

Becoming a Follower of Jesus!

By Pastor Mick Catron

A Basic Growth Manual

*A Discipleship Course for both New Believers as
well as “older” ones who want to stay on track*

“Becoming A Follower of Jesus!”

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Introduction

Often in our Christian growth, we emphasize learning, learning, and more learning. We can even deceive ourselves to believe that learning more and more about God and the Bible is the same as spiritual growth. It isn't. There's nothing wrong with learning - it's sorely needed. But let's be honest about it. It's the next step - putting what we've learned into action that really causes the growth. Consider the following words of scripture:

* Matt. 28:18-20 *"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them **TO OBEY** everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"* (NIV)

* James 1:23-25 *"For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an **EFFECTUAL DOER**, this man shall be blessed in what he does."*

This study is not intended to be one of systematic theology or doctrine. Rather this study is designed to help believers in Christ become disciples of Christ - i.e., doers of the Word. After an introduction to the Bible and how to read it with understanding, we will be looking at 12 very basic commands that were given to Jesus' followers, by our Lord himself and/or the apostles, that show us how to really follow Jesus. Jesus was very clear, *"If you love me, you will **OBEY** what I command."* (John 14:15).

Topics covered in this study:

- Topic: #1 - "Introduction To The Bible"
- Topic: #2 - "Understanding The Bible"
- Topic: #3 - "Faith That Is Alive"
- Topic: #4 - "The Need To Repent"
- Topic: #5 - "Water Baptism"
- Topic: #6 - "Love One Another"
- Topic: #7 - "Prayer"
- Topic: #8- "Witnessing"
- Topic: #9 - "The Importance of God's Word (the Bible)"
- Topic: #10 - "The Church Acting Like The Biblical Church"
- Topic: #11 - "Taking Communion"
- Topic: #12 - "Biblical Giving"

This study can be used for both one-on-one discipleship as well as in a small group format. A leader's guide is also available. God bless you as you seek to become a fully devoted follower of our glorious Lord Jesus!!

Topic: #1 - "Introduction to the Bible"

I. What is the Bible?

- A. The word "Bible" comes from a Latin word that simply means a collection of writings
- B. The Bible is a collection of 66 separate "books" divided into 2 parts: *The Old and New Testaments*
- C. Christians see the Bible as the only basis of authority in understanding the Christian faith & practice
- D. In this session we want you to meet the Bible and discover how to find verses, and to learn a little about it

II. Basic Divisions of the Bible - Find the following in your Bible:

- A. Old and New Testaments
- B. Books / Chapters / Verses
- C. Table of Contents / Tables / Maps / Glossary / Various Helps

III. The Old Testament (39 Books)

- A. Explains the restored relationship God established with His people through a substitutionary sacrifice. This was a picture of the later sacrifice of Jesus to bring forgiveness of sin and restored relationship.
* *c.f., Leviticus 1-4 - approaching God required that the penalty of death because of sin be carried out*
- B. Contains the story of the people of God from the time of creation until about 300 years before Christ.
- C. It's writing covers a span of over 900 years
- D. Represents over 30 different authors from a wide spectrum of vocation and social status
- E. It's Division is into FOUR thematic, rather than chronological, sections

Look up each of the following examples to better acquaint yourself with finding Bible passages

- 1. **The Books of Moses** (or "The Law") - **Genesis to Deuteronomy**
EXAMPLE: The Ten Commandments - Exodus 20:1-17
- 2. **The Books of History** - **Joshua to Esther**
EXAMPLE: David & Goliath - 1 Samuel 17:42-50
- 3. **The Books of Poetry** - **Job to Song of Solomon**
EXAMPLE: The Shepherd Psalm - Psalm 23
- 4. **The Books of Prophecy** - **Isaiah to Malachi**
EXAMPLE: The Prophecy of the Christ's Birth - Isaiah 9:6-7

