines is**, “What do they teach about Jesus Christ?” Most “false doctrines” deny His Deity. (1 John 4:2 and 3; 1 Corinthians 12:3).

It is worth reflecting on the source of false doctrines (John 8:44)—only Satan has anything to gain from the concealment of the Truth (John 14:6). There are many false doctrines including sects such as Mormonism and Jehovah’s Witnesses. By all means acquaint yourself with some information about their origins and false teaching but give the majority of your time to the study of the Bible. In that way

you will instinctively recognize that which is unbiblical. Two false doctrines can be mentioned briefly.

“Christian Science” is based on the true fact that the mind has great power over the body. It is nominally based on the Bible too; in actual fact it is based on Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy’s interpretation. Christian Science denies the necessity of the Atonement by saying the death of Christ was only an example. Reject the Atonement and you may as well throw your Bible away (e.g. *Studies 16, 17, 18 and 30 lose their spiritual teaching*).

Spiritism, or spiritualism, is an attempt to get news of the “other world.” In the Bible we find that in those cases where men were “raised from the dead” they never said anything about what they had seen “on the other side.” Remarkable and convincing! Note too that in these days “messages” supposed to come from the dead are on trivial matters. The truth is that we are not intended to dabble in these things and this the Bible makes quite clear: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 2 Chronicles 33:6. See also 1 Samuel 28:7-25. Note “witchcraft” in Galatians 5:20. You will see from these scriptures that such things as horoscopes have no place in the life of the Christian because, although dismissed as ‘harmless fun’, their root is Satanic and they thus have power to harm and corrupt. Spiritualism is simply not Christian; in the spiritualist hymn book any reference to the Lord Jesus, redemption and atonement is deliberately erased. It is significant that the same is true of the hymns and prayers used in Freemasonry.

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### Day 88. Hypocrisy

*Matthew 6:1-7; 23:13-31*

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A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be what he is not, or pretends not to be what he is. Every decent man detests hypocrisy, but there are many who also unconsciously are a little hypocritical. Each one of us should consider if we are guilty of this to some degree. Hypocrisy takes many forms. The man who really wants to keep straight and yet puts himself unnecessarily in the path of temptation, is a hypocrite. The officer who prays that he may get high marks in an exam but does not work hard is a hypocrite. Some people would rather continue to ask for a blessing than take the responsibility of growing in the new freedom of a blessing received by faith—hypocritical? The Christian whose life does not agree with what he professes is a hypocrite and does great harm. In this connection, what do shopkeepers and servers think of my manners? Is my Christian faith noticeable in that I settle my bills promptly? Can my juniors accuse me of hypocrisy? Am I polite to those with whom I come into contact in the everyday things of life? Is my driving courteous, safe and law-abiding?

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### Day 89. Backsliding

*Psalms 80:14-19*

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Nothing is more tragic than when a man who has been “born again” turns back from following the Lord.

Psalms 78 gives three warnings on the subject.

1. **Verse 9.** Turned back on the day of battle. They found the fight too hard; they were cowards.
2. **Verse 41.** Turned back and limited the Holy One of Israel. They focused on problems and so fell away. If we are not continually focusing on Almighty God, it is very easy to limit in our minds His ability and power.
3. **Verse 57 & 58.** Turned back into sin. They were disloyal and faithless to the One to whom they owed all. They wandered away to pursue enticing sin—the sexual sin of Canaanite religion.

*Note the simple sequence of verse 7—Trust in God, remember His deeds, keep His commands.*

The solution, to avoid turning back, is found in today’s passage:

- **Verse 17.** “Your Hand.” This reminds us of His great power. The battle can never be too hard for God. (Psalm 18:35; 2 Chronicles 20:15).
- **Verse 18.** “Your Name.” Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity. “Jesus” means “Savior.” He is able to save (and keep) completely. (Hebrews 7:25; 2 Timothy 1:12). We dare not limit God’s power with such verses (see also Ephesians 3:20; Matthew 9:29).
- **Verse 19.** “Your Face.” The tender heart of God. In the midst of this saga of failure comes this glimpse of the love and mercy of our loving Heavenly Father. Practice the presence of God. In His presence sin can find no place (Psalm 16:11; Numbers 6:25).

Backsliding can almost always be traced to slack biding—neglect of one or more of the FOUR ESSENTIALS (see note on *Study 26*):

1. **BIBLE STUDY**—exposure to the mind and heart of God through the Holy Spirit who breathed the Bible into being (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
2. **REGULAR AND CONSTANT PRAYER**—sharing of yourself, and every aspect of your life, with God.
3. **WITNESSING FOR\* and TO CHRIST**—serving your Lord and Master. “Expression deepens Impression”—as we speak about our faith and work out answers to people’s questions (1 Peter 3:15), we are building the bulwarks of our own faith.
4. **FELLOWSHIP**—spending time with your (spiritual) family (1 Peter 2:9; 1 Corinthians 12: 14-20). Christians were never designed to operate solo. We are all different individual members of “the body of Christ.”

