

BIBLE STUDY PHASE- 3

GOOD SHEPHERD MINISTRY INTERNATIONAL



BIBLE STUDY-15: GENEROSITY

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.” (Ps.19:1,2).

Read also verses 3,4.

From this Psalm, we learn that God’s Creation (the heavens and the earth)

- **declare** the glory of God
- **proclaim** the work of His hands
- **pour forth** speech, and
- **display** knowledge.

We can learn from God’s Creation if we examine it carefully. Just as there are physical laws which bring order out of the chaos in the universe, God has also put into motion spiritual laws which govern life. One of these is the **Law of Generosity**. This teaches us that *“whoever sows generously will also reap generously”*

(2 Cor. 9:6).

A. PARTNERSHIP

Read 1 Cor.3:9; 2Cor.5:20; 2Cor.6:10.

As partners with God, it is important for us to understand where responsibilities lie:

1. Ownership Is With God

The earth is _____
_____” (Psalm 24:1).

See also Psalm 89:1; Job 41:11; 1 Chronicles 29:10-14.

We are not owners, but stewards. All ownership is with God. Every single created thing, living or not, ultimately belongs to Him – including everything material or immaterial that we may personally have in this life: possessions, careers, families.

He has given us all these things for us to enjoy (1 Tim 6:17); and when we realize that they still belong to God, we can rest in the assurance that God also has ultimate responsibility for them.

2. Stewardship Is with Us

We are not owners, but stewards. A steward manages and takes care of that which belongs to someone else. God owns everything; but as stewards, we manage and take care of it for Him. We have an obligation to be faithful to this stewardship.

The Lord holds us accountable for the special responsibility of managing and taking care of the things He has given us (read Mathew 25:14-30). When we understand this Owner-steward relationship that we enjoy with God's property, then it becomes easy to give.

Before God, stewardship covers every single thing that belongs to us:

a. Our Life (Acts 17:25; 1 Cor 6:19; Gal 2:20; Job 33:4).

*"...because He[God] Himself gives _____
_____ "(Acts 17:25)*

b. Our Time (Ps 90:12; Eph 5:15, 16; Col 4:5).

*"Teach us to _____
_____ " (Ps. 90:12)*

c. Our Talents And Abilities (1 Pet 4:10; 1 Cor 12:4-7, 11)

*"Each one should use whatever gift _____

_____ "(1Pet. 4:10)*

d. Our Possessions (Matt 6:19-21; Col 3:1,2)

"Do not store up _____

_____ where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

But store up for yourselves _____

_____, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where _____

_____ (Matt.6:19-21)

e. The Message Of The Gospel (1 Cor 4:1; 9:16,17; 1 Ti 6:20)

"Woe to me if _____" (1Cor.9:16)

Even so, many Christians still struggle to give (tithe), no matter how much they may want to. But the action that releases a believer in to the full blessings of good stewardship is **SURRENDER – the unreserved submission of one's entire life, possessions and plans to God's will and purpose.**

It is only when we give OURSELVES that we learn what it means to give some of the possessions (or money) God has given us.

B. GIVING IN THE EARLY CHURCH

"All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, _____

_____ ... No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had" (Acts 2:44, 45 and 4:32)

This basic attitude of the early Christians laid the foundation for every expression of giving that was to come later.

As the number of Christians multiplied, different methods of giving appeared. But all their giving expressed their understanding of STEWARDSHIP – that everything ultimately belongs to God.

1. The Church supported the Needy

In the early Church, special men were chosen to serve as “deacons” – helpers in the distribution of offerings and gifts for the widows and needy (see Acts 6:1-3). These men made it their ministry to channel all the giving to where there was a practical need.

2. Churches Gave Sacrificially to One Another

When the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were in a famine, the poor, suffering Gentile church helped them.

“Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in _____” For I testify that _____
_____” (2 Cor.8:2,3).

See also verses 1, 4.

3. The Church Supported Traveling Ministries

The Apostle Paul traveled from place to place establishing new churches. On some occasions, he worked with his hand to provide his own support (Acts 18:3; 2Ths 3:7-9)

On other occasions, the Philippian church showed the true spirit of giving which God commends, by supporting traveling ministries such as Paul.

“I have received full payment and even more; I am _____, now that I have received... the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God” (Phil 4:18). Read also verses 15-17.

4. Christians Worked To Be Able To Give

“He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, _____
_____” (Eph 4:28).

5. Giving Was The Proof Of Their Love

“At this time, your plenty will supply what they need...Therefore show [by giving]... the proof of your love...”
(2 Cor 8:14,24). (See also verses 7-15; 1 Cor 16:1,2; 1 John 3:17,18).

C. GOD’S PRINCIPLES OF GIVING

In 1 Corinthians 10:11, we are told to learn from Israel’s example. We are to apply the principles given them by God. At the same time we are to avoid the mistakes Israel (and the leaders) made in the wilderness. In the area of giving, we find some excellent guidelines that can help us in our giving:

1. God Expects Us To Begin With A Percentage

“Bring _____ [10% or one tenth] in to the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it”(Mal 3:10).

2. We Are To Give Systematically And Regularly

“Hezekiah gave orders to prepare storerooms in the temple of the Lord, and this was done. _____ and dedicated gifts...” (2 Chr 31:11,12).