IV. The New Testament (27 Books)

- A. Explains the contractual relationship God established with His people through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. This "New" covenant (through Jesus' sacrifice) replaced the "Old" (through animal sacrifice).
* *see 1 Cor. 10:16; Eph. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Hebrews 10:1-14; 13:11-12*
- B. It's writing covered a span of over 50 years
- C. Represents 9 different authors
- D. It's Division
 - 1. **The Life of Christ** - "Gospels"- **Matthew to John**
EXAMPLE: John 3:16
 - 2. **The History of the Early Church** - **Acts**
EXAMPLE: The conversion of the Apostle Paul - Acts 9:1-6
 - 3. **Letters of the Apostles** (usually to actual 1st century Church Fellowships) - **Romans to 3rd John**
EXAMPLE: The Love Chapter - 1 Cor. 13
 - 4. **Prophecy** - **Revelation**
EXAMPLE: The Return of Jesus - Revelation 19:11-16

V. Exploring The Bible - Look up the following verses and jot down what it says God's Word is, or does:

- 1. Ps. 119:130 - _____
- 2. Isa. 55:11 - _____
- 3. Eph. 6:17 - _____
- 4. James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23 - _____
- 5. John 15:3 - _____
- 6. Rom. 10:17 - _____

Topic: #2 - "Understanding The Bible"

Text: Psalm 1

Introduction

As we read the Holy Scripture we expect to gain an understanding of what is written. Though it's true that knowing the culture and history surrounding a passage will certainly enhance our understanding, it's also true that even the novice can gain a basic understanding of the passage by faithfully asking three basic questions as he or she reads. Scripture should be read *actively*, not *passively*. Try to imagine yourself in the role of the original writer and receivers and visualize their responses, etc.

II. Three Key Questions

A. WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

Too often people will read into a verse something it doesn't really say (kind of like interpersonal communication between the sexes!). In this step, we want to simply observe the "who", "what", "when", "why", and "where" of the passage - collect the FACTS. We should be able to observe the text and accurately summarize what's there. It's also good to note what the text doesn't say. At this step you're just gathering the facts, not trying to interpret them. The studious term for this step is "Observation."

*Try this with a well known verse like **John. 3:16**. Make a list of the "who's" and "what's" that it says. What about the motivation for what God did? Collect as many facts as you can. As you get deeper into Bible Study, you'll find tools that also help to make deeper observations - such as what is the "greek" word (the original language of the New Testament) for "love" in this verse. That's a glimpse of things way ahead. For now, collect the data solely from your Bible.*

B. WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

Don't ask this question until you've done a good job on the first one. The meaning can only really be arrived at after some good observations are made. In Bible School, they call this step, "Interpretation." The purpose is to discover the significance of the text. As a general rule, a text will only have only one real meaning, or "interpretation" - but many potential applications.

Try this question with the same verse as above. What does it mean that God loved the world? Does it mean planet, or people? (A clue is the word "whoever" or "whosoever" [depending on your translation] - does that sound like planet or people?? Meditate & speculate - then be sure to evaluate your conclusion. Any true interpretation will be consistent with the rest of God's Word.

C. WHAT APPLICATION DOES THIS HAVE FOR ME?

This is perhaps the most practically important of the three questions (but keep it in it's right order!) because it presents our heart as fertile ground to the Holy Spirit in which He will bring personal growth and cultivate Christ-likeness in us. One will think of work, school, ministry, parenting, relationships, etc., that God's principal will apply to in his specific life situation.

With the above cited verse as an example, what application might you draw? For example, "God must really love me. He gave a lot so that I could have eternal life with Him." As well, the question could arise - "have I really accepted His love." Things like that.

This third question ought to be asked with prayer that God would do His work in your life.

