



AFTER SALVATION

[WWW.AFTERSALVATION.COM](http://WWW.AFTERSALVATION.COM)

**Founder: Roger Jackson**

# WELCOME

"We Exist To Develop And Equip Every Believer To Reach Their Full Potential In Christ."

After Salvation is a 5-week discipleship plan with daily readings (5 days per week) along with questions for each day that assist new or maturing believers. This has been created to give any Christian, no matter the maturity level, a strong foundation and clear next steps in their faith. We start off with Biblical foundations and next lead into what I call R.C.M.C

## 4 PILLARS OF AFTER SALVATION



This is also used as a tool for Christians making disciples. Instead of you having to create a discipleship strategy, we offer a free and easy-to-use discipleship plan for those you are ministering to. It establishes basic foundational pillars to help any believer on their spiritual journey.




# HOW THE 4 PILLARS WORK TOGETHER




- **RELATIONSHIP**  
Engaging In Relationship With God On A Daily Basis.
- **COMMUNITY**  
Staying In Community With Other Believers (*The Church*).
- **MISSION**  
Living On Mission For God.
- **COMMITMENT**  
Commitment Holds It All Together.

# HOW TO USE AFTER SALVATION


## Format Breakdown




**5-Weeks Total**



**25-Days Of Reading**





**Individual Reading**  
Individuals read each day by themselves. Recommend reading **Monday - Friday**





**Meet Weekly**  
After Completing 5 Days of reading, you will **meet with your group once a week**, each week, until completed.

**1. Access After Salvation (FREE)**











[www.aftersalvation.com](http://www.aftersalvation.com)


**2. Select Study Method**



**Online Course**  
(Website/Mobile)




**Self-Select**  
(Website/Mobile)




**App**  
(Mobile Device)


**3. Select Discipleship Method (1 Mature Believer Required)**




**1 on 1**



**Growth Huddle**  
(3-4 People)




**Small Group**  
(5-12 People)



**Class**  
(12+ People)

**4. Pick Your Weekly Meeting Date & Start**



**Pick Your Weekly Meeting Date**

Get with your group to work out the best meeting day each week for 5 weeks and get started.

# START HERE VIDEO:



## Recommended Daily Plan:

Monday through Friday - You Personally Read & Answer Questions  
Once A Week (Suggested Friday) - You meet With Mentor Or Group

### Week1

**Mon:** Day 1. Salvation  
**Tues:** Day 2. Daily Living  
**Wed:** Day 3. Faith  
**Thurs:** Day 4. Engage  
**Fri:** Day 5. Prayer  
**Fri:** Mentor/ Group Meeting

### Week2

**Mon:** Day 6. Creation  
**Tues:** Day 7. Jesus  
**Wed:** Day 8. Holy Spirit  
**Thurs:** Day 9. Trinity  
**Fri:** Day 10. Worship  
**Fri:** Mentor/ Group Meeting

### Week3

**Mon:** Day 11. The Church  
**Tues:** Day 12. Fellowship  
**Wed:** Day 13. Spiritual Gifts  
**Thurs:** Day 14. Gathering  
**Fri:** Day 15. Friends & Acct.  
**Fri:** Mentor/ Group Meeting

### Week4

**Mon:** Day 16. The Mission  
**Tues:** Day 17. Disciple  
**Wed:** Day 18. Spiritual War...  
**Thurs:** Day 19. Kingdom & Ca..  
**Fri:** Day 20. Testimony  
**Fri:** Mentor/ Group Meeting

### Week5

**Mon:** Day 21. Commitment  
**Tues:** Day 22. Obedience  
**Wed:** Day 23. God's Will  
**Thurs:** Day 24. Maturity  
**Fri:** Day 25. Remember  
**Fri:** Mentor/ Group Meeting

## Relationship

### Relationship With God

Day 1. Salvation  
Day 2. Daily Living  
Day 3. Faith  
Day 4. Engage  
Day 5. Prayer  
Day 6. Creation  
Day 7. Jesus  
Day 8. Holy Spirit  
Day 9. Trinity  
Day 10. Worship

## Community

### The Church

Day 11. The Church  
Day 12. Fellowship  
Day 13. Spiritual Gifts  
Day 14. Gathering  
Day 15. Friendships & Accountability

## Mission

### Mission of God

Day 16. The Mission  
Day 17. Disciple  
Day 18. Spiritual Warfare  
Day 19. Kingdom & Calling  
Day 20. Testimony

## Commitment

### Holds It All Together

Day 21. Commitment  
Day 22. Obedience  
Day 23. God's Will  
Day 24. Maturity  
Day 25. Remember

# BEFORE YOU BEGIN

## 3 WAYS TO USE AFTER SALVATION

**1) 5-Week Course Method:** This course method keeps track of all of your info and progress. It also includes all the questions with the ability to save your responses. It also provides a little more interaction on the questions. Select [5 Week Course](#) to access.

**2) Self-Select Method:** This method is super simple, just pick and choose what you want to read. Everything is in the same exact order as the journey method, but it doesn't keep track of progress and has less interaction. Select [Self-Select](#) to access.

**3) App Method:** This method is exactly like the Self-Select method, but is on the app. Please use links below to access.

**4) Print Method:** Use the following link to print out entire course..

**Questions:** Each week includes questions to help you reflect and dive deeper into what you're exploring. You can access questions on [Guides](#) tab. You are able to either download and use digitally or print.

**Mentor/Groups:** We highly encourage you to find someone who is a part of your church or a Christian friend/mentor who is further along in their spiritual journey than you currently are, someone who can have tough conversations with you and who has probably wrestled with the same questions that you might be having. We can move faster and farther when we do life together. Remember, if you have any questions, we're happy to help! Find the message tab at the bottom of the page to send any questions.

***"NO SHORTCUTS EXIST TO BECOMING SPIRITUALLY  
MATURE. GROWTH TAKES EFFORT."***

***- RLJ***

# BIBLE - PART 1

## What Bible Version Should I Choose?

There are many versions of the Bible to choose from, especially in the English language. If you walk into a Christian bookstore you might be a little overwhelmed. So, instead of telling you which version is the best, I wanted to take a different approach to this subject.

**As of 2023 the top 6 best-selling English Bibles are as follows:**

1. New International Version
2. New Living Translation
3. English Standard Version
4. King James Version
5. Christian Standard Bible
6. New King James Version

**There is also a consensus on how translations are categorized which includes 3 types.** *\*\*\*Please note this visual is just to help you visually understand how translations are roughly categorized.\*\*\**

## Bible Translation Comparison



## **Word-for-Word Translations (Formal)**

Formal translations are literal translations that have been translated word for word from the original texts.

## **Thought-for-Thought Translations (Dynamic)**

Dynamic translations are translated phrase by phrase and use contemporary language for ease of reading.

## **Paraphrase Translations**

Paraphrase translations use modern language and try to capture the thought or meaning behind the original text.

# **Before Moving Forward...**

I would encourage you to take some time to start looking into which Bible would be best for you specifically. Once you have the Bible that best fits you return to this section to continue!

### **Helpful Tips:**

- 1) Take one verse, for example Matthew 11:28 and read it in several different translations. Try using [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) to explore different translations of the Bible and see what best suits your specific preference.
- 2) Not only are there many versions/translations, but there are different themes. For example, some themes you might see are men's, women's, devotional, sports, theological, archeological, etc. I would always encourage you to get some type of "study bible" (regardless of the theme) because it will help you to understand deeper theological insights in your reading.
- 3) If you find yourself stuck, check with your mentor or pastor, see what version they use, and ask them why they use it.

# Understanding How To Read Your Bible:

Let's use John 3:1-3;6 as an example:

John (Book)    3 (Chapter)    1-3 (Verses 1 through 3) ; (and) 6 (verse)

John 3 ▾ New International Version ▾

**Jesus Teaches Nicodemus**

**3** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. **2** He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

**3** Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. <sup>[a]</sup>"

**4** "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"

**5** Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. **6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit <sup>[b]</sup> gives birth to spirit. **7** You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You <sup>[c]</sup> must be born again.' **8** The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."<sup>[d]</sup>

**Chapter**

**Verse**

**Footnotes**

## Who wrote the Bible?

The simplest way to explain this subject is that the Bible was dually authored. This means that it was authored by God and man. More specifically, it was written by humans but inspired and directed by God.

## How much authority should I give the Bible in my life?

As Christians, we believe the word of God is inspired by God himself, which gives ultimate authority and direction to the believer in his or her pursuit of a Christ-centered life. We should hold the Bible with the highest regard and learn to understand and apply it in our lives, giving us direction in our understanding of God's will for our lives. (2 Timothy 3:16) (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

# Important things to remember as you begin reading your Bible.

There are many suggestions on how to read your Bible, but I just want to point out a few helpful ones as you begin. Please understand this isn't an exhaustive list, just a few helpful tips and thoughts.

Here are a few examples of Bible-reading methods (***there are many types***):

## S.O.A.P.

1- *Scripture*

2- *Observation*

3- *Application*

4- *Prayer*

## OICA+(M) Methodology of Bible Study

1 - Observation - *What is being said?*

2 - Interpretation - *What does this mean?*

3 - Correlation - *How does this connect to the Bible overall?*

4 - Application - *How do I apply this to my life?*

5 - Meditation - *Reflection on what you read.*

## Devotional Study Form

1. *Pray for insight.*

2. *Meditate*

3. *Application*

4. *Memorization*

## **Helpful Tips:**

1) Pray before you read, allow your mind and spirit to get focused on what you are about to read, and ask for help from God who is a good God, who wants you to understand His word deeper to help form and shape you more into His likeness.

2) Historical Context: Know that the Bible was not written in 2021, it was written several years ago, and it's important to remember which audience the text was speaking to. Also, it's key to understand the historical references or people that the scripture is speaking about. Even though some verses might be talking about historical events, we can see God in the midst of how He has worked in the past and be able to pull lessons, wisdom, and greater understanding from scripture.