3. We Are To Give The First And Best To The Lord

*“Honor the Lord with _____,
_____ ; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine”* (Prov 3:9,10).

MY COMMITMENT

I realize, through this study the importance of having a generous heart and attitude towards others. Today I commit myself to begin a life of giving by starting to tithe (give a tenth of my income to the Lord's work). I will also encourage and teach others to do the same

"But you are a chosen people... a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light"(1Pet 2:9).

Suggested Memory Verses:

1. 1Pet.4:10
2. Psalm 24:1
3. 2Cor.9:6
4. Prov.3:9,10
5. Mal.3:10



BIBLE STUDY-16: KINGDOM LIVING

A. CHANGE OF AUTHORITY

We have been delivered from Satan's dominion (rulership or headship). We are now under a whole new authority – that of the Lord Jesus.

As a believer begins growing in his new life in the Lord, he soon discovers that the only way we enjoy living in God's kingdom is in right RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS From Eph.1:17 and Phil.3: 10, what is the key to this relationship?

At the very beginning of our new life with God, this relationship takes two distinct forms:

1. Savior

This is the very first relationship we can ever have with Jesus. We cannot know God as Father or Friend until we first have had a revelation of Jesus as Savior – the One who died for us and rescued us from Satan's kingdom. Jesus has saved us from:

a. God's judgment (1Ths 1:10; 5:9; Rom: 5:9).

"Since we have been justified by His blood, how much more _____
_____*_____"* (Rom.5:9)

b. Satan's Power (Acts 26:18; Col.1:13; Heb.2:14; 1Jn.3:8).

"For He has rescued us from _____
_____*_____"* (Col.1:13)

c. **Our Own Selves** (Phil.3:19; 2Cor.5:15; Titus 3:3-6; 1Peter1:18)

"And He died for all, that those who live should _____

_____"(2Cor.5:15)

Look up these references and write down what each says of Christ the Savior:

a. **Heb.5:8-9:** _____

b. **Heb.2:10:** _____

c. **2Tim.1:10:** _____

2. Lord

Knowing Jesus as Savior brings us into God's Kingdom, but that is not where our relationship with Him ends.

Once we are inside His Kingdom, that relationship takes on dramatic new changes. Now we know him not merely as Savior but **as Lord!** He is King in His Kingdom (Col.2:6).

"Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed'; and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit'"(1 Cor12:3). See also John 13:13; Rom.1:4; 1Cor.8:6; 4:5).

When we enter the kingdom of light, we can enjoy what we were created for – allowing relation with the Lord. Because of this, when Jesus becomes Lord of our life, we find that His dominion in our lives brings us out of the chaos of sin into divine order and peace. See Col.2:9, 10; 1Cor.8:6.

"...yet for us there is but _____

_____” (1Cor.8:6)

B. THE MODEL CITIZEN

“Let your attitude toward life be that of Christ Jesus himself...” (Phil. 2:5, Philips). Jesus, though King of the Kingdom, became a servant. He is the example of what the true citizen of His Kingdom is like.

“You call Me _____ . Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash another’s feet. I have set _____

_____”(John: 13:13-15).

Read also John 13:5-17; Matt.20:26-28; Luke 22:27.

C. SUBJECTS OF THE KING

As members of Christ’s Kingdom, we enter into a Master-servant relationship with Him (Mat: 6:24)

Jesus came to do His Father’s will (Heb: 10:5-9). In His day to Day life, He displayed what the lifestyle of the Kingdom is all about: living to please God (Eph: 5:8-10). We are to have this servant heart, just as He had a servant’s heart.

Many Christians do not like this concept of being a servant because it seems to make one person inferior to another. But in the Bible, we find our interesting paradoxes:

1. In slavery, There is Freedom

"But now that you have been set free from sin and _____

_____ "(Rom:6:22). Read also verses Rom.6:16-23; 12:1;

1 Corinthians 7:22; 2Cor:3:17; Eph: 6:6, 7; 1Pet:2:16.

2. In Being A Servant, There is Greatness

"The greatest among you will be _____

_____ " (Mat: 23:11, 12). See also Matt. 20:26, 27; Mark: 9:35; 10:43; John 12:26.

3. In Humility, There Is Exaltation

"Therefore, whoever _____

_____ " (Matt. 18:4).

See also Luke 18:14; Prov: 29:23; James: 4:10; 1Peter:5:5, 6; Matt.19:30.

4. In Submission, There Is Authority

The Roman centurion (a military leader over 100 soldiers) who came to Jesus understood this Principle. *"...I did not consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it" (Luke: 7:7-8).*

Because the Centurion was under authority, he was able to exercise authority, and he readily submitted to Jesus' authority. Read also verse 1-10;

“_____ ,then, to God.” (James 4:7)

The lifestyle of the Kingdom of God is an attitude of SUBMISSION and OBEDIENCE TO GOD (see Matt. 12:50; Eph.6:6; Heb 13:21; 1John 2:17; 1Thess.4:1).