II. Let's Try It! Applying The Questions To Psalm 1

A. Verses 1-3

1. What is the man called who is described in these verses? _____

2. What three things does this man avoid? _____

3. What does he do? _____

4. To what is this man compared? _____

5. What is the significance of this comparison? _____

B. Verses 4-6

1. Who is described in these verses? _____

2. To what is he compared? _____

3. What is the significance of this comparison? _____

4. What is the end of this person? _____

5. What is the basic difference between these two types of person (see v. 1-2)? _____

C. Overall Passage Questions

1. What might the “walk, stand, sit” of verse 1 seem to imply? _____

2. What does it mean to “delight” oneself in the Word of the Lord? _____

3. What does it mean to “meditate” on the Word of the Lord? _____

4. What does the symbolism of the “leaf not withering” mean? _____

D. PERSONAL APPLICATION - Are you presently more like the tree or the chaff? Which would you rather be? How can you become the one you want to be? _____

Topic: #3 - "Faith That Is Alive"
Text: Galatians 2; James 2

Introduction

Remember that Scripture should be read *actively, not passively*. Be sure to keep asking those three key questions - 1) What does the text say? 2) What does the text mean? 3) What application does the text have for me? Also, try to imagine yourself in the role of the original writer and receivers and visualize their responses, etc.

In this study, we will look at what the Scripture says about faith and good works. For practice, look up Eph. 2:8-9. It speaks of faith being an integral part of our salvation. We'll see what *Living Faith* is and what its result is in our lives. We'll also see what faith by itself is called.

I. Read Galatians 2:16

(What Does The Text Say?)

1. About being justified (2 things)? _____

2. About faith? _____

3. About keeping the law? _____

4. What "law" is being referred to? _____
5. Other observations? _____

(What Does The Text Mean?)

6. How many ways are there to be saved according to this verse? _____
7. How does a person receive justification (or "salvation")? _____
8. What are you personally trusting in for your salvation - good works, or a relationship with Jesus? _____

II. Look up James 2

This passage describes what true faith is and what it will result in. Watch for the contrast between true faith, and phony "faith."

A. Verses 14-17

1. What kind of *faith* is described in these verses? _____
2. How is this *faith* demonstrated? _____

B. Verses 18-20

1. Who's *faith* is referred to here? _____
 2. What kind of *faith* do demons have? _____
 3. What does their *faith* result in? _____
-

C. Verses 21-24

1. Who's *faith* is referred to here? _____
 2. How was his *faith* demonstrated? _____
-
3. What does it mean that "*his faith was made complete [or, "perfected"] by what he did*"?

 4. When did God see him as justified? (compare v. 23 with Genesis 15:5-6 - Abraham was 85 yrs. old at the time) _____
 5. When did man see him as justified? (compare v. 21 with Genesis Gen. 22:1-2 - Abraham was about 115 yrs. old at the time) _____
 6. In Abraham's case, did his faith (or belief) give birth to action, or did his action give birth to faith? _____
-
7. How does this Abraham's action differ from the type referred to in Galatians? _____
-

III. Summary / Conclusion

- A. What is the difference between *living faith* and *dead faith*? _____
-
- B. What kind of things should be seen in our lives if our *faith* is alive and real? _____
-
- C. How does John 14:15 apply to this topic? _____
-
-

Topic: #4 - “The Need To Repent”
Text: Mark 1:15; Matthew 16:24-26; Colossians 3:1-13

Introduction

Remember, Scripture should be read *actively, not passively*. Be sure to keep asking those three key questions - 1) What does the text say? 2) What does the text mean? 3) What application does the text have for me?

In this study, we will look at a direct command, then at some clarifying Scripture about how to obey it in the heart, and not just outwardly.