If one of these essentials is allowed to slide, you will slide too, and always downhill! 2 Peter 3:17 is a warning. Friendships are particularly important because of the way they can influence our attitudes and values. It is important to maintain friendships with those of our own sex who are not Christians, but the deepest levels of friendship and affection should be limited to Christians (2 Corinthians 6:14). More Christians have back-slidden through going out with and subsequently marrying non-Christians than for almost any other single reason. This is a well-established ploy of Satan (see Numbers 31:15-16). Balaam, hired by King Balak to curse Israel, was prevented from doing so by God, see Chronicles 22-24, but his final advice to Balak was to entice the Israelites into compromise by getting women of his tribe to befriend young Israeli men (Numbers 25:1-3).

See Hosea 14:4; Micah 7:18,19. Also read again the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15), and note that the father says to the elder son (verse 31), “everything I have is yours”—and he had never realized it! If he had perhaps he would never have backslidden in love to his father and brother.

*\*Matthew 10:32 “Acknowledge ME.” See Psalm 66:16; Acts 1:8 “You will be MY witnesses.” Therefore, don’t let personal setbacks deter you, from witnessing to the saving and keeping power of the Lord. Christians are neither infallible nor omniscient, but we can all testify “once I was blind; now I can see” (John 9:25).*

## SECTION I ::: PROPHECY

It is particularly desired not to be dogmatic in the notes on Studies 90 to 95, as it is realized that a variety of views are legitimately held. The Bible is totally clear on key topics such as Salvation, less detailed on other matters (Deuteronomy 29:29). However, in examining prophecy it will be helpful to have something definite to work upon. It is hoped therefore that these notes are definite without being dogmatic. It is important, as always, to remember that Bible study is for application, not information, so there should always be the question “So what?” in the back of our minds. Of the topics examined, by far the most important is the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ (Study 91), which is the only one that is to be found in all the Creeds of the Church. Other topics remind us that God is working through history to His own timetable, and He is in control. History is His story.

It is interesting to read the following note which appeared in the 1937 edition of this booklet:

“The Jews are one of the greatest proofs of the accuracy of Prophecy. Although

dispersed throughout the earth, they have always maintained their identity, thus being ready to come together as a nation at the appointed time. The 1937 report of the Royal Commission under Lord Peel emphasized the desire to give the Jews a ‘National Home in Palestine’ confirming the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the Macdonald Letter of 1931. The prophecies of Jeremiah 32:37, Ezekiel 36:21-24 and 37:12-21 are thus being literally fulfilled at the present time, for thousands of Jews are returning to Palestine, large numbers from Poland, thought by some to be the ‘Land of the North’ referred to in Jeremiah 16:14-15. Official statistics show that whereas in 1918 there were 60,000 Jews in Palestine, in 1937 the number had risen to 400,000, and although immigration in the future may be slower than in the past, we may expect a continuance of this return of the Jews to the Holy Land, vide the prophecy in Amos 9:14-15.”

In 1947 the number of Jews in Palestine had risen to 650,000. Prophecy was further fulfilled when Israel became an independent nation in 1948. Some believe that ultimately there will be Jewish possession of the land from the Nile to the Euphrates (Genesis 15:18 and Joshua 1:4). Other Christians take the view that such promises have been superseded with the incorporation of Gentiles into the spiritual Israel (Romans 11:17-21). Read Romans 9-11 for a fuller understanding of the spiritual future of the Jews. One thing is certain, that God’s plans for the future include definite plans for the ultimate salvation of “all Israel,” believing Jews and believing Gentiles alike (Romans 11:26).

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### Day 90. World Prophecy

*Daniel 2*

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The great statue mentioned in today’s study seems to be a prophetic outline of the world’s history. Note how the metals decrease in value, but increase in strength.

- **The Head of Gold** represents the Babylonian Empire (2:37).
- **The Breast and Arms of Silver** represent Media-Persia, inferior in form of government, though not in widespread dominion and power (see Daniel 5:31 and 8:20).
- **The Belly and Thighs of Brass** represent Greece (see Daniel 8:21).
- **The Legs of Iron** represent the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1).
- **The Toes partly Iron and partly Clay**, are thought by some to represent democracy. Note that the iron (of rule and authority) does not mix with the clay (of un-disciplined democracy). In these days don’t we find the “clay” in evidence against the “iron?” What about Communism and world-wide general lawlessness?