We submit ourselves to God's will – NOT reluctantly – because of fear or duty – but rather:

- a. **Because Of All God Has Done For Us** (Rom.12:1; Eph. 4:1; Titus 3:4-7).
- b. **Because In Doing So We Find Fulfillment** (Ps. 40:8).
- c. **Because Of Love** (John 14:15; 1John 5:3)

D. FRUIT OF THE KINGDOM

“For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his children, encouraging, comforting and arguing you TO LIVE LIVES WORTHY OF GOD, who calls you into his kingdom and glory”(1Thes.2:11,12). See also 2Thess:1:5.

In Matthew: 21:43, Jesus said that the Kingdom would belong to those who *“produce its fruit”*. The fruit of the Kingdom is explained in a number of Scriptures:

- Love, Joy, Peace (Gal 5:22,23)
- Goodness, righteousness, truth (Eph. 5:9; James 3:13-17).
- Righteousness, peace, Joy (Rom: 14:17; Heb: 12:11).

Since we are created by God, we were also made for His Kingdom and its lifestyle.

The fruit of that Kingdom is simply the natural outworking of the miracle of rebirth that the Holy Spirit has performed in us (see Gal: 5:22).

Our responsibility as citizens of God's Kingdom is to live like the people we now are! (1Pet:2:11)

“We also pray that your outward lives, which men see, may bring credit to your master’s name, and you may bring joy to his heart” (Col.1:10 Philips).

See also Col.2:6; Eph: 4:1; Eph. 6:8-10.

MY COMMITMENT

I realize, after studying about Kingdom living, that I am to submit my life to the service of others, just as Jesus did. I commit myself to being a willing, joyful servant of Christ and others.

Suggested Memory Verses

1. Eph.1:17
2. 2Cor.5:15
3. Phil.2:5
4. Matt.23:11,12
5. James 4:7
6. Col.1:10



BIBLE STUDY-17: WORSHIP

A. BLESSING GOD

Worship is an integral part of a believer's life. Only God deserves our worship.

"Bless _____, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His _____" (Ps: 103:1).

It is awesome to consider that we have the ability to bless our Creator, but time after time in the Scripture, we are exhorted to do just that. We bless Him through our praise and worship of Him.

See Psalm 34:1-3.

B. PRAISE

Praise is an expression of admiration and appreciation. When we praise someone, we tell them how wonderful we think they are, or how they are, or how great their accomplishments are. It is the same with the Lord. **Praise has to do with acknowledging God's character and power.**

"Because Your love is better than life, my lips will _____ You. I will _____, and in Your name I will lift up my hands" (Ps: 63:3, 4).

1. Why Do We Praise God?

a. Because of Who He Is.

"Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our _____, sing praises. For God is _____: sing to Him a psalm of praise" (Ps: 47:6, 7)

b. Because Of What He Does.

"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

_____ " (Ps: 103:1-5).

2. Who Is To Praise God?

a. Those who seek God. "..._____
_____ "(Ps:22:26)

b. Everything That Has Breath. _____ *praise the Lord.*
Praise the Lord" (Ps: 150:6)

3. When Do We Praise God?

- a. At All Times.** *"I will extol the Lord _____; His praise will _____ be on my lips" (Ps:34:1)*
- b. In Every Circumstance.** *"Be joyful _____; pray continuously; give thanks in _____, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1Thes:5:16-18).*

4. Where Are We To Praise God?

a. Surrounded By God's People.

"He [Jesus] says, 'I will declare Your name to my brothers; _____
_____ ' (Heb: 2:12).

b. Among The Nations.

*"I will praise you O Lord, _____; I will sing of You
_____ " (Ps: 57:9).*

c. On Your Beds.

*"I will praise you as long as I live... with singing lips my mouth will praise you.
_____" (Ps:63:4-6)*

B. WORSHIP

Whereas praise is an expression of admiration and appreciation, **worship is an expression of love and adoration**. It is possible to admire someone and appreciate what they do without being in love with them. In the same way, **worship has to do with our love of the Lord. It can be expressed only with the giving of our whole heart and life to Him.**

*"To love Him _____, with all _____
_____ and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself, is more
important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mark 12:33).*

The religious rituals and ceremonies of Israel in the Old Testament became detestable to the Lord because their heart was far from Him (Isa 1:10-15; 29:13). Today, also, **God is only interested in the genuine and sincere worship that comes from the heart.**

*"Yet a time is coming and has now come, when the true worshippers will worship the Father
_____, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father
seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers _____ in SPIRIT and TRUTH" (John 4:23, 24). Read
also verses 4-26.*

1. In Spirit

Our spirit is called the “inner man” (Eph 3:16). True worship takes place when **the inner man**, in response to the promptings of God’s Spirit, expresses love and adoration to God. This can take the form of spoken words, a love song to the Lord, or silent adoration.

True worship requires the action of the Holy Spirit on our spirit. So, **only those who have been “born again of the Spirit” through faith in Jesus Christ can truly worship God.** (John 3:5-8)

2. In Truth

To worship God in truth is to worship him as the Bible says we should. Nadab and Abihu (the sons of the high priest) offered strange fire before the Lord and died (Num 3:4; 26:61). This sober warning illustrates the need to study God’s plan (the Tabernacle of Moses) for priestly ministry.

There was a *sacrifice, cleansing, anointing and clothing* before worship (Exo 30:17-38).

You will note in Revelation 1:5,6 that we are “...*washed from our sins in His own blood*” before being made “...*priests unto God.*”

There was much preparation of the priests before they could go into the Holy place to worship the Lord. To ignore the steps outlined was perilous. We must worship in truth – in the Bible way.