I. Read Mark 1:14 - *The Command*

1. What is the command of Jesus here (2 things)? _____

2. What is the “Gospel”? _____

3. What does “repent” mean (look it up if necessary)? Can you think of a modern day example of “repenting”? _____

4. Can a person be a true Christian and yet not repent? _____

II. Read Matthew 16:24-26 - *Doing it from the heart*

1. What three things does Jesus call His followers to do, and what does each one mean?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
2. How do 21st century people seek “to save (preserve the quality of) his own life”? _____

3. Apart from martyrdom, how can someone “lose his life for me for Jesus”? _____

4. What are we to turn away from? _____

5. How does Isa. 53:6 apply to this discussion? _____

5. "Repenting" isn't just turning FROM something, it's also turning TO something else. Whose way are we to turn "from" and whose way are we to turn "to"? _____

III. Look Up Colossians 3:1-13 - *Attitudes and actions that accompany repentance*

1. What does v. 1-2 tell the believer to do (2 "do's" and 1 "don't")? _____

2. According to v. 3-4, why are we to do these things? _____

3. According to v. 5-9, what are we to "put to death" or "put off"? _____

4. According to v. 12-13, what are we called to "put on" or "clothe selves" with? _____

IV. Summary

In consideration of the Scriptures we have looked at, how would you summarize the Bible teaching on "repentance"?

Topic: #5 - "Water Baptism"
Text: Romans 6:3-4 and various

Introduction

In this study, we will look at the significance of being baptized in water and how it fits into the life of the obedient Christian. To help understand "baptism," there are THREE major types of Christian baptism referred to in the New Testament; Two happen on the inside, and one is on the outside. Each is said to be "into" something different and has a unique significance. Here they are:

1. **1 Cor. 12:13** - being baptized BY the Holy Spirit, INTO Christ. This is a inner spiritual event. It happened when you became a Christian and you became identified with (or "in") Christ and His forever family.
2. **Mark 1:7-8; Acts 1** - being baptized BY Jesus, INTO the Holy Spirit, another inner spiritual event with outward effects. This baptism is to immerse you into the Holy Spirit and results in spiritual empowerment for witness and ministry.
3. **Acts 8:35-38** - being baptized BY another person (often a Pastor), INTO water. This is the outward baptism that we all can see and celebrate when it happens. That's the one this lesson is really all about.

Let's look at the command for water baptism and then it's significance and relation to salvation.

I. The Command - *How does water baptism seem to fit with the whole concept of following Jesus and becoming a disciple?*

- A. Matt. 28:19 _____
- B. Acts 2:38 _____

II. How Is Water Baptism Related To The Faith That Brings Salvation (c.f. study #3)?

Observe who is involved and if and when they were saved, and if and when they were baptized:

- A. Luke 23:39-43 _____
- B. Acts 10:43-48 _____
- C. Acts 2:38 _____

III. What Is The Significance Of Being Baptized?

A. A mini Greek lesson

1. "Baptizo", the Greek word for our English "baptize" = "submerge an object into a specific medium so that the object undergoes a change, now taking on or reflecting characteristics of that which it was submerged into."
2. Two 1st century examples:
 - a. Cloth - when "baptized" into a dye became _____
 - b. Cucumbers - when "baptized" into vinegar, became _____

B. The spiritual application / symbolism - *Read Romans 6:3-4*

1. Of the 3 types of baptism above, which one is directly referred to in v. 3? (INTO what?)

2. What are the two areas of identification we have with Jesus Christ in v. 4? _____

3. How is water baptism symbolic of both of these aspects? _____

C. Should baptism be a private or public expression? (*see Matt. 10:32-33*) Why? _____

D. What are the prerequisites for being baptized? (*see Acts 2:38; 9:37*) _____

E. What about being rebaptized? (*see Acts 19:1-7*) When should this be done? _____

IV. Conclusion / Personal Challenge

A. In consideration of the Scriptures we have looked at, how would you summarize the purpose of *water baptism*? _____

B. What are the two reasons a Christian ought to be baptized? _____

C. If *you* haven't been baptized ***after*** having begun a personal relationship with Christ, is there anything that would now stop you from doing so? _____

Topic: #6 - "Love One Another"
Text: John 13:34; 1 Cor. 13:1-13

Introduction

In this study, we will see two commands regarding the necessity to love others. We will also look at a Biblical description of how God's love in us is demonstrated to others.