It is not for us to know the “times and seasons,” but the sequence of the main

events of the future is thought by many to be:

- The Second Coming of Jesus Christ in Person in the air when our Lord comes for His Saints; and the “First Resurrection” (see Study 91).
- The Judgment of the works of true Christians (see Study 92).
- The Great Tribulation; and rule of Anti-Christ (see Study 93).
- Jesus Christ comes with His saints to reign on earth in Person; this is known as Christ’s Millennial Reign, and follows the Battle of Armageddon (see Study 94).
- During this period of 1,000 years Satan is bound.
- The Judgment of the nations (See footnote after Study 95).
- Satan loosed, followed by a further period of strife and deceit.
- The Judgment of the Great White Throne (see Study 95).
- The new heaven and new earth.

Others differ on the exact sequence of events.

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### **Day 91. The Second Coming**

*Matthew 24:27-44*

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Since prophecies concerning the First Coming and Death of our Lord were fulfilled in detail (Psalm 22:16-18; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6, 7; 11:1; 53.; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9) we may be sure that Acts 1:11 and prophecies referring to His Second Coming and other future events will as certainly be fulfilled.

The Second Coming and the first resurrection take place at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Titus 2:13). Jesus Christ will actually appear in the heavens in Person. The dead, who during their lives had accepted Him as their personal Savior, will rise to meet Him, immediately followed by those who are still living on this earth who have likewise acknowledged His sovereignty. Philippians 3:14—literally “up calling.” We don’t know the date (Matthew 24:36), but for the signs see 2 Timothy 3.

Shall we enjoy His coming? See the necessities in Matthew 25. Also Luke 24:25-27; Revelation 20:6; 22:20. Knowing the certainty of Jesus’ return at any time, what should be the impact on our lives (2 Peter 3:10-14)?

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### **Day 92. The Judgment of the “works” of true Christians**

*1 Corinthians 3:1-23*

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This event is sometimes called “The prize-giving” and this title is certainly a better description. It is the one occasion when true Christians stand before God to be judged: it is in no way a judgment of their sins, for these are “remembered no

more” (Hebrews 10:17). That our deeds are to be judged is clear from Matthew 16:27; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 22:12.

This teaching impels us to seek to serve our Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength—to press on in the face of every setback so that we qualify for the “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Luke 19:17), rather than standing naked and embarrassed, the substance of our lives consumed by fire, having been revealed as wood, hay and straw (1 Corinthians 3:12).

Shall we receive on that occasion—

- the Crown of Righteousness, 2 Timothy 4:8 ?
- the Crown of Life, James 1:12; Revelation 2:10 ?
- the Crown of Glory, 1 Peter 5:4 ?

*See 1 Corinthians 9:25 and Revelation 3:11*

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### **Day 93. The Departure of the Holy Spirit**

*1 Corinthians 3:1-23*

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The Holy Spirit’s special work was to call out true Christians, dwell in them and establish them. All true Christians having left the earth at “the Second Coming” (Study 91), the Holy Spirit, it is suggested, departs with them from the earth. It is thought that verse 7 may be translated, “The secret force of lawlessness is already at work, but it cannot be fully revealed until the Holy Spirit, Who at present is a restraining influence, is removed.”

The withdrawal of the Holy Spirit would allow lawlessness to reach its climax. Sin will abound. Anti-Christ will reign. Nevertheless a great multitude will be saved during the tribulation (Revelation 7:9-17).

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### **Day 94. The Millennium**

*Revelation 20:1-6*

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The Millennium, or “1000 years,” is the period during which our Lord reigns in Person on the earth. See verse 4. Micah 4:1-5 also appears to refer to this period.

The Millennium will follow the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:14-16; 19:11-21). All nations will be involved in the conflict (Isaiah 34:1,2). Much may be learned from Zechariah 14. In the fury of the battle, Jesus Christ comes (Zechariah 14:3,4,5) with His saints (i.e. those referred to in Study 91) and intervenes. See 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14. Satan is bound “1,000” years (i.e. during the Millennial reign of Christ) as stated in verse 3 of today’s study.