D. EXPRESSIONS OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP IN SCRIPTURE

1. With The Mouth

a. _____ (Ps 9:2, 11)

b. _____ (Ps 103:1)

c. _____ (Ps 47:1)

2. With The Hands

a. _____ (Ps 63:4)

b. _____ (Ps 47:1)

c. _____ (Ps 150)

3. With The Body

a. _____ (Ps 134:1)

b. _____ (Ps 95:6)

c. _____ (Ps 30:1)

"Who among the gods is like you, O Lord? _____

*_____ ?... Sing to the Lord, for he is
highly exalted..."*

(Exo 15:11, 21)

*"Among the gods _____, O Lord...For You are
_____...I will praise You, O Lord my God,
with all my heart; I will glorify Your name forever"*

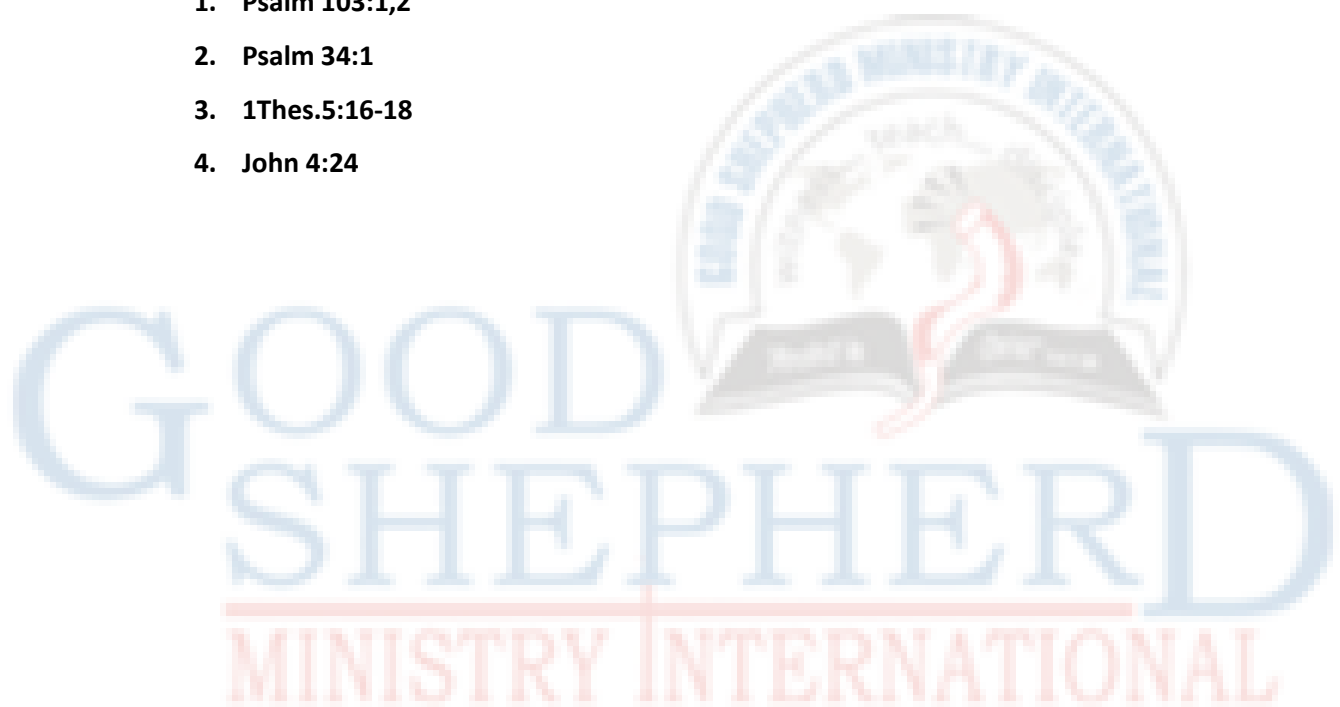
(Ps 86:8,10,12).

MY COMMITMENT

The greatest thing I will ever do in this life or in eternity is to worship God. I determine today to be a true worshiper and to make this my supreme goal in life.

Suggested Memory verses

1. Psalm 103:1,2
2. Psalm 34:1
3. 1Thes.5:16-18
4. John 4:24



BIBLE STUDY 18 – PRAYER

Matthew Henry said, "You may as soon find a living man that does not breathe, as a living Christian that does not pray." Such is the vitality of prayer to a Christian. It is calling upon the Living and All-powerful God with a sense of total dependency on Him.

"He will call upon me, and I will answer him...and show him my salvation" (Ps 91:15-16). The time we spend with the Lord in prayer can release the most dynamic, history-changing power this world has ever known.

The Bible describes many different operations of prayer, but in this lesson, we are going to look at prayer as an individual first. Our prayer as a Body together can only be as strong as our personal time with the Lord.