I. The Command To Love (*Greek work = Agape*)

- A. A mini Greek lesson - there are three very common words for "love" in the New Testament
 - 1. "Agape" - *decision & commitment to seek the best for the one loved, regardless of the personal sacrifice it may cost the "lover."* Per Strongs Concordance, *agapao* embraces the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety in making a beneficial choice on the receivers behalf.
 - 2. "Philadelphia" - *fraternal affection, fondness, commitment to friendship*
 - 3. "Eros" - *physical expressions of love - the word "erotic" comes from this word*

Summarize the following:

B. Lev. 19:18 [Heb. = "*ahab*"- akin to philadelphia] _____

C. John 13:34-35 [*Agape*] _____

D. Luke 6:27 [*Agape*] _____

E. 1 Thess. 4:9-10 [*1st = Philadelphia; 2nd = Agape*] _____

F. What is the source of the kind of love the Bible is talking about? (Gal. 5:22) _____

II. How Biblical Love Will Look - 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

A. How would you summarize v. 1-3? _____

B. In v. 4-7, what is love said to do? _____

C. In v. 4-7, what is love said NOT to do? _____

IV. Conclusion / Personal Challenge

A. How would you rate yourself (on a scale of 0-10) as one who loves according to the above description with:

1. your spouse _____	5. your in-laws _____
2. your kids _____	6. those who share your Christian beliefs _____
3. your co-workers _____	7. those who are not believers _____
4. your parents _____	8. those who ridicule your beliefs _____

B. How can you increase your rating? _____

C. If you are holding bitterness or anger toward anyone right now, it will hinder you with regard to effectively loving Christ and showing Christ's love to others. Is there anyone(s) that God is impressing you to forgive and/or resolve a hurtful relationship with? _____

Topic: #7 - "Prayer"
Text: Matthew 6:5-15

Introduction

In this study, we will see the importance of prayer and the pattern that Jesus gave us to help direct us when we pray. Prayer is a relationship of coming to God and both sharing our heart with Him, as well as listening for what He would desire to share with us as well.

I. The Command To Pray

What do the following passages indicate regarding prayer?

- A. 1 Thess. 5:17 _____
- B. 1 Tim. 2:8 _____
- C. Col. 4:2 _____
- D. Acts 2:42 _____
- E. What are the two aspects of prayer? _____

II. Jesus' Teaching on Prayer - Matthew 6:5-9

- A. Read the first word of v. 5, 6, 7. What is the implication? _____

- B. How would you describe the difference between the prayers in v. 6 & 7? _____

- C. What are some reasons people feel uncomfortable or embarrassed about praying out loud around other people? _____

- D. How are we instructed NOT to pray (v. 5, 7)? _____

- E. What does the *how* (NIV), *after this manner* (KJV), or *in this way* (NASB) of v. 9 imply? _____

III. The Pattern of Prayer - Matt. 6:9-13

A. What two things are emphasized about God in v. 9? (c.f., Rom. 8:15) _____

B. If v. 10 is prayed from a sincere heart, what does that mean about the one praying?

C. Why doesn't v. 11 say *give us . . . our monthly, or annual, etc. bread?* _____

D. According to v. 12, what is the two-fold request presented? Do you think this is there for the benefit of Jesus, or for his disciples? _____

IV. Some Biblical Examples Of Things To Pray For

Mt. 26:41 _____

Luke 6:28 _____

Luke 22:32 _____

Eph.1:18 _____

Phil.1:9 _____

Col. 1:9 _____

2 Thes. 3:1 _____

Heb.13:18 _____

James 5:16 _____

3 Jn.1:2 _____

V. Conclusion / Personal Challenge

Using the acronym "A-C-T-S" way to pray. This is a helpful way to direct your communication to God in prayer. Remember, prayer is not just a shopping list to God of what we'd like, it's the expression of a real and love relationship with our Father through Jesus Christ.