3) Metaphoric and/or Exaggerated Language: For example Matthew 5:29 says, "If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell." This verse is not literal in the sense of plucking your eye out, but a command to remove things in your life that cause you to stumble in your faith.



# BIBLE - PART 2



## The Bible Story Line:

Storyline:

- The Bible is God-inspired. This means man wrote it, but the Holy Spirit guided their direction on what to write. There are 66 books in the Bible. It is divided into 2 significant sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- In the Old Testament God creates the world and all that is within it. Adam and Eve are living in perfect union with God, but through the influence of the devil (serpent) and free will, they chose to disobey God's direct command. Through this act, sin enters into the world and creates separation between God and man. Throughout, we see the struggle and brokenness of man, but within it, we see a merciful God who, in his love, sets forth a plan that starts with a promise to Abraham to restore all mankind through his genealogy, the Israelites. The O.T. is the prediction and preparation for the coming savior of the world, Jesus Christ.
- The New Testament contains Jesus' miraculous birth, life, ministry, death, & resurrection. After the ascension of Jesus (Jesus returns to heaven), the promise of the Holy Spirit came upon those who believed in Jesus (Both Jew & Gentile-means not Jewish). The Holy Spirit is the seal (or assurance) of salvation and the power through which Jesus's followers live out their lives for God. The New Testament is also a guide for how the church and believers are to live. It is preparation for Jesus's second coming, in which a new Heaven and new Earth will be established (this is yet to come).

# Why are there two testaments (Old & New) and what are the differences?

The word testament means something that serves as a sign or evidence of a specified fact, event, or quality. Throughout scripture, there are pivotal verses that shape major points and themes of scripture. I want to help point out 2 verses that help identify the differences between the Old and New Testaments. As we look at the two differences please note that what separates Old and New Testaments is Jesus. The Old Testament happened before Jesus's birth; the New Testament represents Jesus's ministry, death, and accession. It also describes the earlier church and predicts the return of Christ.. We find these two clear distinctions in the following places:

1. Jeremiah 31:31-33 predicts the coming of Jesus, known as the "Messiah," meaning he has not arrived yet.
2. Luke 22:20 points towards this idea of a new covenant that Jesus declares.

This helps us see a clear distinction between the "Old" and "New" Testaments within the context of scripture itself.

Old Testament -

- Total Book Count: 39 Books
- Language: Hebrew & Aramaic

New Testament -

- Total Book Count: 27 Books
- Language: Greek

## How was the Bible formed, and can I trust it?

**Can I trust it... Absolutely!**

One of the biggest questions I get from any new believer is whether they can trust the Bible. I like to help them to understand how it was formed to shed light on how we can trust it. Below we go through just a very quick snapshot of that, but I do have a few resources below for you to dig deeper into these topics that I think will be very helpful as you grow in your faith and understanding of the formation of the Bible.

## Old Testament:

Our historical roots derive from a Jewish background and culture, so when we look at the Old Testament specifically we will have the same exact books that you would find in the Hebrew Bible (known to Judaism as the Tanak) dating back thousands of years. The only difference that we will find when we compare Christian Old Testament to Hebrew scriptures is how they categorize these books. The Old Testament books are believed to have been written over roughly a thousand-year span dating to the mid-second to the mid-first millennium BC. The Old Testament was fully established before Jesus and we even see Jesus reference the Old Testament during his earthly ministry.

### Categories of the Old Testament:

<b>Law:</b>	<b>Historical:</b>	<b>Wisdom:</b>	<b>Prophetic (Major &amp; Minor)</b>
Genesis	Joshua	Job	<i>Major Prophets:</i>
Exodus	Judges	Psalms	Isaiah
Leviticus	Ruth	Proverbs	Jeremiah
Numbers	1 & 2 Samuel	Ecclesiastes	Lamination
Deuteronomy	1 & 2 Kings	Song of Songs	Ezekiel
	1 & 2 Chronicles		Daniel
	Ezra		
	Nehemiah		<i>Minor Prophets:</i>
	Esther		Hosea through Malachi (12 Total)

## New Testament:

The New Testament was written roughly around 45-90 AD. These writings were immediately embraced by early Christians as scripture based on their understanding that these were eyewitness accounts of those who saw Jesus and observed his ministry. Author Timothy Paul Jones states the following: “The four Gospels, Acts, the writings of Paul, and at least the first epistle from John—was well-established in the churches no later than the second century. It took some other writings longer to become well-known, and Christians did debate the authenticity of a few texts. And yet, in time, Christians concluded together that a total of twenty-seven books—the texts that we know today as “the New Testament”—could be traced back to apostolic testimony from the first century AD. Christians kept the texts they kept because these texts could be traced back to eyewitnesses from the apostolic era. Not only does this scholar make this point, but so many others do as well.

## Categories of the New Testament:

### Gospels & Acts:

Matthew  
Mark  
Luke  
John  
Acts

### Pauline Letters:

Romans  
1 & 2 Corinthians  
Galatians  
Ephesians  
Philippians  
Colossians  
1 & 2 Thessalonians  
1 & 2 Timothy  
Titus  
Philemon

### General Letters & Revelation:

Hebrews  
James  
1 & 2 Peter  
1,2, & 3 John  
Jude  
Revelation

## **Some Helpful Sources:**

<https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/old-testament>

[\*Timothy Paul Jones "How We Got the Bible"\*](#)

[\*Robert L. Plummer "40 Questions about Interpreting the Bible"\*](#)

# STARTING WEEK 1 VIDEO:



# SALVATION

Day 1



As we begin day 1, I want to help cultivate your understanding of your newfound faith. As new Christians, we all start off in different places of understanding or knowledge. So as we begin, we will break down some basic concepts that include sin, faith, salvation, and baptism. These four areas are essential for new believers to start, so let's define and understand each of these areas.

## What Is Sin?

We see that the Bible clearly explains that sin is "Lawlessness" [1 John 3:4](#) - *Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness*. More specifically, sin is failing to live up to the expected standard and conduct of a perfect God. This includes both internal and external unholy practices, actions, thoughts, desires, etc. that directly violate God's divine will. Examples can include the 10 commandments in [Exodus 20](#). As one basic example Jesus says, if you look at a woman lustfully, you are committing adultery! [Matthew 5:27](#). Example of sin is all over both the Old and New Testament

## How Sin Entered The World and the Consequence.

Sin entered the world because of Adam and Eve's disobedience to what God commanded them to do. The serpent (devil or Satan) tempted Eve and Adam and this temptation led to the action of sin. We know this because [Genesis 3](#) discusses the fall of man and sheds light on how sin entered the world and because of this event, it has condemned all of us. The consequence of sin can be found in Romans chapters 5 & 6.

[Romans 5:12](#) *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.*

[Romans 6:23](#) *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ.*

## Faith:

Faith is defined as having complete trust or confidence in something or someone. Christian faith is a required element for anyone who has accepted Jesus as Savior. Apart from faith, it's impossible to receive and experience the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Faith is also vital to any believer as they complete their spiritual journey on Earth. We will go deeper into this topic on day 3, but these three verses are a good starting place to help build our understanding of faith.

[Hebrews 11:1](#) *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what **we do not see.***

[Hebrews 11:6](#) *And without faith, it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

[Ephesians 2:8](#) *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—*

## Understanding Salvation:

God really does love us ([John 3:16-17](#)) and desires that all come to repentance, meaning a restored relationship with Him. God sent Jesus to fix and restore what was broken. God uses that longing within our hearts and the power of the Holy Spirit to draw us back to Him, but it is our choice at the end—God doesn't force us. God is patient, and He desires to see all saved and restored. He doesn't want any of His children to be separated from Him and that is why it says this in 2 Peter:

[2 Peter 3:9](#) *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

**Next, we need to identify the answers to the following questions.**

- What does salvation mean?
- Why do we need to be saved?
- How does that happen?

Salvation is the process in which Jesus **delivers or rescues us** from judgment because of our sins. More than likely, when you accepted Jesus, you understood that Jesus has forgiven you for your sin and if you accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, you will be saved.

**Now let's walk through a few key verses that help shape our why and how of salvation.**

- **Sin has caused a separation between man and God**

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

- **The penalty for sin is death and separation from God, but Jesus died to make us right with God & to give us eternal life.**

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ*

- **Jesus loves us and showed us by dying on the Cross while we were with no hope of being made right by God.**

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

- **If we confess and believe in our hearts that Jesus is Lord and was raised from the dead, we will be saved.**

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

### **Bringing it all together - Salvation:**

When sin first entered the world, its impact was felt throughout all humanity. The consequence of sin was death and separation from God. In God's perfect understanding, He wanted to restore what was broken, so He sent His very own son Jesus to Earth. Jesus, who was God, came to restore the broken relationship between God and man. Jesus took on our sins on the Cross as a perfect sacrifice and paid for the "debt" through His death, so we didn't have to.

When Jesus overcame death (which is called resurrection), He conquered the consequences of sin once and for all. Everything about our faith depends on the



resurrection of Jesus Christ. Salvation is only given to those who confess and believe that Jesus is Lord and that He was raised from the dead.

When we confess and believe, we are instantly restored to a right standing with God. The process of being made right with God is called salvation. Christian author Bill Hull says it best when he states "The point of salvation isn't the finish line; instead, it's the starting line for a lifelong journey." It's important to note that this new life was given by God's grace. We did nothing to earn it. Our responsibility within this exchange for eternal life is that we confess, believe, and commit ourselves to follow Jesus. It was a gift freely given to us by God because of His love for us. Jesus gives us new purpose, identity, and eternal destiny. Ultimately, everything about our life changes once we are saved. If we have truly confessed and believed in Christ, there is also a commitment made in the believer to embrace and follow their newfound faith, I call this C.B.C.!