A. THE SECRET PLACE

*"But when you pray, go into _____
_____ and your Father who
sees _____ will reward you in the open"* (Matt 6:6)

We have been invited into intimate prayer by none other than the Lord Himself. This kind of "secret" prayer presupposes and ensures:

1) The Right Motives (Matt: 6:5)

*"And when you pray, _____, for they love to
pray standing in the synagogues and on the streets, to be _____
_____"*

2) A Right Relationship With God As Father (Luke 11:11-13)

*"If you then, though you are evil, _____
_____ give...(vs.13)*

3) A Real Trust In the Lord (Ps 55:16-17)

*"But I call to _____ me. Evening,
_____ and _____ I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.*

4) A Dispensing Of False Front (Jer.17:10)

*"I the LORD searches the _____
_____". Refer Mark 7:6,7*

As we express our feelings and burdens in conversation with God, it can be in the form of **adoration** (Ps 34:1-4), **confession** (1John 1:9), **request** (Matt 7:7), or **thanksgiving** (Eph 5:4-20)

B. FIVE COMMANDS RELATED TO PRAYER

1. Watch And Pray Always

*"_____ and pray that you may be able to escape all that
is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man". (Luke 21:36) See
also Mark 13:35-37*

2. Pray Lest You Fall Into Temptation

"Watch and pray so that _____. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." (Matt 26:41)

3. Pray For Workers

"He told them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, _____" (Luke 10:2)

4. Pray For Those In Authority

*"I urge, them, first of all, that _____
be made for everyone – _____, that we may
live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1Tim 2:1-2)*

5. Pray For Your Enemies

"Bless those who curse you, pray for _____" (Luke 6:28)

C. WHEN TO PRAY

The Bible gives many examples of people who prayed (1 Chr 4:10). Many of the heroes of faith can be observed to have had regular times of the day set aside specifically for prayer, often three set periods a day – at morning, noon and evening.

*"As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me. _____
_____, will I pray and cry aloud: and He shall hear my
voice". (Ps 55:16-17) See also Daniel 6:10*

The best example of the daily pattern of regular, whole-hearted prayer – prayer that avoided meaningless religious ritual – can be found in the Lord Jesus Himself:

- 1) Early in the morning (Mark 1:35)
- 2) All Night (Luke 6:12)
- 3) Before Each Meal (Mark 6:41)

D. WHAT TO PRAY

1. For ourselves

*"Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, 'Oh that you would _____
and enlarge _____! Let your hand _____
and _____ so that _____
_____". And God granted his request. (1 Chr 4:10)*

2. For One Another

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and _____" (Jam 5:16)

3. For the Ministries in The Body of Christ

*"Finally, brothers, pray _____
_____, just as it was with you." (2 Thes.3:1)*

4. For the Sick and Distraught

*"Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray....is any of you sick? He should call for the elders of the church to _____ and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the _____; the Lord will rise him up.
...and pray for each other _____" (James 5:13-16)*

5. For Those ensnared By Sin

"If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, _____

and God will give him life..." (1 Jn 5:16)

E. HELP IN PRAYER

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what _____

*_____, but the Spirit _____ with groans
that words cannot express" (Rom 8:26)*

Part of the Holy Spirit's purpose is to:-

- teach us (Luke 12:12),
- guide us in prayer (Rom 8:27),
- and to help us in our faith (Eph 3:16-17)

The Holy Spirit will sometimes anoint a believer's prayer in a special way, and this called **"Praying in the Holy Spirit"** (Jude 20; Eph 6:18)

To help us in prayer, the Holy Spirit has also provided a special gift to the believer:-

The Gift of Tongues - speaking in another language to the Lord in prayer. See 1 Cor.12:4-11.

"...the prayer of the upright is His delight.... He heareth the prayer of the righteous..."

(Prov. 15:8, 29)

F. YOKEFELLOW

Two joining together in prayer provides some very real advantages: *"Again I say unto you, That if*

*_____ on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it
shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven". (Matt 18:19)*

G. THE CHURCH PRAYING

If there is tremendous power when two people pray, what about the whole assembly of God's people?