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## Day 95. The Judgment of the Great White Throne

*Revelation 20:7-15*

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At the end of the Millennium Satan is loosed “for a short time.” Verses 3, 7-9. He is then “thrown into the lake of burning sulfur” (verse 10). The final judgment then takes place (verses 11-15). Only those who have not accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, appear before the Great White Throne.\* Verse 15 is terrible; read it in conjunction with Matthew 7:22, 23. Many men dismiss the reality of Hell “because God is too loving to send anyone to Hell.” It may be difficult to understand, but the following must be remembered:

- Isaiah 55:8.
- Man has free will. This being the case, how can God allow a man into Heaven, when he does not, of his own free will, accept the conditions of entry? Whose decision results in a person going to Hell? Is it God’s (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9) or the person’s (John 3:17 and 18)?
- The eternal state of the wicked is “Death” (Revelation 20:14). From the spiritual point of view, doesn’t this mean “eternally cut off from God?” Before we put our faith in Jesus, we are already spiritually dead Ephesians 2:1; doing nothing (i.e. failing to respond to the love of God) simply allows that state of separation from God to continue into eternity.
- God is just as well as loving, and we will only fully realize the extent of what this means when we finally understand all things (1 Corinthians 13:12).
- A worldly person finds no pleasure in Christian company, so how could they enjoy Heaven, even if admitted?
- We have already seen that God’s holiness is like fire (Study 92; Luke 3:16; Hebrews 12:29). This means that anything profane or corrupt will be consumed by exposure to His presence. No ungodly person could survive in Heaven—it is only those who are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus who will enjoy exposure to God’s holy presence.
- God is not only dealing with individuals, but is Governor over all. So in justice, He must discern between the obedient and the disobedient. At the Cross His justice was satisfied by the wages of sin (death) being paid, and His infinite love and mercy revealed, in that He (God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself) paid the price Himself. If men refuse the gift of forgiveness, why blame God’s mercy? (2 Corinthians 5:19).
- Concern may be felt for the destiny of those who have never heard the Gospel message of salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross. If they have not heard, how can they respond? Thankfully that decision is in safe hands. When God revealed to His servant Abraham that He was about to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham was horrified and asked, “Will not the Judge of all the Earth do right?” The answer then, as now and upon the Day of Judgment is, “Of course!” This in no way diminishes the charge to every Christian to tell everyone the Gospel. Jesus tells that all judgment is entrusted into His hands (John 5:22); having lived

as a man He is in the perfect position to pass fair judgment. Finally verse 12 and 13 of today’s study stress that judgment will be based on what we have done, not on what we have known or not known.

*NOTE: The section on Prophecy is now ended. Let us go back to the most important future event—our Lord’s Second Coming (Study 91). The constructive point for us is to “Watch and pray” (Mark 14:38). Watching implies activity, and not idleness.*

*\* As regards the “Judgment of the Nations” referred to in Matthew 25:31-46, Scofield writes: “This judgment is to be distinguished from the judgment of the Great White Throne. Here there is no resurrection; the persons judged are living nations; no books are opened: three classes are present—sheep, goats, brethren: the time is at the return of Christ, and the scene is on earth. All these details are in contrast with Revelation 20:11-15.”*

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## SECTION J :: VARIOUS

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### Day 96. The Dispensations

*Romans 6:1-23*

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Of the seven “Dispensations,” or periods into which time can be divided, the following three are most important for us.

1. **The first is that of the LAW**, i.e. the period of time between the delivery of God’s Law by Moses to the people and the death of Christ for sinners. During this period, mankind was always struggling against unconquered sin in an effort to “keep the law,” and the Old Testament history of the wanderings of the Children of Israel shows how man continually failed. (See first part of the note on Study 29 and Galatians 2:21.)
2. **The second is that of GRACE**, i.e. the period from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to the present time and until the “Second Coming” (see Study 91). From the moment that our Savior died on the Cross, procuring our Redemption by the sacrifice of Himself, mankind could claim grace. Scofield put it this way, “Under grace God freely gives to the believing sinner eternal life (Romans 6:23); accounts to him a perfect righteousness (Romans 3:21, 22; 4:4, 5); and accords to him a perfect position (Ephesians 2:6).” See Ephesians 2:5, 8; Colossians 1:6. Under “Grace” sin is conquered (Romans 6:11; 8:3 and 4; 1 Corinthians 15:56 and 57). “Grace” may be defined as the unmerited and unlimited favor of God, or the love of God in action.
3. **The third is “THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULLNESS OF TIMES”**

(Ephesians 1:10 AV3), i.e. that period in the future when Christ will have fully set up His own Kingdom on earth.

*Verses 14 and 15 in today's study emphasize A and B, and the "eternal life" of verse 23 spreads from B into C.*

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## Day 97. Overseas Missions

*Matthew 28:16-20*

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Here are a few points for those who object to foreign missions.