**C- Confess** - your sin and acknowledge Jesus as your Lord.

**B- Believe** - that God raised Jesus from the dead.

**C- Commit** - is embracing and living out your newfound faith.

[Colossians 1:21-22](#) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

## Understanding Baptism:

- What is Baptism to you?
- Why do we need to be baptized?
- Have you been baptized? **Yes / No?**

- **When should a person be baptized?**

- As soon as a person trusts Christ, he or she should be baptized as quickly as possible. In all the accounts in the Scriptures, baptism is rather immediate. I would encourage you to talk with your pastor or mentor this week about it, don't wait. This pattern of somewhat immediate baptism should be emulated. ([Acts 22:16](#))

### **What does water baptism symbolize?**

- The death & resurrection of Jesus.
- The new life in which a Christ follower now walks in.
- Cleansing and washing away of sin.
- It's a public step of obedience. ([Acts 10:47-48](#))



- **Through Jesus's example, we see that...**
  - Jesus taught water baptism ([Matthew 28:19-20](#))
  - Jesus was water baptized (Matthew 3:5-15)
  
- **What water baptism is NOT...**
  - Water baptism does NOT save you
  - it is NOT a substitution for confession and belief in Jesus.

### **Baptism Explained:**

Baptism is a public and symbolic gesture showing that you have accepted Jesus Christ to be your personal Lord & Savior. Going under the water represents you dying to your old life. Being raised out of the water represents a new birth (spiritual birth) and you are now raised to a new life with Christ. Not only does Jesus command us to baptize during the great commission in Matthew 28, but Jesus Himself was baptized as a model for us to follow.

# Daily Living

## Day 2



Welcome to Day 2! For the next several days we will be focusing on understanding our Relationship with God! The most valuable piece of information I can give you as you start your journey is that your relationship with God is everything. That relationship happens through reading scripture, prayer, and living in the Holy Spirit. Over the next several days we will go into greater depth on what that means, but we must know Him by spending time with Him; there are no substitutes for this part of your spiritual development. The closer you press into your relationship with God, the greater your clarity and understanding of His love and truth will become.

As we begin, I encourage you to get familiar with the image below, which displays the 4 pillars of our faith in Christ. Understanding this can be useful as you begin your new journey in Christ. I pray that by the time you have completed this journey, these 4 pillars (Relationship, Community, Mission, and Commitment) will be a part of your daily spiritual journey.



As a new believer, you might be asking yourself, "Now that I'm a Christian, what am I supposed to do?" You might have questions about reading, prayer, music, friends, and many other aspects. To help build your foundation before we approach any of these questions, we need to define a major piece of this approach. If you look at the image above, you will see a phrase that says "Gospel-Centered".

To explain "Christ-Centered," it simply means everything (actions, decisions, worldview, etc.) is now filtered through our new-found relationship and understanding of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we commit and obey His ways through the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit and His word (Bible). Through this, we may honor and glorify God by fulfilling His will in our lives ([John 15:5](#)).

## How do I develop a personal relationship with God?

Any relationship in the world takes work. There is no difference in our relationship with God: we must put forth the effort. There are no shortcuts to spiritual growth; it takes effort. In [James 4:7-8](#) it says we must submit

ourselves to God, resist the devil, and draw near to Him, and through that God will draw near. Also, [Jeremiah 29:13](#) says, "You will seek and find God when you seek him with all your heart." There is something about the idea of fully committing your entire being (mind, will, emotions) to God, not just what are convenient parts of your life, but the entirety of your life. There is no substitute for time; we must and should spend time with God because it is the only way to develop a real relationship with God. ([Galatians 2:20](#))

### We do this through the following:

- Reading the Bible with intentionality and purpose. [Hebrews 4:12](#)
- Confessing sin to God. [John 1:9](#)
- Prayer (we will go more into it later this week).
- Listening to worship music. [Ephesians 5:19-20](#)
- Reflecting and having gratitude. [Colossians 4:2](#)
- Find a church and be committed to those gathering together. [Acts 2:42-47](#)
- Having accountability and Christian friends to talk to about spiritual things. [Proverbs 27:17](#)
- Listening and or watching sermons/podcasts/audible/books etc. [1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)
- Being obedient to His way and putting forth the effort to live out what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. For example, giving up pornography in your life because it is lust and very destructive [1 John 2:16-17](#)

# How do I overcome temptation and sin?

Sin and temptation are a part of life and will continue to be until we die, but there is good news and victory over that. Jesus was tempted (but never sinned), and Paul sinned throughout his accounts within the New Testament. King David murdered Uriah and committed adultery with Bathsheba. So we see examples throughout the Old and New Testaments of examples of temptation and sin. Here is a short list with scripture references of these three examples.

- **Jesus** - [Matthew 4:1](#) *"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."*
- **Paul** - [Romans 7:15](#) *"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do."*
- **David** - [2 Samuel 11:14-15](#) *"In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."*

To clarify, **temptation** is not a sin– you can think of temptation more like the "attraction", "desire", or "suggestion" to commit sin. In 1 Corinthians it talks about temptation for believers.

[1 Corinthians 10:13](#) - *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

I have been saying for years, "The best way to avoid temptation is don't put yourself into a situation to be tempted." For example: if you struggle with getting drunk, don't go to bars or parties with alcohol. Temptation comes from both inward desires and external forces (relationship or the enemy) ([James 1:14-15](#)). The danger with temptation is it has a strong compelling factor that tries to lead us into sin. You can only overcome temptation; once you cross the line into action and commit sin, at that point it is no longer temptation. Below is a list of a few ways we can fight temptation.

## **Fight With Prayer:**

[Matthew 26:41](#)- *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

[Matthew 6:9-13](#)- *"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"*

### **Fight With The Holy Spirit:**

[Galatians 5:16](#) - "So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

[Galatians 5:22-23](#) - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law."

### **Fight With Scripture:**

[Psalms 119:11](#)- "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. "

[Matthew 4:7](#)- "Jesus answered him, it is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

### **Fight With A Mental & Spiritual Commitment:**

[James 4:7](#)- "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

[Ephesians 6:11](#)- "Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

## **What Is The Most Important Thing I Need To Know As I Start My Journey?**

Commitment to scripture (Bible), the Holy Spirit, and the church must be the consistent pieces as you build the foundation of your new life with Christ. Read the Bible with the intent to really learn it. Don't race through it just to check a box or accomplish a goal or task— understand how it can be applied to your life. Memorize scripture as it brings life to your understanding and helps you to combat sin and the desires of the flesh. Learn how to hear the Holy Spirit's guidance in your life. Be committed to a church and build friendships.

***If you haven't already, I highly suggest you check out Bible Basic (Part 1 & 2)***

# FAITH

Day 3



## What Is Faith?

As we begin the 3rd day I want to remind us of something we learned in Day 2, which is the definition of faith. Faith is “complete trust or confidence in something or someone.” Faith is required for anyone who has accepted Jesus as Savior. Apart from faith, it’s impossible to receive and experience the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Faith is also vital to any believer as they live each

day. Let's look through some passages of scripture to develop our understanding of the concept of faith.

[Hebrews 11:6](#) *"And without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*

First, we know that faith is a requirement for any believer because of Hebrew 11:6. Second, faith is the activating agent to accept Jesus Christ. We know this because of what Ephesians 2:8 says...

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast."*

Since we cannot save ourselves, faith is the only responsibility we have in the process of salvation. Since we understand grace (the giving of something even though you don't deserve it), it presents salvation as a gift for us to accept. Just like when your family member or friend gives you a gift, the only part you play is receiving it. In the same

likeness, it goes for salvation, through grace, Jesus hands us the eternal gift of salvation, we just have to receive that gift.

A common response to any gift by the recipient is the action of either playing with or using the gift to fulfill its intended purpose. This very simple action shows the gift giver that the gift you received brings you joy and/or is useful in your life, which in return feeds the giver's heart. The Christian life is very similar: now that you have received the gift of salvation, our expression towards God is one of faith. Faith brings joy to the Father because He knows you acknowledge what He has done for you.

## What Is Genuine Faith?

When a gift really matters to you, it does two things. First, It creates genuine meaning and thankfulness within your heart and mind. Second, that gift becomes a part of your life in some way. We as Christians need to examine our faith within the same standards of how the gift of the Father affects us.

- Does the gift of salvation and our new relationship genuinely matter to us?
- Do we truly feel a sense of gratitude or thankfulness? If so, has it impacted how we live our lives?
- Is this new-found faith in Jesus a nice thought, or a reality within us?

The reason I bring this up is because of a very powerful verse we find in James.

[James 2:19](#)- *You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

This verse points to the idea that belief by itself doesn't do much. James connects the thought that even demons believe there is a God, so what does that prove? Let's try to connect this verse back to the idea of "gifts" that we have been discussing. More than likely, you have at least received one gift in your life you absolutely didn't like. Even though the gesture of the gift was thoughtful, you saw no value in it. I'm confident you still acknowledged that person by thanking them, but in the end, it didn't impact your life by any means.

Using this analogy, the same goes for Christians who acknowledge God's existence, and even give God thanks, yet there is no real manifestation that the gift of salvation and new relationship ever made a genuine impact in their lives. You see, anyone can acknowledge that the gift giver existed, thank him, and they can even describe the gift, but the reality is, did you eternalize it, and did the gift genuinely impact you?