See Acts 4:24

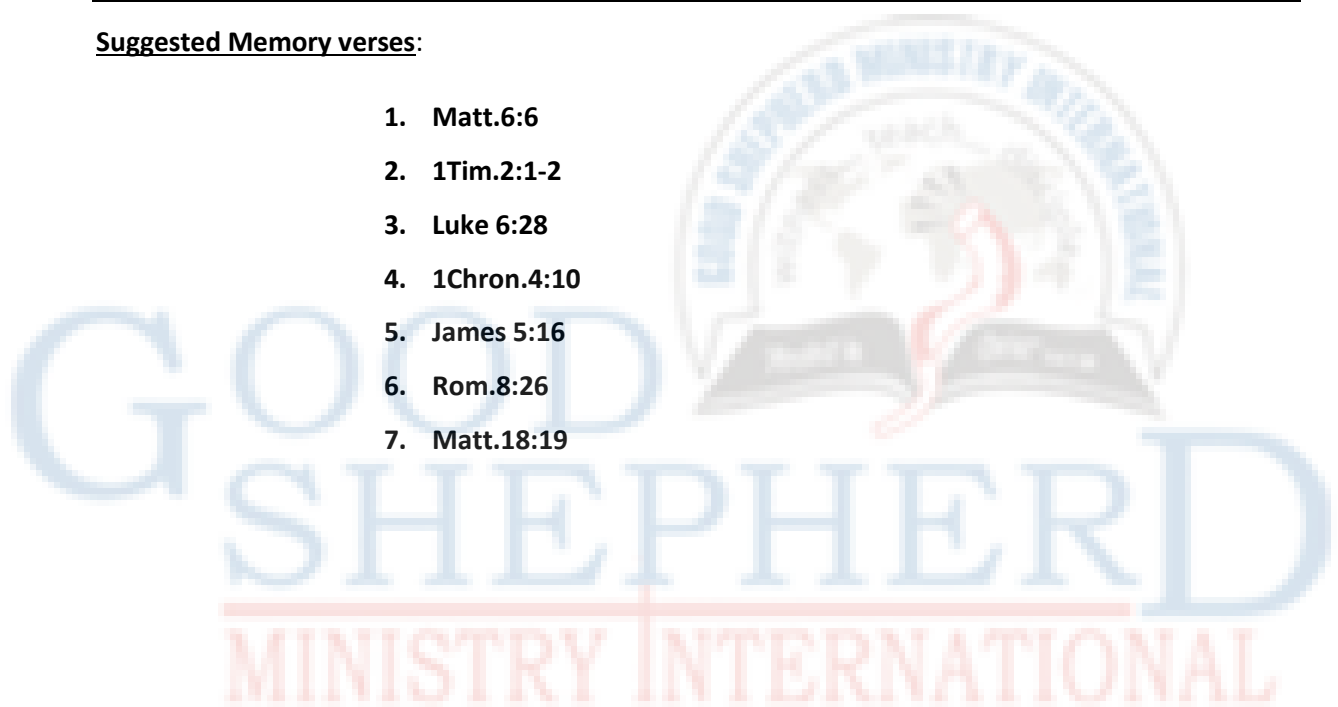
Today God is calling His people to prayer! The Church's mission is to change individual lives, families, communities, cities and nations through prayer!

MY COMMITMENT

Through this study, I realize the wonderful opportunities of prayer – not only in my relationship with my God but also the supernatural results that follow. I commit myself to make prayer always a priority in my life.

Suggested Memory verses:

1. Matt.6:6
2. 1Tim.2:1-2
3. Luke 6:28
4. 1Chron.4:10
5. James 5:16
6. Rom.8:26
7. Matt.18:19



CHAPTER 19

HEAVEN

"....God is in heaven and you are on earth....Therefore stand in awe of God". (Eccl 5:2,7)

A. WHAT IS HEAVEN

1. Heaven is The Dwelling Place of God

"Is not? And see how lofty are the highest stars!" (Job 22:12).

See also Deuteronomy 26:15

2. Heaven Is The Thorne-Room of God

"The Lord has established in heaven, and his kingdom rules overall all" (Ps 103:19).

See also Is 66:1)

Write Isaiah 66:1

.....

.....

.....

3. Heaven Is The Place Of God's Full Glory

"As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as snow, the hair of his head was white like wool, his throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him..." (Dan 7:9,10)

See also Acts 7:55.....

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4. Heaven Is The Home Of The Righteous (Believing) Dead

"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands." (2Cor 5:1)

5. Heaven Is The Future Home Of All Believers

"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne...' (Rev 7:9,10)

B. THE NATURE OF HEAVEN

Heaven is a place far beyond anything we can possibly conceive (1Cor 2:9; 13:12). Heaven is like a place of holiness, full of glory and without end.

But though the Bible doesn't describe all the details of what Heaven is like, it does give us some clues as to its nature. It is :

1. A Place Of Great Glory

"Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father...." (Matt 13:43)

2. A Place Of Continual Worship

"After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God....' Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns...' (Rev 19:1-6).

See also Revelation 5:11-12.

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3. A Place That Will Never End

".....and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2Peter 1:11). See also 1Peter 1:4

4. A Place Untainted By Evil

"Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life". (Rev 21:27) See also Ephesians 5:5)

The Book of Revelation describes the New Jerusalem, coming out of Heaven, as a place without :

- (a) Night (22:5)
- (b) Curse (22:3)
- (c) Pain (21:4)
- (d) Crying, sorrow (21:4)
- (e) Death (21:4)

This is because the nature of Heaven is a product of the nature of God. Since Heaven is the full manifestation of His presence, what God is like, Heaven is like a place of holiness, full of glory and without end.

C. OUR LINK WITH HEAVEN

As believers, we now live our lives in a special relationship with Heaven, because:

1. We Belong There

"But you have come to.....the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven...." (Heb 12:22-23). See also Phil 3:20)

2. We Are Enthroned There

"And God raised us up with Christ and enthroned us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:6)

3. We Have Our Source Of Life There

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Eph 1:3) See also Co 3:1-4)

4. We Have Our Names Recorded There

"However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). See also Hebrews 12:23

5. We Have Been Sent By The One Who Lives There

"They are not of the world, even as I am not it.....As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (John 17:16,18). See also 2 Corinthians 5:20)

6. We Have Our Eyes Fixed There

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2Cor 4:17, 18). See also Heb. 11:9, 10, 14-16.

7. We Have Our Treasure There

"....He has given us new birth into a living hope....into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you..." (1 Pet 1:3,4). See also Matt 6:19-21

8. We Are Being Called There

"....But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14)

Jesus Himself, before returning to Heaven, made a very special promise to every believer. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may where I am" (John 14:1-3)

See also 17:24

MY COMMITMENT

I decided today to set my affections on things Heaven, not on things of this earth. I realize my life on earth is only temporary, so I will live by priorities established by this truth. I will share with others the good news about this wonderful eternal home Jesus offers to all who will believe on Him.