- In view of the direct command given by our Lord to His disciples in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15, loyal Christians will obey without questioning. Obedience to a command is not dependent on our understanding the reason for it, or agreeing with it. If Acts 1:8 does not appeal to us, is it because we are not allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our lives?
- Those who remark "charity begins at home" may be asked, "If the followers of Christ had waited to convert every Jew before going abroad, when would Christianity have reached the United States?" Everyone in America has the opportunity to learn about Christian faith. If many neglect it, is this a reason for not engaging in evangelism abroad?
- Those who "do not believe in mission work" admit by their attitude that they have not themselves understood or experienced the boundless riches of Christian faith. If they had, there would be no hesitation in their desire to pass on to others the most priceless news ever published. Further they cannot pray the Lord's Prayer—the phrase "Your Kingdom come" obviously refers to the spreading of the kingdom of God throughout the whole world. (See Study 39).
- The cry, "Leave them alone, their own religions are good enough for them," is illogical, besides being untrue. Christianity is not unsuitable for "the heathen," though its presentation may have been in the past. A good Muslim may well be better than a bad Christian. But God wants both to be good Christians. Good conduct is not the final arbiter of our entry to Heaven—self-righteousness is not a viable alternative to God's righteousness which is received by faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 1:17; 3:21 and 22; 4:4 and 5). Jesus' claims on our lives are totally exclusive—"No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6) and the disciples taught likewise—"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Other religions are man's best efforts to reach out to God. Christianity is God reaching out in love to men.
- Other religions have institutionalized the immolation of widows, child prostitution, sexual depravity in "worship" ceremonies, the permanent

deprivation of certain classes of people simply on the basis of their family background, people living their whole lives in bondage to fear of demonic powers (which are real), polygamy, fatalism and the like. Those who are the loudest in their criticism of foreign missions seldom make any effort to investigate such matters and so such information as they have is often incorrect.

- Christianity has brought the emancipation of women, light instead of darkness, hope instead of hopelessness, satisfaction instead of superstition, hospitals, care of the aged, justice, honor and integrity. Can anyone be so selfish as to want to keep these gifts to himself? Christianity makes you care.

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## Day 98. Sunday Observance

*Mark 2:23-28*

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The Jewish Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, and the word *sabbath* means *cessation*, indicating rest from work (Genesis 2:3). The Hebrew word here translated "made it holy" is also translated "consecrated," or "separated." The rest day was changed to the first day of the week to mark the Resurrection of Christ. The observance of Sunday is, thus, a further proof of the Resurrection! (see Study 19).

Although there is much that is not common between Sunday and the old Jewish Sabbath, and although the details as to how we should now spend Sunday must be left to the individual, two principles regarding its observance may be emphasized.

1. **It is a day of worship.** Going regularly to a place of worship is valuable for more than one reason: It is an acknowledgment of God (see "Witness for Christ" in Study 26) and it is an example (see Study 47). Don't complain if you do not think you are getting anything out of it; go and see how much you can put into it. Worship is for God's benefit, not our own! See our Lord's example in Luke 4:16. There is value in corporate worship (Hebrews 10:25).
2. **It is a day of rest, and remember this with regard to our subordinates.** Don't start an exercise at a weekend unless it is absolutely necessary, for instance. From the lowest motive even, one day's rest in seven is necessary. During the 1914-1918 War it was found that output was not increased by keeping munition factories open on Sundays, and a government commission reported strongly against the practice. Remember, too, the failure of the 10 day week introduced into France after the revolution. See also Exodus 20:8-11; Psalm 122:1; Isaiah 58:13,14.

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## Day 99. The Christian and War

Acts 10:1-33

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See the booklet “May a Christian Serve in the Military” published by Officers’ Christian Fellowship. Respect is due to those who honestly think that the principles of Christianity and those of the Fighting Services are so opposed that no true Christian can join the latter. But consider the following:

1. **War is the result of man’s sin** (James 4:1 (AV)). Fallen man, until redeemed by Christ, will always tend to act for selfish advantage. War is an evil, and—human nature being what it is—it will continue in this dispensation (Matthew 24:6-7 and note on Study 96B).
2. **While killing by an individual on his own behalf is always condemned in the Bible** (Exodus 20:13; Leviticus 24:17; 1 John 3:15), taking of human life in the execution of justice or in battle is never made the responsibility of the individual. The same Law which condemned the unlawful taking of human life (i.e. murder) actually specified the death penalty (i.e. the lawful taking of life) as the only fit punishment for certain crimes.
3. **In the New Testament, where many officers and soldiers are mentioned, they are never told to abandon their calling** (see Luke 3:14, and 7:1-10; 1 Corinthians 7:20; Hebrews 13:17). In today’s study we find an officer, Cornelius, conspicuous for being a true Christian (verses 2, 22, 30).
4. **The Christian’s armor is typical of warfare** (Ephesians 6:11-18; 2 Timothy 2:3). If it were wrong to take part in warfare, would it be compared in this way? Evil professions such as prostitution are always used as examples of wicked conduct (Ezekiel 16:28).
5. **Many great and godly men of the Bible were highly proficient military leaders**—Abraham, Moses, Joshua, King David. Many officers and men have proved the reality of God in their profession and have found He helps them to be more efficient. If the profession of arms were wrong, would this be the case?
6. **Notice Matthew 5:9 says “Blessed are the peace-makers” not “the pacifists.”** Is it really moral to do nothing to put right an evident injustice? The response by Britain to the unprovoked aggression of Nazi Germany against Poland in 1939 is one example. If the earlier policy of appeasement (urged by pacifists) had continued, Hitler would have remained free to murder Jews and subjugate many peoples with extreme cruelty. Every sane person should loathe war and do everything possible to prevent it. True peace (a positive condition, not mere absence from war) follows righteousness. Note the order in Isaiah 32:17; Romans 14:17; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 3:17. The Christian outlook must be “Righteousness at any cost,” and not “Peace at any price,” for “Righteousness exalts a nation” (Proverbs 14:34).
7. **Action by the Armed Forces is often of exactly the same nature as action**

**by the police.** Romans 13:1-7 explains the duties of governments to protect the weak against the strong and to punish the wrong-doer while rewarding the just. Part of that delegated authority from God is the ultimate sanction of taking human life (4). Those who exercise such authority are accountable to God; our responsibility is to submit to the authorities (1 Peter 2:13) up to the point where their commands are in conflict with God’s (Acts 4:19), and to pray for them (1 Timothy 2:1 and 2).

It should be noted that we live in a provisional world order. This world will never be brought to total justice, righteousness and peace—these will only be experienced during Christ’s 1,000 year reign (Revelation 20:4-7) and in the New Heaven and the New Earth (Revelation 21:1). We can never be utopians because the Fall of Man has excluded such an eventuality. We are not passive, though. We must do all we can to relieve suffering and injustice and to improve the lot of our fellow man. Christians should be active in politics, in Third World relief and development projects and the like, provided we never lose sight of the greatest need of mankind, which is to know the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Day 100. God’s plan of Salvation

John 5:24

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An outline of God’s plan of salvation may be helpful. Man in his natural state is sinful.<sup>1</sup> He is spiritually dead.<sup>2</sup> Being “convicted of sin,”<sup>3</sup> he repents<sup>4</sup> and confesses his sin to Christ.<sup>5</sup> He is redeemed<sup>6</sup> by the propitiatory<sup>7</sup> sacrifice<sup>8</sup> of Jesus Christ. Through faith<sup>9</sup> in His blood<sup>10</sup> he is forgiven,<sup>11</sup> he is justified<sup>12</sup> in the sight of God, becomes regenerate<sup>13</sup> (having accepted Eternal Life as a free gift from God<sup>14</sup>) and is sanctified.<sup>15</sup> He claims the gift of the Holy Spirit,<sup>16</sup> by Whom is produced the “new birth.”<sup>17</sup> The Holy Spirit will indwell the “new believer,” imparting power and spiritual gifts to live a life of deliverance from sin<sup>18</sup> and of victory over temptation, the world, the flesh, and the devil,<sup>19</sup> in full-time service of God,<sup>20</sup> manifesting the fruit of the Spirit,<sup>21</sup> to His glory,<sup>22</sup> watching for His return,<sup>23</sup> and ready when the call comes, to go gladly to be forever “with Christ which is better by far.”

**The superscript numbers refer to the paragraphs that follow:**

1. Studies 12 and 13. The consequences of sin are threefold: debt, which requires forgiveness, bondage, which requires redemption, alienation, which requires reconciliation. Christ, by His death, has procured all this and more for us and, therefore, His ministry is final.

2. Ephesians 2:1.

3. Luke 15:18.

4. The word translated “repentance” really means “to change one’s mind” or “to make a U turn.” This change will be accompanied by sorrow for sin, but this alone is not enough, it must be accompanied by change of action. Be clear on the difference between sorrow for the discomfort cause by sin (remorse) and true repentance which leads to restoration (2 Corinthians 7:10). Simon Peter repented of his denial of Jesus and was restored; Judas Iscariot was remorseful about his betrayal of Jesus, did not repent and ended up taking his own life. See Matthew 21:28, 29; Acts 3:19; Luke 13:3; 24:47. Without faith repentance becomes despair; without repentance faith is presumption.

5. 1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 32:5.