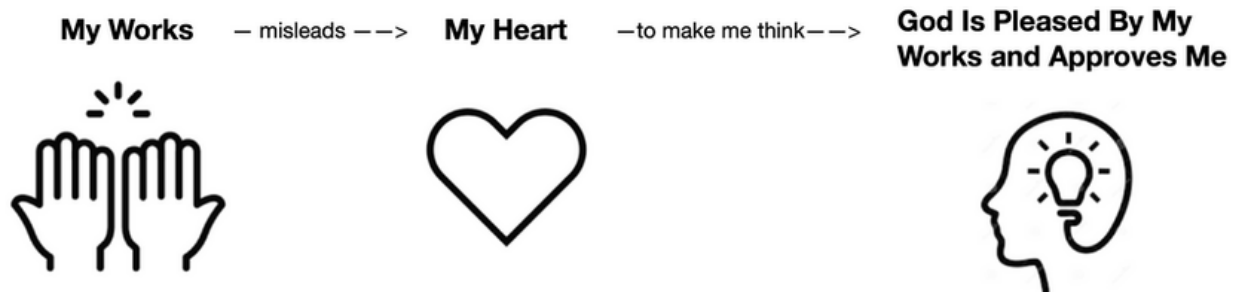


I like to think of it like this, if you love someone, do you just tell them you love them? Of course not, you also show it through gifts, spending time, honoring them, and many other ways. Genuine faith is the same thing; it's not just talk or belief, it's actually walking out what you believe. Genuine faith produces a desire in us to have a holy fear of God, to be in a relationship with Him, to pursue His ways, and to live like Jesus.

[1 John 2:3-6](#)- *We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*

## Faith & Action (Deeds/Works)

It's important, as we discuss this topic, that we make something very clear. Neither your actions nor your deeds save you. Have you ever heard someone say, "I need to fix myself before I come to God"? Below is an illustration of how some view their relationship with God.



It's not as if there's a scale, and God is measuring good and bad deeds. Some Christians actually believe that if their good deeds outweigh their bad deeds at the end of their life, that grants them access to heaven. That type of thinking is incorrect. Jesus has already completed the work of salvation; it is finished ([John 19:30](#)). Eternal life is yours; it is by grace you have been saved ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)), and nothing else is required from you outside your personal commitment to your faith in Jesus Christ. The proper way to understand this is demonstrated below.



**Understanding  
Grace**



—informs —>

**My Heart**



—Which propels me —>

**To Do Good Works**



We must properly understand God's grace. The Tyndale Bible Dictionary states that grace enables God to confront human indifference and rebellion with an inexhaustible capacity to forgive and to bless. Understanding His grace is the connection that places the desire inside of us to 'do good works.' Many new or maturing believers feel like they **'have to'** do good things, but when we properly understand His grace and mercy on our lives, it changes to **'we desire to'** do good things because we want to honor and worship Him.

[Galatians 2:16](#) *know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.*

[Romans 5:1-2](#) *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.*

So within the same line of thinking, we must not abuse God's grace. Some might take this idea to mean that we are saved through faith, so we can just do whatever we want. We are still responsible for our actions ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#)). We don't just get a free pass to do whatever we like after salvation. I tell you this because the early church struggled with this understanding as well. The enemy and our sinful nature are tricky, and they will try to confuse us as believers. Paul even says this in Romans...

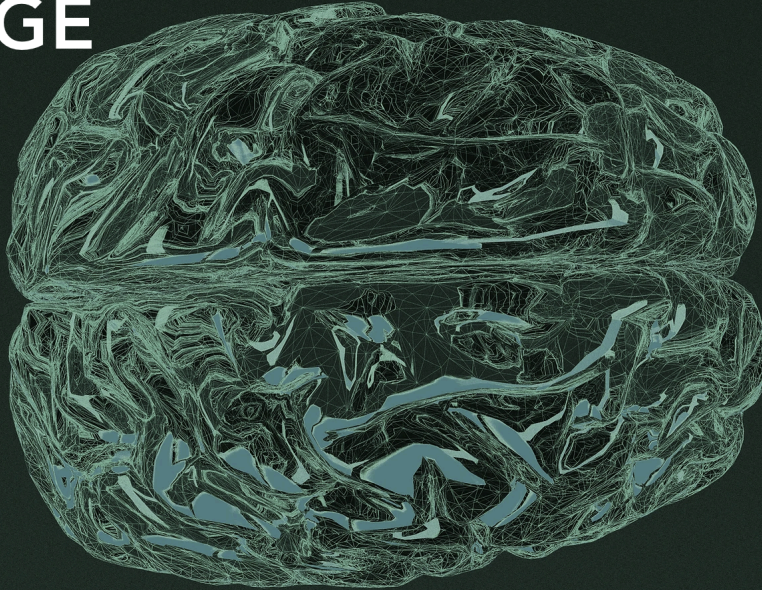
[Romans 6:1-2](#) *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?*

Therefore, as we reflect on this topic, we identify that faith and action accompany one another and cannot exist apart from each other as genuine believers in Jesus Christ. So practically, each morning when we wake up we have two choices. Will we walk in faith, or will we walk in our own power and understanding? Which will you choose each morning?

[2 Corinthians 5:7](#) *For we live by faith, not by sight.*

# ENGAGE

Day 4



Welcome to day 4! You're doing great, keep up the good work! Today we will be discussing the battlefield of the mind and how we should look at our lives from a Christian perspective. Life tends to challenge our mental game regardless of whether we believe in Jesus or not. Adding the redemptive process into the mix can get very difficult and complicated because you will find great opposition as you strive toward your relationship with God.

## Two Enemies

To understand the battlefield of the mind, we first have to understand who we are actually battling. We as humans are unfortunately hardwired with a sinful nature due to the fall of man. Every human has two enemies and those are the following:

### The Sinful Nature:

[Colossians 3:5](#) *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

[Romans: 7:20](#) *Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.*

[1 Peter 2:11](#) - *Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.*

## The Enemy Satan:

[Ephesians 6:12](#) *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

[John 10:10](#) *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

[1 Peter 5:8](#) *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

We have these two forces working against us at all times. Since we still live in this world (which is fallen), and our soul dwells in the body and mind (which has the fallen nature), we have to acknowledge these opposing forces so that we take into consideration what actions we should take to battle and win the fight. Daily victory is obtainable and very possible, but we have to make a commitment within our faith and use the right spiritual disciplines to assure victory.

## Our Daily Target

So what is the goal for the believer on a daily basis? What is our target or objective? What does it mean to have daily victory in a practical sense? Let's go through a few verses that will help shape us to understand this concept better.

### 1. We Live Daily To Glorify God

[1 Corinthians 10:31](#) *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

This is a simple verse with powerful insight for the believer. Since our lives are now in Christ, everything we do ties to a greater purpose and meaning because we understand the unique position we now have with God. We no longer are just living for ourselves ([2 Corinthians 5:15](#)), but we are living to know and honor God by living a life underneath His Lordship. The personal benefit of following God and dying to yourself ([Luke 9:23-25](#)) is a life of purpose, meaning, ([Romans 8:28](#)) and relationship ([2 Corinthians 5:17-19](#)) with the creator of the universe.

The enemy will try to convince you that you are giving up too much of your life for God, but that could not be further from the truth. We see in verse 25 that it says, "What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self." What the enemy and your sinful nature will not disclose to you is the blessing in ([Luke 11:28](#)), the favor in ([Psalms 84:11](#)) and the fullness of life in ([John 10:10](#)) that proceeds from a life of commitment to Him. This doesn't mean that everything will go perfectly in your life.

There will be injustices that happen, hard times, and struggles, but you do not face it alone. We have the Lord with us throughout it all.

## **2. We Live Daily For God's Will.**

[1 Peter 4:1-4](#) *Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and detestable idolatry. 4 They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you.*

We are reminded in 1 Peter that we live for God's will as believers in Jesus Christ. We will go a lot deeper on the topic of God's will in Week 5, but we must recognize that giving Glory to God is us living out His will for our lives. So how do you know God's will for your life? God's will for you is not a destination, nor do you just arrive at God's will one day. God's will for your life is an ever-unfolding direction provided by the Holy Spirit until we die, and it requires us to walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit's guidance. This also means we strive to abstain from anything that leads us away from the will of God.

## **3. We Live Daily To Love God and Love Others**

[Matthew 22:37-40](#) *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

This third focus can be simply understood that we love God with our entire being and love others. The heart represents emotion, the mind represents our thinking and the soul represents the spirit or the spiritual aspect of the human. If we want to gauge our daily living, this is a great measurement of how we are doing. Are we loving those around us? Are we loving God with everything we have in us? As we love both God and others, we are glorifying God (in part) and doing His will (in part) within our lives.

## **How To Stay Engaged**

So all that we have learned today has led us to this point. We know the enemy, we also now know our goal, so how do we stay engaged on a daily basis? There is no perfect answer to this question, but I do want to highlight a few things I truly believe would be helpful through the word of God.



[Romans 12:1-3](#) *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

## 1. Become A Living Sacrifice

So, I know this terminology sounds a little barbaric, but it holds so much power. As we have been discussing, this life is no longer ours, as scripture says we are now hidden with Christ....

[Colossians 3:2-3](#) *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

To become a living sacrifice means that we offer our lives to God, for His glory. This is the only way we move from conceptual Christians to devoted Christians. If there is no commitment within this step on a daily basis, your spiritual journey will end very quickly and the thought of God and the power of salvation will just become a nice thought, not a reality. Staying engaged takes a tremendous amount of commitment and effort (mentally & physically), but your mind has to be fully engaged to want it—this why you see in the diagram daily the "commitment arrows". There are no shortcuts to becoming spiritually mature.