Memory Verses : (1) 1Peter 1:3-4

(2) Phil 3:20

(3) Eph 2:6-8

(4) Phil 3:13-14



CHAPTER 20

WHEN JESUS RETURNS

The Second Coming

“Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you have proclaimed the Lord’s death UNTIL HE COMES” (1Cor 11:26).

A. THE PROMISE OF HIS RETURN

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus to the earth is one of the most important subjects for the Christian. The writers of the New Testament discussed it more than 300 times, and the language used was almost always imperative. The first thing we need to know about the Second Coming is that it is CERTAIN!

1. Jesus Spoke About His Own Return

“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30) See also John 14:2,3

2. Angels Foretold It

“They were looking intently into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them, ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand there looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:10-11)

3. The Earthly Christians Encouraged One Another With It

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (1Thess 4:16-18). See also Rev 1:7

4. The Holy Spirit Bears Witness Of It

"Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come". (2Cor 5:5)

"But be patient, my brothers, as you wait for the Lord to come. Look at the farmer quietly waiting for his precious harvest. See how he has to possess his soul in patience till the land has had the early and the late rains. So must you be patient, resting your hearts on the ultimate certainty. The Lord's coming is very near". (James 5:7-8) See also Hebrews 10:37

B. HOW WILL JESUS RETURN ?

1. Unexpectedly

"Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly..."

2. Like The Lightning

"For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matt 24:27) See also Luke 17:27

3. In The Same Way That He Left

"This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11)

4. With Great Power And glory

"At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27)

5. In Full view of All

"Look he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen." (Rev 1:7)

C. DRAMATIC EVENTS TO TAKE PLACE

1. The Mystery of the Ages Will be Completed

"....There will be no more delay! But in the day when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets" (Rev 10:6-7) See also Rom 16:25-26

2. God's People Will Enter Their Full Glory

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:20-21) See also 1 Corinthians 15:35-53

3. The Dead In Christ Will be raised To Life

"....because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence: (2 Cor 4:14) See also John 6:40; 11:25

4. Those Believers Still Alive will be Caught up to Meet Him

"And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other" (Matt 24:31)

5. Creation Will Be Set Free From Its Bondage

"The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom 8:19-21). Read also verse 22 and Is 35:1-7

6. Every enemy Will be Destroyed

"Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under His feet" 1 Cor 15:24-25. See also 2 Tess 1:7-10; 2-8

7. Satan Will be Bound

"And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan and bound him for a thousand year" (Rev 20:1-2). Read also verses 3, 7-10

8. Judgment Will Be Meted Out

"God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled.... This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

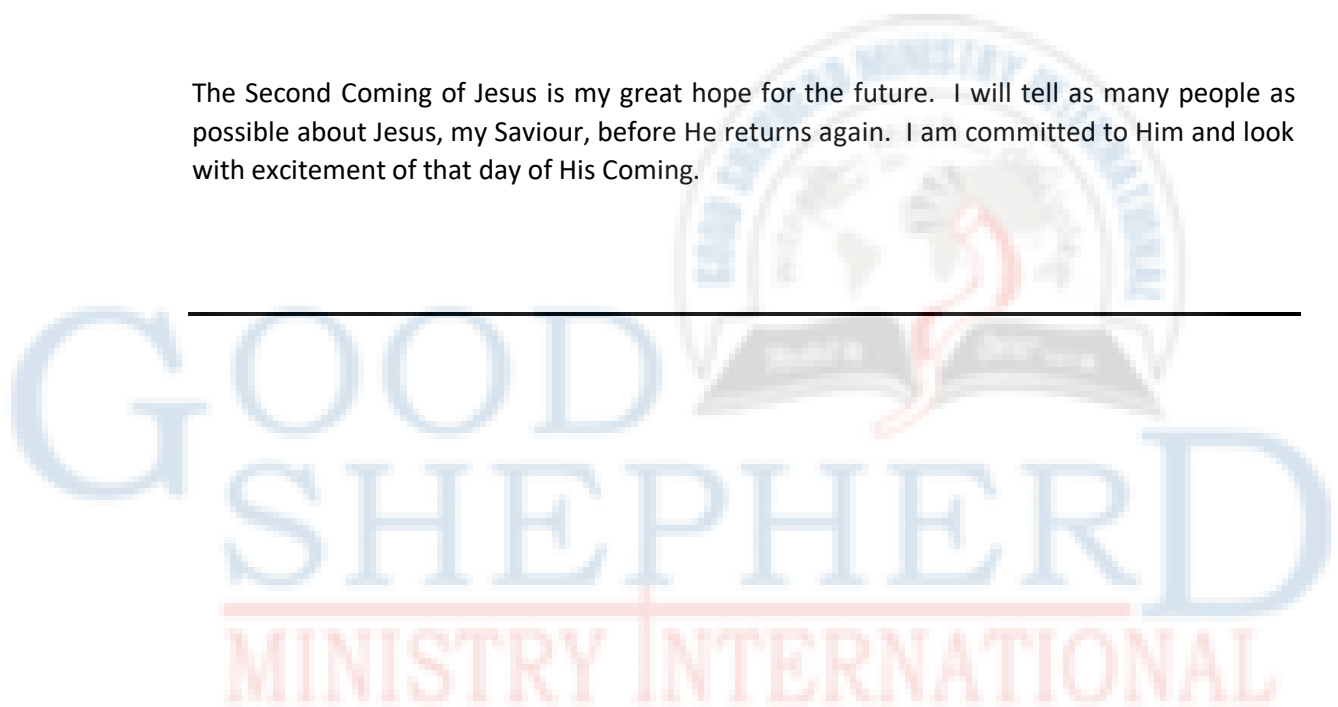
"He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power" (2 Thes 1:6-9)