A - Adoration (Ps. 34:1)

C - Confession (1 Jn. 1:9)

T - Thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6)

S - Supplication (Phil. 4:6)

After you've shared your heart, concerns, etc., don't forget to listen for the direction of the Holy Spirit as you spend time in prayer. Don't just talk. Look for Him to also put in your heart specific scripture He wants to bring to your attention, words of comfort and encouragement, people that you are to pray for and / or reach out to, and various tasks he puts on your heart to do. As you receive direction from Him, make sure it's Biblical [He won't lead you contrary to the Word]. Then obey Him.

Topic: #8- “Witnessing”
Text: Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; and various

Introduction

Let’s start our study by answering some questions:

1. What is a witness? _____
2. What is a testimony? _____

In reality, all persons are witnesses almost everyday of their lives for they tell, show, or demonstrate something to another. In today’s study, we will see the important role God has given us as witnesses for Him. He could have decided to use angels - but He didn’t! He lets us get in on the excitement!

I. The Command of Christ

Matt. 28:18-20

- A. Who was Jesus talking to in this passage? _____
 - B. What does He tell them to do? _____
-

Acts 1:8

- A. What is the scope of witnessing to be (i.e., *how far*)?

- B. How is this to be accomplished?

John 3:16-18 & Col. 1:13-14 & John 14:6

- A. Why is it important that we give witness to the gospel? What happens to one who rejects Christ?

II. Two Ways We Are To Witness

- A. By Our _____ (Matt. 5:16)
 1. What does it mean to “shine”? _____
 2. What are some of the behaviors / attitudes that would suggest that God IS NOT the real Lord in a person’s life (Gal. 5:19-21)? _____
-

3. What are some of the behaviors / attitudes that would suggest that God IS the real Lord in a person's life (Gal. 5:19-21)?

B. By Our _____ (1 John 1:3)
What do these verses teach or show about witnessing?

1. Ps. 107:2 _____
2. 1 Peter 3:15, 16? _____
3. John 9:13-25 [note v. 25 - what did the man tell]? _____

III. A Simple Presentation of the "Gospel" (a.k.a., "The Roman Road")

Memorizing these verses is a great means of always being ready to share the good news:

Romans 3:10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:9-10 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

IV. Conclusion / Personal Application

A. How can you be a better witness for Christ?

B. Who is God indicating to you now that He wants you to pray for, that He would give you a chance to witness to them?

Topic: #9 - "The Importance of God's Word (the Bible)"
Text: 2 Timothy 3:10-17

Introduction

Let's start our study by reviewing what we've already learned about the Bible (*Lesson #1*):

1. What are the four basic divisions of the Old Testament?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. What is the central theme of the Old Testament? _____

3. What are the four divisions of the New Testament?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

4. What is the central theme of the New Testament? _____

5. What does Isa. 40:8 indicate about God's Word? _____

Isa. 55:11? _____

6. In Psalm 1, what is the difference between the one who is stable & bears fruit, and the one who is unstable and *blown around by the wind*? _____

I. Some Observations of 2 Tim. 3:10-15

A. Summarize Paul's comments re: Timothy in v. 10-11: _____

B. What instruction does He give Timothy (v. 14)? _____

C. According to v. 15, what can be obtained from the scriptures? _____

D. What is the prerequisite to the scripture having this effect? _____

II. Some Observations of 2 Tim. 3:16-17

A. What does it mean the all Scripture is “inspired” or “God-breathed” (greek: *theopneustos*)?

B. List the four distinct functions of the Scripture found in v. 16 and their significance:

C. What is the result of a person having a relationship with God’s Word (v. 17)?

D. What will this person be prepared for (v. 17)? _____

Personal Application

A. Knowing God’s Word is great but only part of the equation. Complete the following:

a. Knowing the Bible + not really following it = _____

b. Knowing the Bible + following it = _____

B. On a scale of 1-10, where would you rate your knowledge of the scriptures? _____

What can you do to move it closer toward a “10”? _____

C. On a scale of 1-10, where would you rate your consistency in obeying the Word? _____

What can you do to move it closer toward a “10”? _____

D. Some suggestions:

1. Start reading 15 min. per day. Read in one of the four gospels, Acts, or Romans to start.

2. The 4-finger hold on God’s Word:

a. R (for READ)

b. M (for MEMORIZE)

c. M (for MEDITATE)

d. O (for OBEY)

3. Partner with another who can honestly provide mutual accountability, then ask, “What has God showed you in His Word today?”