## 2. Renewing Our Mind

Below are a few methods that come to mind when I think of the idea of renewing our mind. This is a very similar activity to physical training. We have to "train" our minds to stay committed to God daily because we are hardwired to desire and pursue the things of this world. *(Please take time to read each verse)*

### How do we renew our mind?

1. Scripture - [Joshua 1:8](#)
2. Worship - [Psalms 150:6](#)
3. Taking Every Thought Captive - [2 Corinthians 10:5](#)
4. Dependence on the Holy Spirit - [Galatians 5:25](#)
5. Prayer - [1 Thessalonians 5:17-18](#)

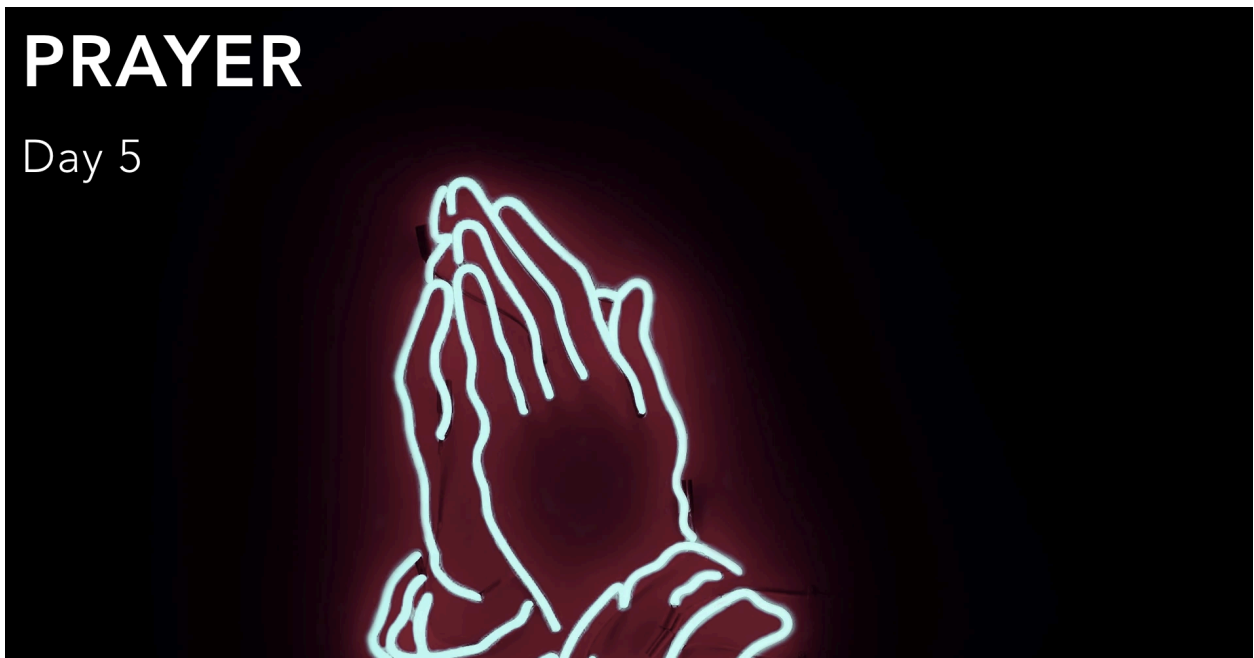
I want to expand upon one last thought to wrap up the conversation for today. To "take every thought captive" is so crucial to you as a believer. You have the power, through Christ, to take every thought captive. Meaning every negative, sinful, lustful thought, etc. As the gatekeeper to your mind, imagine (hypothetically) that you're standing at the front gate of your mind and the gate is closed. Only you possess the power to open that gate,

so when lies, negative thoughts, sinful thinking comes to that gate, you now have the power to reject it as a believer. In addition, the good news is this, the Holy Spirit will actually help you to identify what thoughts are approved; all that you have to do is listen and obey.

[2 Corinthians 10:5](#) *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

# PRAYER

Day 5



Welcome to Day 5. Today we will explore prayer and its importance. If you live in America, you probably heard the phrase "communication is key." It is no different within our relationship with God. It's imperative that we take hold of one of the most important tools that we have in building our relationship with God. Prayer can best be summarized as communication with God, and it should be a very familiar practice in your life. So let's start to understand the concept of prayer through scripture.

## How do we pray?

Prayer is simply talking to God, just like you would talk or communicate to any human on earth. The difference is that He is God, but He is our father, and we are his sons and daughters, so we should approach Him within that mindset. I would dare to say that there is no special formula or structure to prayer. It's not as if you say a prayer a certain way God will hear you better, but I would tell you that [James 5:16](#) says, "*The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*" So if you are in Christ and are truly devoted to Him, I believe he hears us.

A part of Jesus's earthly ministry was to set an example for us, and He does this for us in many aspects including prayer. I don't think there is a better example for us to learn prayer from than Jesus himself. The book of Matthew provides us with great insight in this concept.

[Matthew 6:9-13](#) "*This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, you will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give*



*us today our daily bread.12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'*

### **So what are a few things that we can pick up from Matthew 6?**

- **Honor God** -*"Hallowed be your name"* Hallow means to make or declare holy, meaning we should approach God with honor and reverence, understanding His Lordship in our lives.
- **Prioritizing God's Will** -*"Your kingdom come"* This acknowledges God's will to be a priority within your life and understanding.
- **Provisions** -*"Give us today our daily bread"* This acknowledges that everything that gives life comes from Him.
- **Repentance** -*"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"* Acknowledging the sin in your life and forgiving those who have sinned against you.
- **Give Power To Resist & Provide Victory Over The Enemy** -*"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"* This simply acknowledges that as the enemy will come at us, we ask for God's assistance to combat the sinful nature and satan.

### **How do we end prayer ?**

The most common phrases to end a prayer are "In Jesus Name" or "Amen"(which means to agree or affirm). Again, this is just a suggestion, but we have come up with these phrases because of verses like [John 14:13-14](#) and [Ephesians 3:21](#).

Who do we pray to: Father, Son, or Spirit?

We will learn more about the Trinity in Week 2, but because God is three in one, you can literally address anyone of three depending on the nature of your prayer. I truly believe it gets to God, no matter whom we address, but most commonly we hear the term, "God," "Lord," or "Father" to start a prayer and that is because of [Matthew 6:9](#)

## **When do we pray?**

Prayer should be the most common activity for the believer. The nice thing about it is God is with you wherever you go. You do not need to be in a church building or have a pastor with you to pray. This is both a private and sometimes public practice of the believer. So, when do we pray? Let's look at a few verses that will help shape our understanding.

**(Please keep in mind this is not an exhaustive list.)**

- **Continuously:**
  - [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#) - "Pray continually"
  - [Colossians 4:2](#) - "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful"
  - [Philippians 4:6](#) - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."
  - [Luke 18:1](#) - "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up."
- **Battling Temptation:**
  - [Matthew 26:41](#) - "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- **Difficult Times (Health/Sin/Trouble):**
  - [James 5:13](#) - "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."
- **Seeking God's Guidance & Will For Your Life:**
  - [1 John 5:14](#) - "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us"

When you pray in a group, don't worry about impressing anyone around you. God is not concerned with the elegance of how you pray' He is focused on your heart's attention.

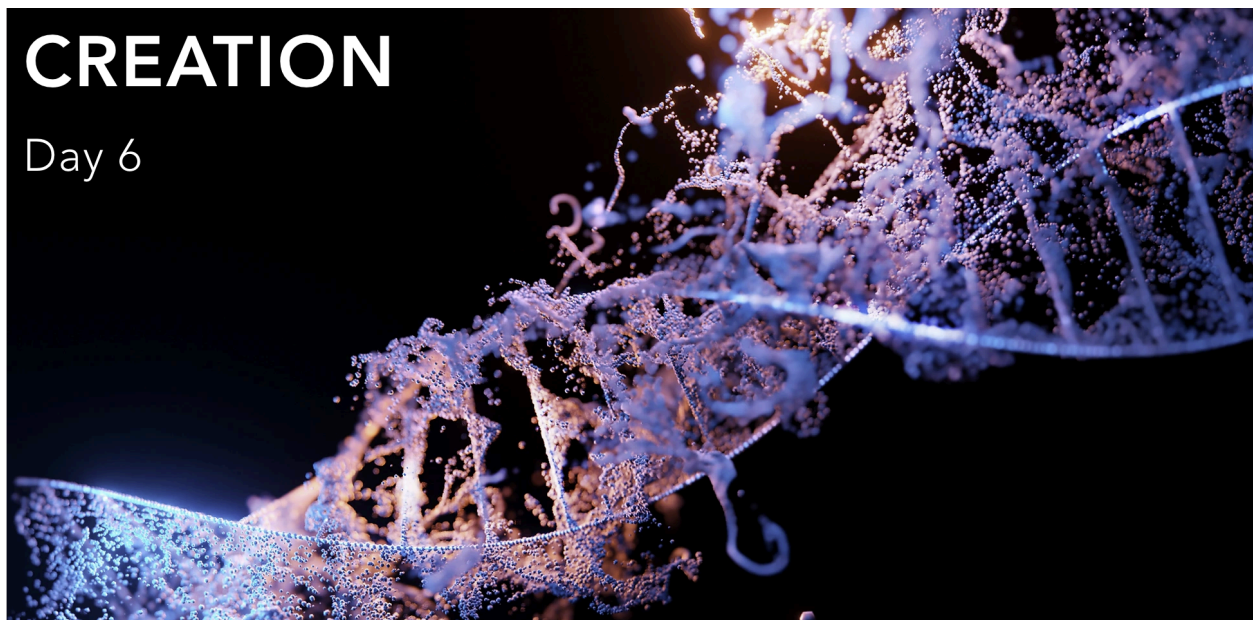
[Matthew 6:7](#) " And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words."

## Communication Is A Two Way Street

Lastly, I would just like to encourage you as you talk with God to reflect and take time on what God might be saying back to you. As you grow in your faith, the spirit of God communicates to us all the time, we just have to tune in to hear the voice of God. He sometimes speaks in His word, in our thoughts, internal impressions, through brothers and sisters in Christ, etc.

[Isaiah 30:21](#) - Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

# STARTING WEEK 2 VIDEO:



Welcome to day 6! Today we will focus on understanding who God says we are and the nature of His design within us. My current church has a saying, "**Created On Purpose, For A Purpose,**" and I love that because of the amount of truth this little saying carries. I cannot express to you the importance of understanding that you were never a mistake—God knows and loves you. Since this is true, let's explore what Scripture has to say about this.