9. A Kingdom Will be Set Up That will Never Be Destroyed

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever" (Dan 2:44) See also Rev 19: 15-16)

MY COMMITMENT

The Second Coming of Jesus is my great hope for the future. I will tell as many people as possible about Jesus, my Saviour, before He returns again. I am committed to Him and look with excitement of that day of His Coming.



CHAPTER 21

CALL OF GOD

God has a plan for the life of every individual believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only des His call involve wonderful purposes for us throughout eternity, but we also have an expression of that call upon the earth now.

“Who has saved us, and CALLED us with an holy calling.....according to his own purpose and grace...” (2 Tim 1:9)

“Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.... And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE” (Rom 8:17, 28) See also verse 29, 30

A. GOD HAS CALLED US

1. From the Foundation Of the Word

“For HE chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will” (Eph 1:4-5) Se also 2:10 and Matthew 25:34

2. To be Separated Unto Him

“But you are chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Pet 2:9) See also Rom 9:23-26

3. To Fulfill His purpose

“So do not ashamed to testify about our Lord....who has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything. We have done but because of his own purpose and grace...”
(2Tim 1:8,9). See also Rom 8:28, Phil 3:14

B. OUR CALL ON EARTH

“Paul, a servant (slave) of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God”
(Rom 1:1)

In describing his own ministry, the Apostle Paul gives us an example of the call that is upon EVERY believer. It has three aspects :-

1. The General Calling – “A Slave Of Christ”

Jesus paid a high price for us: His own Life.

“For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lords’ free man; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ’s slave. You were bought with a price...” (1Cor 7:22-23). See also 1 Cor 6:19-20

When Paul calls himself a slave of Jesus Christ, he is pointing to an even deeper meaning. According to the custom of his day, if a slave came to the time when he could be set free, but because of love for his master chose not to accept his freedom, he then received a mark pierced in his ear. This was the sign that he was a ‘love slave’ to his master for life (Exodus 21:5-6; Deut 15:16,17). The Apostle Paul, by choice, declared himself a love-slave of the Lord Jesus.

2. The Special Calling – “Called To Be An Apostle”

Just as the Apostle Paul had special calling upon his life, so does every believer. Paul was called to be an apostle, but there are many different callings in the Body of Christ. See Rom 12:3-8; Eph 4:7-16. The special part that God has for us to play will be revealed to us as we earnestly seek His will.

3. The Particular Calling – “Separated To The Gospel”

Within each special calling there is a particular calling. For example Peter and Paul were both apostles, but one was the apostle to the Jews and the other to the Gentiles. See Rom 11:13; 1 Tim 2:7; 1Cor 12:4-11

We move into our special and particular calling only as we prove ourselves as “love-slaves,” for we must first learn to be wholly under the authority of Christ before we can be SENT by Him. See Matthew 28:18-19

C. WHY DOES HE CALL US?

1. Because The World Is In the Darkness

“We know that we ourselves are children of God, and we also know that the world around us is under the power of the evil one” (1 Jn 5:19 Phillips). See also Eph 6:12 and Colossians 1:13.

2. Because People Are Hungry And in Need

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd”. (Matt 9:36)

3. To prove His Wisdom

“His intent was that now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms, according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph 3:10-11)

4. Because The Time Is Short

“Do you not say, “Four months more and then the harvest?” I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest!” (John 4:35) See also John 9:4

D. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE CALLED ?

1. We Are Made By Him

“Come, follow me, ‘Jesus said, and I WILL MAKE YOU fishers of men” (Matt 4:19) See also Jer 18:1-10)

2. We are Taught By Him

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26) See also 1 Cor 2:12; 1 John 2:27

3. We are Send By Him

“As you sent me into the world, I have sent them in to the world” (John 17:18) See also Mark 16:15

When God calls, He comes and interrupts our lives. So examples of this in the Scripture are :

Moses (shepherd in the desert): “To set my people free” (Exo 3:1-12)

Samuel (a boy serving in the temple): “Wake up, speak for me” (1 Sam 3:1-19).

Ezekiel (a captive in a foreign land): “Standup, I am sending you” (Eze 2:1-7)

Disciples (businessmen, fishermen): “Come, follow me” (Luke 5: 27,28;
Matt 4:18-22)

Saul (an enemy of the Church) : “Go, I will tell you what you must do”
(Act 9:1-9)

MY COMMITMENT

Now that I realize that God has had a plan for my life even before the foundation of the world, I now make a total commitment to this plan and will follow the Lord all the way. I will teach others also about God’s call for their lives.