Topic: #10 - “The Church Acting Like The Biblical Church”
Text: Various

Introduction

This study has to do with the church. The church is an organism, not primarily an organization, and definitely not just a building. It is a living organism that according to scripture, has two specific lines of relationship - one “horizontal” and one “vertical”. What do you think they are?

- (1) “vertical” = _____
- (2) “horizontal” = _____

Today we will look at a variety of scriptures that instruct and challenge us to live as the church is to live:

I. The Big Picture

- A. Who is building up the church? (Mtt. 16:18): _____

- B. Who is trying to destroy the church? (same verse) _____

- C. How does he try to destroy (i.e., his strategy)? (1 Pet. 5:8) _____

- D. How can a life of regular church fellowship together deter the enemy’s efforts to destroy?

II. What The Church Is Designed To Look Like

- A. What is the church compared to in 1 Cor. 12:12-25? Why? _____

- B. Look up the following scripture and note how we are to respond to one another:
John 13:35 _____
Rom. 12:10 _____
Rom. 12:16 _____
Rom. 14:13 _____
Rom. 14:19 _____
Rom. 15:7 _____
Rom. 15:14 _____
Rom. 16:16 _____
1 Cor. 12:25 _____
Eph. 4:2 _____
Eph. 4:32 _____
Eph. 5:19 _____
1 Thes. 4:18 _____
1 Thes. 5:13 _____
Heb. 3:13 _____
Heb. 10:24 _____

James 4:11 _____
James 5:9 _____
James 5:16 _____
1 Pet. 4:9 _____
1 Pet. 4:10 _____
1 John 1:7 _____
1 John 3:11 _____

C. What was the pattern of the early church with regard to the frequency of their fellowship (Acts 2:46; Heb. 3:13)? _____

D. Why it is important that a Christian be in regular fellowship both with God and with other Christians:

Personal Application

A. When you get together with other believers, is your goal more *What can I receive* or *What can I give*? _____

B. What do you think the focus *should* be? _____

C. Based on the Biblical instruction above, how would you respond to the person who states that going to church once every week or two is plenty? _____

Topic: #11- “Communion”
Text: Luke 22:14-20 and various

Introduction

Why do Christians celebrate communion? Many do so because of tradition without understanding the real significance. Some religions teach it is necessary to be saved. Some teach that the elements actually become the literal flesh and blood of Christ. In our study, we will look at the Biblical teaching on communion to gain an understanding of the activity and the importance of our participating in it.

I. Some General Observations - Luke 22:14-20

- A. What was the occasion in this passage? _____
- B. What does v. 19 indicate re: the continued observance? _____
- C. What are the elements used and what are they said to be or represent? _____
- _____
- _____

II. The Relation of Communion with The Old Testament Passover Celebration

What was Passover all about?

- A. **Exodus 11** - The pending and final plague on Egypt that would result in Israel’s deliverance from 430 yrs. of slavery
- B. 12:1-6 - What were the Israelites to do? _____
- _____
- C. 12:7 - What were they to do with the Lamb’s blood? _____
- _____
- D. Do you see a symbol of anything in the specific positioning of the blood? _____
- _____
- E. 12:12-14 - What was the purpose / effect of the blood on the doors? _____
- _____
- F. 12:24-28 - Why were they to annually celebrate the memorial feast of the Passover? _____
- _____

In the annual Passover meal, what did the elements represent?