**He knows the number of hairs on your head...**

*[Luke 12:7](#) - Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*

**You were created on purpose and God has always known about you...**

[Psalm 139:13–14](#) -*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

**The Lord gives life to our TRUE purpose, to those who know him...**

[Psalms 57:2](#) - *I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill his purpose for me.*

**He cares about your worries and burdens and doesn't want you to carry the brokenness of this world...**

[Matthew 11:28-30](#) - *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

## **Creation Of Mankind**

God created us, and we know this because of Genesis 1 & 2. It describes the creation of the world and gives us the understanding that God created the world and all things in it ([Colossians 1:16](#)). In addition, we can recognize that He has made us in His own image ([Genesis 1:27](#)). You and I were made to bring glory to God through perfect union and relationship with Him. The whole reality before sin entered into the world is that we would experience the full expression of God in perfect union. So what does it mean to be created in the image of God and be human?

## **Created In His Image**

There is an interesting phrase that encompasses who we are as humans, it derives from the Latin phrase, "*Imago Dei*", which means "image of God." This concept sheds light on us as humans: we are "God's image bearers". Since we are made in his image, God has clearly defined who we are as his children, and although we are not equal to God, He has made us with similar capacities and abilities that He possesses and wants us to have.

# What Makes Us Human?

- Physical Body: The Bible teaches that humans have a physical body formed from the dust of the ground. [Genesis 2:7](#) states, *"Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."*
- Spirit: God breathed the breath of life into the physical body, giving humans a spirit or life force. [Ecclesiastes 12:7](#) says, *"the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."*
- Soul: The soul represents the innermost part of a person, encompassing emotions, intellect, and will. [Matthew 22:37](#) describes aspects of the soul. *"Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart (will/emotions) and with all your soul (will/emotions) and with all your mind (intellect)."*

[1 Thessalonians 5:23](#) - *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify[a] you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In summary, according to the Bible, humans are composed of a physical body formed from the dust, infused with the spirit from God, possessing a soul representing their inner being, made in the image of God, and having the capacity for a spiritual connection with God.

## Stewardship:

One of those characteristics he has given us is authority or dominion over the earth ([Genesis 1:26](#); [Psalms 8:6](#)). You and I have been entrusted with great power and privilege on this earth to rule it. Unfortunately, because of our sinful nature, we all know that there has been great abuse of that privilege over time in many ways. He has given over ownership and authority to us to manage everything from plants and animals to human life. In Genesis 1 it says multiple times that what God created was "good". All created things are important in God's eyes, especially human life. No matter the stage of life (conception through old age), every soul matters to God because He created us all. Through scripture, we see different roles for men and women, but we are equal in God's eyes. In the same likeness, there are many ethnicities, but no race is superior—we are all equal ([Romans 2:11](#); [Proverbs 22:2](#); [Acts 10:34-35](#); [Genesis 1:27-28](#)).

## Creation:

Next, we also have the ability to create, and we can see the truthfulness of this concept by simply looking at how man is driven and motivated to build. We greatly desire to create amazing buildings and structures, music and art, businesses, transportation, technology, etc. We have even been given the power of creation through procreation, to create life ([Genesis 1:28](#))! These are some of the amazing gifts and blessings that God has given to mankind. The most important aspect to humans is how we are going to manage this great privilege and trust that God has given to us. As Christians, we must allow the Bible and the Spirit of God to shape our identity in how we are to steward, create, and live our lives ([Romans 12:1-3](#)). We are a new creation in Jesus Christ, and we have a new life now, which is why the gospel is such great news for those who have Christ! ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#))

## Sexuality:

When sin entered the world, sexual identities and many other aspects of human sexuality were distorted. We see that God said it's not good for man to be alone ([Genesis 2:18](#)) so he created Eve. This exclusive union between man and woman was formed, but it was broken through the fall of man. We read various passages of sexual perversion addressed throughout the Bible, for example ([Leviticus 18:22](#), [Romans 1:26-28](#), to select a few). Even in a natural sense, two males cannot have babies (naturally speaking), nor can two females have babies (without the help of a doctor). Please understand that the goal of this short section is not to tell people that God doesn't love them because of sexual struggles, but to allow scripture and the Spirit of God to inform us who we are. Scripture clearly states two types of genders (male & female), and sin has twisted that truth for unnatural relationships. We can see in [Genesis 1:27](#) that God made both male and female only, with no other variations. This has become a big battle over the last several years, but please understand the Bible is very clear on these matters. This will never be a popular view within the world around us, but it is the truth, and it's important to know where scripture stands.



# JESUS

Day 7



As we continue to build our connection to God in Day 7, we must understand more about our savior Jesus Christ. From the beginning, God had a plan to restore mankind (as we read previously), and he made it known since the beginning. It's important to note that we cannot be reunited with God the Father without Jesus Christ. We also cannot have access to the Holy Spirit without Jesus Christ. Lastly, we cannot have eternal life without Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the knot that ties our faith together;

without Christ, it's impossible for our faith to hold together. Jesus Christ is the "Good News" that establishes the concept of hope and redemption for all mankind through his love and sacrifice on the cross!

**So as we begin a deeper dive into understanding Jesus, what things should we know about Him?**

**Jesus existed since the beginning of time.**

[John 1:1-18](#), [John 8:58](#) [Genesis 1:26](#)

Understanding that Jesus existed before the world started is significant because it establishes his eternal nature and divine authority. It means that Jesus is not just a human being, but rather a part of the eternal Godhead (Father, Son, & Holy Spirit), who played a central role in the creation of the universe. This knowledge provides a deeper understanding of the nature of God and the significance of Jesus' mission to redeem humanity from sin and death.



## **Jesus was prophesied about throughout the Old Testament.**

[Isaiah 53](#), [Isaiah 7:14](#), [Micah 5:2](#)

The prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament are important because they provide evidence of the divine plan for salvation that extends throughout human history. It demonstrates that the coming of Jesus was not an afterthought or a random occurrence, but rather a fulfillment of God's promises and a part of his larger plan for redemption. It also helps to establish the credibility of Jesus as the Messiah.

## **Jesus was born through a virgin birth.**

[Isaiah 7:14](#), [Matthew 1:18–25](#)

The virgin birth of Jesus was a miraculous event that sets Jesus apart from all other human beings. It affirms his divine nature and establishes his unique role as the Son of God, who came to Earth to save humanity from sin and death. It also fulfills prophecy as we see in [Isaiah 7:14](#).

## **Jesus was 100% Man/100% God.**

[1 Timothy 2:5](#) [John 10:30](#) [Colossians 2:9](#)

Jesus' dual nature demonstrates God's love and grace towards humanity. By taking on human form, Jesus identifies with us in our suffering and shows us the depth of God's love by willingly sacrificing himself for our salvation. Within Jesus's humanity, he also sets forth an example of how we should live on earth as well.

## **Jesus lived a sinless life.**

[1 John 3:5](#) [1 Peter 2:22](#)

The importance of Jesus's sinless life is a direct reflection of proving Jesus's divinity. His sinless life created a "perfect sacrifice" as well. This also helps encourage believers to follow Jesus's example in how he lived. Although we cannot be perfect, our newfound life should develop inside of us a desire to resist sin [Romans 6:6](#).

## **Jesus became a perfect sacrifice to make us right with God forever.**

[Hebrews 10:1-18](#). [Hebrews 9:11-14](#)

Because of the fallen nature of man, sacrifices were used to cover our sins. Since the beginning, as we read in the Old Testament, they used animal sacrifices to temporarily cover the sins of God's people, to be made right with God. Over the course of the Old Testament, we see that God had a plan to send a savior (Jesus) to make us right with God once and for all!

### **Jesus conquered death.**

[Romans 1:4](#) [Luke 23:46](#) [Luke 24:1-35](#)

Jesus died in his human state, but 3 days later rose from the grave. In Luke 23 we can see evidence of Jesus breathing his last breath, and very shortly afterward we see that He arose from the grave. When Jesus conquered death this proved His divinity (meaning He was God). This is also an encouragement to the believer, if Jesus conquered death, then what should we fear if we have Jesus in our lives? We have nothing to fear, not even death for those who are in Him. We are now set free from all fear through Christ. [1 Corinthians 15:55-56](#).

### **Jesus was not only seen by the disciples after his resurrection but seen by over 500 people.**

[Luke 24:36-49](#) [1 Corinthians 15:6](#)

Some skeptics would say that Jesus's disciples faked his resurrection and stole his body and hid it in an attempt to say that he resurrected from the dead. You also might hear skeptics point out and say that "of course" Jesus's followers said they saw him, but it's a completely different story to have over 500 individuals see the resurrected Christ. We must understand as we develop our faith that this is not just a nice story; Jesus truly resurrected, and many people saw this. There is even non-biblical documentation about these events as well. This should help build greater confidence in our faith and who Jesus is.

### **Jesus is the only way to God.**

[John 14:6](#) [Acts 4:12](#)

It's important to understand that Jesus Christ is the only way to a life reconciled with God. There are no amounts of works or deeds you and I can do to earn our way to heaven. There are also no other religions or spiritual practices available to rescue us from sin and eternal separation from God. Jesus is the only way. Be cautious—the world around you will try to convince you that there are other ways, but that isn't true.

# HOLY SPIRIT

Day 8



Today we will be focusing on a major key element that every believer must understand to reach their full potential in their relationship with God, which is the Holy Spirit. Jesus makes a very important statement that I think is key for us to understand. I'm going to use the Amplified Bible version for this passage reading in [John 16:7](#) which says...