6. “To redeem” really means “to reclaim by paying the price.” See note on Study 70. The Blood of Jesus Christ redeems from the guilt and penalty of sin (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

7. “Propitiatory” means “that which appeases.” There is no thought of placating a vengeful God, but rather of satisfying justice and holiness. See note on Study 10.

8. The sacrifice of Christ is:

- penal (Galatians 3:13)
- substitutional (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24)
- voluntary (John 10:18)
- redemptive (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 6:20)
- propitiatory (Romans 3:25)
- reconciling (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19; Colossians 1:21, 22)
- effective (Romans 5:9, 10; Ephesians 2:13; Hebrews 9:11, 12, 26; 10:10-17; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5)
- revealing (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10)

9. Faith. See Study 80. Ephesians 2:8. “Faith” = “Faith in His blood” which means trusting in the death of Jesus Christ, and not in our own good deeds. See Study 71, John 3:36.

10. For a parallel demonstration (sometimes known as a biblical “type”) of protection by, and safety through, the precious Blood of Christ read Exodus 12 (Study 30).

11. Romans 4:7; 1 John 1:9.

12. The believing sinner is justified, because Christ having borne his sins on the Cross, is “become for us...righteousness” (1 Corinthians 1:30, Isaiah 64:6). “God justifies the believing man not for the worthiness of his belief, but for the worthiness of Him Who is believed.” We cannot therefore take any credit for our salvation—all the glory belongs to God.

13. A regenerate man is a man who has been given a new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36:26) with a new nature, not an old nature improved. See note on Study 13 and Romans 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; 2 Peter 1:4.

14. Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11-13; Revelation 22:17. It is a narrow gate that leads to life: so low that one must stoop in humility to get through, so narrow that we have to go alone, so confined in space that we must forsake all hindrances (Matthew 7:13 and 14).

15. Sanctification signifies being made holy and set apart for God. The Holy Spirit makes good to us that which Christ achieved on the Cross, where He “became sin for us,” i.e. took our sinful nature, and gave us His nature. (2 Corinthians 5:21; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 8:1-4). Note:

- The old man...the life of evil nature...crucified (Romans 6:6).
- The body of sin...the instrument through which the “old man” worked...destroyed, i.e. annulled or made ineffective (Romans 6:6).
- The body of sins...the acts committed by the “old man”...put off. Colossians 2:11.

16. See Studies 21 and 22.

17. John 3:3.

18. Romans 6:14. The “self” problem continues after the “sin” problem is solved.

19. 1 Corinthians 10:13. See Study 59.

20. Studies 69 and 70. Luke 9:23.

21. See Studies 73 to 82.

22. John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.

23. Mark 13:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Study 91.

# APPENDIX A

## Methods Of Bible Study

### 1. BOOK STUDY

Compare the gospels, remembering that generally speaking:

	Wrote his gospel to:	Emphasizing Jesus as:	Specially Recording:
<b>Matthew</b>	the Jews	The King	Sermons to the people
<b>Mark</b>	the Romans	The Servant	Miracle and Action
<b>Luke</b>	the Greeks	The Divine Man	Parables
<b>John</b>	the Christians	The Savior The Son of God	Talks with disciples

A fourfold gospel to reveal God in the terms of human life.

### 2. CHAPTER STUDY

After reading a chapter, or the daily study, note the following five points:

1. Subject. State principal contents in a sentence.
2. Principal persons.
3. Leading lesson. Truth most emphasized.
4. What does it teach about Jesus Christ? (Luke 24:27).
5. Most helpful verse. Ponder and mark it. Also ask yourself the questions at the end of the Foreword.

### 3. TEXT STUDY

Choose a verse from each day's reading and write it down on a weekly or monthly

paper prepared by days. This ensures finding a helpful thought daily, and the actual writing down is an aid to memory.

### 4. CHARACTER STUDY

Of such persons as Moses, Joseph, Gideon, Joshua, Nehemiah, Daniel, David, Mary, Paul, Peter, or others.

### 5. SUBJECT STUDY

Study all references in the Bible on such subjects as faith, holiness, worthiness, glory. Some people find it helpful to use colored markers, for example, on all references to:

Sin .....in Black  
 Salvation .....in Red  
 Prayer .....in Green  
 Promises .....in Brown  
 Second Coming .....in Yellow

### 6. WORD STUDY

Also with a concordance look up all references to certain words.

### 7. TYPE STUDY

Get a good book on the subject and you will be surprised how interested you become. Here are some examples:

- Abraham as a type of God the Father, Isaac as a type of Jesus Christ His Son, and the ram as type of substitution: Gen. 22:1-14.
- Moses as a type of Christ the Deliverer, in Exodus.
- Joshua as a type of Christ, the "Captain of our salvation" Hebrews 2:10, 11.
- The wanderings of the children of Israel as a type of the experiences of Christians.
- Joseph as a type of Christ's rejection by the professed people of God, yet bringing blessing to the world.