The Wine - _____

The Bitter Herbs - _____

The Unleavened Bread (also Deut. 16:3) - _____

How were the wine and the bread similar in their symbolism? _____

III. Jesus, Passover, and Communion

A. What is Jesus called in John 1:29? _____

B. What is Jesus called in 1 Pet. 1:18-19? _____

C. What is Jesus called in 1 Cor. 5:7? _____

D. How is Jesus the fulfillment of the Passover lamb? _____

E. What are the elements symbolic of?

Wine ("Fruit of the vine"): _____

Unleavened Bread: _____

F. What then is the *New Covenant* of Luke 22:20? _____

G. What is being proclaimed by our taking of communion? (see also 1 Cor. 11:26) _____

IV. Conclusion / Personal Application

A. What are things we can do to help us keep the correct focus when we take communion?

Topic: #12 - Biblical Giving

Text: Various

Introduction

The subject of *giving* is a touchy one. It shouldn't be. It really should be a joyful topic. But, some times we encounter those soliciting or pressuring us to give which results in reactions, not well thought out Biblical responses. The purpose of this study is take a summary look at what the Scripture teaches about giving - it's basis, motivation, and practice. As we approach this subject, it's very important to remember that we cannot buy our way into God's favor - He's already favored (or "graced") us by His mercy in redeeming us. This issue is not how can we manipulate God's love or His activity in our life, the issue MUST be like everything else we've studied in this course: *How can we honor and obey our Lord out of gratitude for what He's done in, and for us?*

I. The Command Given

A. Luke 6:38

1. What are the first two words of this verse? _____
2. Who was Jesus talking to? (see v. 20) _____

B. Mt. 6:2-4

1. What are the first four words of this verse? _____

C. Summarize the instruction:

D. What are three things that all can have and can give to God? (Three "T"'s)

Ti _____ - Trea _____ - Tal _____

II. A "Pre-giving" Understanding

A. Scan the offering for the temple in 1 Chron. 29:1-9

1. With what attitude did the people & the leaders give (v. 3, 6, 9)? _____

B. How could they give so willingly?? Read 1 Chron. 29:10-13

1. What did they understand about God? _____
2. What did they understand about themselves? _____

III. General Principals of Giving

A. Giving Must Be Done With The Right Heart

1. Prov. 3:9 _____
2. Mt. 6:20-21 _____

B. What is the "wrong" heart attitude with which to give?

1. 1 Tim. 6:5, 9-10 _____
2. Malachi 1:6-10 _____
3. Mt. 6:2 _____
4. Mt. 23:23 _____

C. What part of what we have are we to give back to God?

1. Prov. 3:9-10 _____

2. What is the difference between the “first-fruits” and the “leftovers”? _____
3. How much faith does it take to give God leftovers? _____
4. How much faith does it take to give God off the very top? _____

D. God generally gives more to those that are using the resources properly that He’s already given them (*except for certain seasons of testing and purifying*). What do these verses indicate?

1. Lk. 6:38 _____
2. Prov. 3:10 _____
3. Phil. 4:17-19 _____
4. Malachi 3:8-12 _____

IV. What About Tithing? (“Tithe” means 10%)

A. What is tithing?

1. A method of systematic giving introduced in the O.T. for the support and necessities of the temple and it’s priesthood, and on occasions, the widows, orphans, and foreigners
2. It was an *off the top - not the leftovers* - gift to honor God

B. Three purposes of tithing

1. 2 Chr. 31:4 _____
2. Mal. 3:8-10 _____
3. Mt. 6:21 _____

E. Is tithing for today — or just for under the law of Moses?

1. Please note that although the Old Testament Law institutionalized the Tithe, it was a principal of giving already instilled and practiced in God’s people long before the Law:
 - a. Gen. 14:20 _____
 - b. Gen. 28:22 _____
2. What did Jesus state about the tithe in Mt. 23:23? _____

Conclusion & Application

In the space below, write a summary of what God is teaching you with regard to the topic of giving. Is there anything specific that He is leading you to do with regard to your three “T”s - *time, treasure, talents*?