*"7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners,*

*Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you].*

Could you imagine that you have been walking around with Jesus for about 3 years, and he tells you, "I'm going to be leaving soon." I could imagine how His disciples felt at that moment—I bet their hearts dropped. After he makes that statement he then proceeds to tell you it's best that He actually goes so that the Holy Spirit would come. I don't know about you, but I would have had a million questions for Jesus. I'm sure you have a few questions as well, so we will look at a few different questions and pieces of scripture that will develop a foundational understanding of the Holy Spirit.

# Who Is The Holy Spirit?

## The Holy Spirit Is God

[Acts 5:3-4](#) - *Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."*

This verse clearly points out that the Holy Spirit is not just some spiritual entity, but is God himself. It affirms that if they lied to the Holy Spirit then they lied to God, which if you tie the text together shows that the Holy Spirit is clearly representing God. Next, we see a very simple but clear example of this idea in John 4.

[John 4:24](#): *God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.*

# What Role Does The Holy Spirit Play In Our Salvation?

## The Spirit Draws & Helps Us To Recognize Sin

[John 16:7-11](#) - *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.*

[1 Thessalonians 1:5](#) - *because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.*

The Holy Spirit plays a significant part in our salvation process; we see in John 16:8 and 1 Thessalonians 1:5 that the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin which leads us to know that we need a savior who is Jesus Christ. Take a second to reflect back to the moment you accepted Jesus; someone might have told you that you need Jesus, but something inwardly convinced you and convicted you to move to say yes to Jesus. That, my friend, I strongly believe was the work of the Holy Spirit in you.

## The Spirit Is A Part Of Our New Birth

[John 3:3-7](#) - *Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'*

[Titus 3:5](#) - *he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

## The Holy Spirit Is Evidence Of Our Salvation

[Ephesians 1:13-14](#) - *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

[1 John 4:13](#) - *This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit.*

## How Do I Know If I Have The Holy Spirit?

Your body is the "temple" for the Holy Spirit, meaning God wants to rest His spirit within man. The only way to have the Spirit dwell within the human being is to be born again, which means you have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord & Savior. Remember it was God who created you; you are His creation and He designed humans in His image. As image bearers He wants us to experience the fullest expression of Himself by placing the power of His Spirit within us.

[1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#) - *Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*

Next, it's important to recognize that there is a process of maturing in the Lord and recognizing the Spirit's leading. It is natural to question if you have the Holy Spirit. We have to practice the skill of listening (which includes reflecting and slowing down to

listen), but then by faith, actively live out the Spirit's guidance and direction within our lives which in return builds our confidence in His leading. Here are a few practical ways to identify the Holy Spirit is present in your life (*this isn't an exhaustive list*).

### **When You Desire And Want To Obey God's Way.**

[1 John 3:24](#) - *The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.*

### **When We See The Manifestation Of The Spirit In Our Lives.**

[Galatians 5:22-23](#) - *the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things, there is no law.*

### **When You Sense His Presence.**

[Ephesians 3:16-19](#) - *pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

### **When His Words And Thoughts Start Forming How We Understand Life.**

[1 Corinthians 2:10-12](#) - *these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Bible does tell us we can suffocate the spirit's leading and voice in our lives ([1 Thessalonians 5:19](#)), so we have to be cautious about how we live. There will be some things that supernaturally happen quicker than others within our maturing process, but remember if you seek God with your whole heart, He will be found ([Jeremiah 29:13](#)), and understanding the Spirit's guidance will come naturally as you pursue God. The key is not just listening, it's actually stepping out in faith and putting his guidance into practice which will produce confidence in us to hear His voice.

# What Role Does The Holy Spirit Play In Our Daily Lives?

*(this is not an exhaustive list)*

## **Convicts Us Of Our Sin.**

[John 16:8](#) - *When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:*

## **Gives Us Spiritual Gifts For The Works Of The Ministry & To Edify The Church.**

[1 Corinthians 12:4](#) - *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them*

## **Empowers The Believer.**

[Acts 1:8](#) - *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

## **Intercedes For The Believer In Prayer.**

[Romans 8:26-27](#) - *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.*

## **Produces Good Works Within The Believer.**

[Philippians 2:13](#) - *for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*

## **Teaches Us His Way.**

[John 14:26](#) - *But the Advocate, 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.*



# THE TRINITY

Day 9

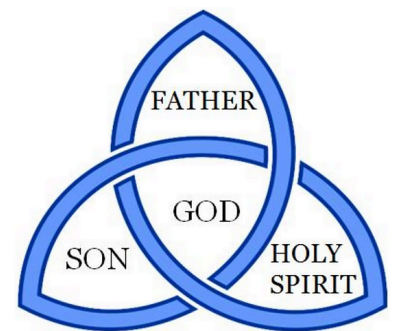
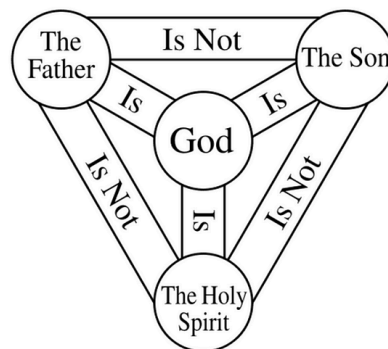


It is day 9 and I'm proud of you for accomplishing what you have so far! The Trinity is a component of our faith that is a very complex and profound concept that can be difficult to fully grasp and understand. There have been several analogies or metaphors used throughout history to help people understand the nature of the Trinity. Here is my personal favorite:

## Water Analogy:

Water can exist in three distinct states: liquid (*God the Father*), solid or ice" (*Jesus the Son*), and gas or "steam" (*Holy Spirit*). Similarly, the Trinity consists of three distinct persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), but they are all part of the same divine being.

It's important to note that while this analogy can be helpful in understanding the concept of the Trinity, I pray that these visual illustrations might be helpful for you to grasp the Trinity:



# Where do we find the Trinity in scripture?

## [Luke 3:21-22](#)

*This verse is great at showing us the Trinity. The father is represented in "voice", Jesus is physically there, and lastly, the Holy Spirit is represented as the "dove".*

## [Matthew 28:19](#)

*This verse is Jesus himself identifying all three parts of the Trinity.*

## [Genesis 1:26](#)

*Finally, we see the statement from God that he is making humans in "**our** image" which points to the Trinity. This means before the foundations of the world, Father, Son, & Holy Spirit existed.*

# What are some of the distinct roles within the Trinity?

## **God the Father:**

1. Creator and sustainer of the universe.
2. Heavenly Father who loves and cares for his children.
3. Just judge who holds all people accountable for their actions.

## **God the Son:**

1. Savior of humanity who died on the cross for the sins of the world.
2. Mediator between God and humanity, enabling reconciliation and relationship.
3. Teacher and example of how to live a righteous and loving life.

## **God the Holy Spirit:**

1. Empowerer and guide of believers, providing spiritual gifts and guidance.
2. Revealer of truth and interpreter of Scripture.
3. Comforter and encourager who brings peace and joy to believers.

# Is the Trinity three different Gods or just one?

The Christian faith sees the Trinity as One God. This is best understood as three in persons, but one being, meaning we hold to a monotheistic belief. We see the Bible teaches that there is only one God (see verses below):

### **Let's break this down:**

- As humans, we are 1 being with 1 person.
- God is 1 being with 3 persons.

## **What does Scripture say about God being one?**

[Deuteronomy 6:4](#) "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."

[Isaiah 44:6](#) "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides me, there is no god.'"

[1 Corinthians 8:6](#) "Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

**A great Theological term to learn is monotheism.**

**Monotheism** The belief that there is only one God.

**BONUS HELP:** This is a great video by Nabeel Qureshi that is a great resource on going deeper within this topic.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0JpwOSKRC0>



# WORSHIP

Day 10



This is our final day of focusing specifically on our Connection with God. Today we are going to look at the idea and concept of worshipping God. As we set the stage on what worship is, the most important piece, to begin with, is how we view God within the context of worshipping Him. God is our creator and savior. Most importantly He is holy and worthy to be praised. I want to break down a few key concepts within this framework. First, let's define what Holy is.

**Holy** - Having the characteristics of moral or ritual purity; context often emphasizes one over the other.

As we look at this definition, I want to focus on two key components. The word "purity" and the phrase "one over the other." In God, there is no sin nor evil; He himself is perfect ([Matthew 5:48](#)), and He is the literal definition of pure and true. He declares what is right, good, holy, and just, because he himself is Holy ([Deuteronomy 32:4](#)). He also sits at the highest possible position in the universe ([Psalm 83:18](#)). There is no one like Him ([1 Samuel 2:2](#)).

**Holy Fear** - God is our friend ([John 15:15](#)), that is true, but more importantly He is God. As you develop your understanding, it's important that we would develop what many would call a "Holy Fear" of God. Proverbs says the following in [Proverbs 9:10](#), "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*" Now this concept of fear is not in the sense that you should run and hide, but it's a high level of respect towards God, meaning reverence and awe. We see this concept spoken about in Hebrews.

[Hebrews 12:28-29](#) - Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire."

Let's quickly define reverence and awe.....

**Reverence** - A feeling of profound respect.

**Awe** - An overwhelming feeling of fearful wonder.

As we build up our understanding of how to approach God in worship, we must approach God with a Holy Fear. This is something that should be consistent within the believer's life for the duration of his or her life. If I were to define Holy Fear, I would say it's a fearful wonder with a high level of respect for who God is. It's interesting that Hebrews 12:29 says, "For our God is a consuming fire." When you look at a fire, it tends to be captivating, yet you have respect not to touch the fire because of its power. The same goes for God— God is an all-consuming fire: powerful, captivating, but greatly respected.

Just like on a very cold night, the fire keeps us drawn into it to sustain us. The same goes for the Holy Fear of God; it should draw us ever closer to Him because He is the sustainer of life. The fear that we should carry is out of a place of high respect and honor. I like how author John Bevere says, "*The fear of the Lord doesn't drive us from God's presence — rather just the opposite. A good and wonderful fear draws us close to Him.*" I also heard John mention something I'm going to paraphrase. When we walk with a daily understanding of the proper fear of God, we should fear being away from Him, not fear being near Him. This understanding now sets the stage for us to explore some aspects of worshipping God.