## APPENDIX B

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### Suggested Subjects for Bible Study

1. God's remedy for sin as shown in Leviticus. Key verse, Leviticus 17:11.
2. Obedience. Key verse, 1 Samuel 15:22.
3. Satisfaction. Key verse, Psalm 107:9.
4. The "Fools" (or foolish) in the Bible: Numbers 22:29; Judges 16:10, 13, 15; 1 Samuel 25:25; 26:21; Job 5:2, 3; Psalm 14:1; Proverbs 10:8, 10, 14, 18, 23; 11:29; 12:15, 16; 13:16; 14:16; 15:2, 5, 14; 17:7, 10, 12, 16, 21, 28; 18:2; 19:1, 10; 20:x3; 23:9; 24:7; 26:1, 4-12; 27:3, 22; 28:26; 29:9, 11, 20; 30:32; Ecclesiastes 2:14; Matthew 7:26; 25:2; Luke 11:40; 12:20; 24:25; Romans 1:21; 1 Corinthians 1:20, 27; 3:18; 15:36; Galatians 3:1; 3:3; Ephesians 5:4, 17; 1 Timothy 6:9; 2 Timothy 2:23; Titus 3:3.
5. Statements of our Lord in the Gospels emphasized by the preface, "I tell you the truth." Matthew 5:18, 26; 6:16; 8:10; 10:15, 23, 42; 11:11; 13:17; 16:28; 17:20; 18:3, 13, 18; 19:23, 28; 21:21, 31; 23:36; 24:2, 34, 47; 25:12, 40, 45; 26:13, 21, 34; Mark 3:28; 8:12; 9:12; 10:15, 29; 12:43; 14:30; Luke 4:24; 11:51; 12:37; 13:35; 23:43; John 1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:26, 32, 47; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:16, 20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23.
6. The connection between miracles of healing, faith, and acts of worship.
7. Suffering. Key epistle, 1 Peter, but also see John 9:1-3; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 11:23-33; Hebrews 12:4-11; James 1:2-4; Luke 22:39-46.
8. Our Lord's command to those who follow Him.
9. The working of the Holy Spirit in Acts and Ephesians: Acts 1:2, 5, 8, 16; 2:4, 17, 18, 33, 38; 4:8, 25, 31; 5:3, 9, 32; 6:3, 5, 10; 7:51, 55; 8:15-19, 29, 39; 9:17, 31; 10:19, 38, 44, 45, 47; 11:12, 15, 16, 24, 28; 13:2, 4, 9, 52; 15:8, 28; 16:6, 7; 19:2, 6; 20:22, 23, 28; 21:4, 11; 28:25. Ephesians 1:13, 17; 2:2, 18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 30; 5:18; 6:17, 18.
10. The word "Resurrection" in Acts 1:22; 2:31; 4:2, 33; 17:3 (rise), 18; 17:32; 23:6, 8; 24:15, 21; 26:23 (rise).
11. Saint Paul's missionary journeys in Acts.
  12. Conscience. Key verses, 1 Samuel 25:31; Acts 24:16; Romans 2:15; 13:5; 1 Corinthians 4:4; 8:7, 10, 12; 10:25-29; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 4:2; 5:11; 1 Timothy 1:5, 19; 3:9; 4:2; 2 Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:15; Hebrews 9:9, 14; 10:22; 13:8; 1 Peter 3:16, 21 (see also Ephesians 3:12, 1 John 3:19-21.)
  13. Justification in Romans, chapters 3-5.
  14. Satan's cunning. Key verse, 2 Corinthians 11:14.
  15. Comfort in 2 Corinthians 1 and 7.
  16. Promise. Key chapter, Galatians 3.
  17. Grace. Key verses, Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 4:16.
  18. Rest. Key chapter, Hebrews 4.
  19. Perseverance. Key verse, James 1:4.
  20. The "withouts" of Hebrews 4:15; 9:14; 9:22, 28; 10:23; 11:6; 12:8; 13:5; 13:11-13.
  21. "Let us" in Hebrews 4:1, 11, 14, 16; 6:1; 10:22, 23, 25; 12:1, 2, 28; 13:13, 15.
  22. Spiritual gifts. Romans 11:29; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:7, 11-13; Hebrews 2:4; 1 Peter 4:8-11.
  23. Riches. Key epistle, Ephesians, especially 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16.
  24. The Christian's attitude to civil authority. Key chapter, Romans 13, but also see 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 3:13.



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