## **Worship God With Our Lives**

After salvation, our pursuit of life and the way we think about our lives should be changing. We now live for God, not for ourselves only. We have a call to worship God with our life. Worship is defined as the feeling or expression of reverence (respect) and adoration (deep love) for God. I like to compare our relationship with God to marriage. In marriage, you are solely committed (deep love and respect) to one partner and completely sold out to that one relationship. The same goes for our relationship with God; to be committed to God is to worship Him solely, placing Him as a priority over everything, even your desire and will. Worship is genuinely expressed within us when we fully submit ourselves (*Body, Soul, Spirit*) to Christ. We see this discussed in Romans 12 where it says.

[Romans 12:1](#) - *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

To "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice" does not mean you need to die as a sacrifice—Christ has done that for us already. The key word here is "living" sacrifice. A living sacrifice means you continuously or daily offer yourself in full submission to God. We see this throughout scripture; another great verse is [Colossians 3:3](#) " *For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*" If this concept is difficult for you to understand, an easier way to consider it is to fully commit your entire being solely to God on a daily basis.

This idea of a living sacrifice is vital because it places God as king in our life, so He is the ultimate authority, and we understand that following His word and the Holy Spirit leads to true life. Second, He directs us on what to do and how we should do it. This is called living out the "Will of God," which will be discussed in greater detail in Week 5. The only way we follow God's lead is if He is fully in control—you and God cannot be co-equals in the leading of your life. We are flawed by sin, which includes lust for the flesh, pride, envy, selfishness, etc. We unfortunately are broken and are in need of His saving grace. True salvation should lead us to desire to submit to God's rule in our lives, and this is how we show genuine worship to Him.

## **Worship God With Our Song**

There are many aspects that go into worshiping God, but there is something powerful within worshiping God with our song. Worshiping God in song is more than just singing words on a screen in the church or over iTunes or radio. The song should come out of an overflow of our hearts, understanding with gratitude, respect, and awe who God is and what He has done for us. If we choose to sincerely press into singing worship songs, it enables us to take a deep reflection within our hearts. It has a tendency to reposition or even break our hearts back into proper alignment with God. Song is an offensive approach we can take within our spiritual lives to elevate God to His rightful place. Song is a way of communicating the sincerity of our heart's affection toward God. Below are some great verses to reflect on this specific act of worship.

[Psalm 95:1-6](#) - *Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. 3 For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. 5 The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. 6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;*



[Isaiah 12:5](#) - *Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world*

[Ephesians 5:19-20](#) - *speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## Worship God With Our Resources

Finances might be one of the most difficult areas for people to trust God in and to even talk about because it is a touchy topic, but the Bible has a lot to say about it. There are different interpretations on the idea of tithing, but I believe this verse describes why this is so important.

[Matthew 6:19-21](#) - *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your **treasure is**, there your heart will be also.*

Tithing and/or giving is a benchmark in our spiritual maturity, in my personal opinion. I know that we have all read how some church leaders have misappropriated the funds of their respective organizations, but it's key to understand that we don't give to men. If someone misappropriates the funds, God will hold that man or woman accountable, and to be honest, it is not as common as the news outlets might indicate. I believe the enemy uses these rare examples to try to discourage our spiritual development. Remember, this is an act of worship; we give to God to spiritually demonstrate our faith, trust, and obedience to Him. In [Mark 12:17](#) it says, *“Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s;”* The Old Testament and New Testament have several examples, but let me share with you a few that are most often used.

[Malachi 3:8-10](#) - *Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.*

[2 Corinthians 9:6-12](#) - *You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerf*



ully.” 8 And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. 9 As the Scriptures say, “They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be

*remembered forever.” 10 For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. 11 Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. 12 So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.*

We are called to be stewards of God's resources according to His will. If you think about it, God really gives us the health to work and the ability to earn wages. With a healthy biblical perspective on this subject, we realize that no matter if it is a little or abundant resource, it's all the Lord's.

# STARTING WEEK 3 VIDEO:



## THE CHURCH

Day 11



Welcome to Day 11! We will turn our direction towards a new key component within our faith, **Community**. We were never called to walk this life alone, and the first example of that is in Genesis 2, where God creates Eve to accompany Adam ([Genesis 2:18](#)). We learn throughout scripture that God finds joy in creating and having fellowship with both spiritual and earthly beings; this is an expression of His love and desire. God wants a relationship with us, that is why we are here.

## Old Testament "Assembly"

Throughout scripture, we see communities formed out of their belief and desire to worship God. The idea of the "Church" actually existed prior to Jesus's coming. Instead of using the word church, they would use the word "assembly." If you look up the word church in Greek (ekklesiā), this actually means assembly. There is a distinction between

the words assembly and church because of who actually makes up "the church," Christ's followers.

In the Old Testament, there was a big difference from what you and I experience in today's church service. We see several examples in the Old Testament that give us details on what services were like. Mostly it was composed of the Israelites, but they did have various people from different tribes or nationalities named sojourners ([2 Chronicles 6:32-33](#)) within their gatherings as well.

In some aspects, the Old Testament assembly meetings would look very familiar to us today. In the Old Testament, we see worshipers of God praising/singing, reading scripture, confessing sin, and praying together.

[Nehemiah 9:3](#) *"They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God."*

[2 Chronicles 29:28](#) *"The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the musicians played and the trumpets sounded. All this continued until the sacrifice of the burnt offering was completed."*

We even see in the New Testament where they confirm some of these practices, for instance in Acts 15.

[Acts 15:21](#) *"For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."*

The practice of worship in the Old Testament was very different because it was prior to Christ offering salvation. A major piece of their services was to offer sacrifices and follow specific guidelines to be made right with God that day. This was practiced and performed continuously because there were no permanent solutions to combat sin. That all changed when Christ came; we no longer had to practice "physical sacrifices" to cover our sins because Christ became the permanent sacrifice, once and for all.

## **New Testament "Church"**

Now as we fast-forward, we come to the New Testament, and we meet up with Jesus. While He was fulfilling His earthly ministry, we see that He makes a very important declaration for the future community of worshipers in Matthew 16.

[Matthew 16:18](#), - *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."*

It is at this moment that Jesus declares that He will establish this community of people that will not be defeated by the works of the enemy nor the flesh, and they will be called the church. We are His people because He is the only way back to the Father, so He is our leader and our Lord.

[Ephesians 1:22 - 22](#) *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."*

This community will consist of Christ's followers, and it will be made up of Jews and Gentiles (meaning open to all people groups). You can think of Jesus's death on the cross as the unifier of all people and nations because He created a pathway for all to receive salvation. Even though sojourners/foreigners were a part of worship services before Christ, it wasn't as common for Gentiles to accept the God of Israel because of their idol worship and devotion to other gods. But this didn't exclude foreigners (non-Israelites) from playing major roles in the Old Testament. People like Ruth, Jethro, and Rahab played very important roles in the Old Testament. These non-Israelite figures demonstrated how God's plan of redemption and involvement extends beyond the boundaries of Israel in the Old Testament, and how God used individuals from various nations to accomplish His purposes in the biblical narrative, which is confirmed in Ephesians 2.

[Ephesians 2:19-20](#) " *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."*

As you might have concluded, the church is not just a physical location where believers come together in a building: it's deeper than that. It is true that in part we do go to a physical structure called "the church," or you might read it in scripture as temples or synagogues, but overall, the church is a collective group of Christian believers under the authority of Christ. Although there are many people who make up the church stretched all over the world, we are one, unified by Christ Himself and through the Holy Spirit. As a group we are called by Christ to carry out His will and mission collectively here on earth.

[Ephesians 4:4](#) - *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;*

# The Body Of The Believer "The Temple"

We have one last step in understanding the church, which affects us as believers on a personal level. Scripture gives us awareness that our own physical bodies are temples.

Because we now have the Holy Spirit, as believers in Christ, we are actually hosting the Holy Spirit within our physical bodies.

[1 Corinthians 3:16](#) - *Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?*

[1 Corinthians 3:9](#) - *For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.*

This is important to realize because we can now have fellowship with God, continuously, because we are made perfect through the blood of Jesus Christ (meaning because of His sacrifice). Since this is true, the Holy Spirit has the ability to rest within the believer permanently because we have been purified and made holy by accepting Christ as Lord. This is what enables the Holy Spirit to dwell within the believer. Having the Holy Spirit doesn't mean we will act perfectly in everything we do, but it gives us the ability to live out God's will and His purpose for us.

## The Church

As we have uncovered, the church is a global living active group of Christ followers that come together to worship and honor God, by carrying out His will on earth. We are unified underneath the name of Christ, but as individuals we each play our part to glorify God. As we continue over the next few days we will uncover the importance and the details of worship gatherings, spiritual gifts, accountability, and the importance of our individual roles within the Church.

# FELLOWSHIP

Day 12



Welcome to day 12. Today we will be discussing the details or components of a healthy church. We are going to unpack what's in Acts 2:42-47 in detail. These verses set the standard and models for us what the church should be like. As we mentioned yesterday the church is more than just a building, it's a living entity because we as humans make up the church. For a living organism to survive and thrive, it has to have the right environment to succeed. It also has to have the right nutrients to grow to its fullest potential and to be sustained. Let's now read Acts 2:24-47.

## Fellowship Of The Believers

[Acts 2:42-47](#) - *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

### Teaching:

*Acts 2:42 - They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching*

The apostles at that time were instructed by Jesus to teach everything that He (Jesus) taught them. We know that the Old Testament was used in these teachings because we see it sprinkled throughout the New Testament. One of the most important aspects to

point out is that they weren't just making up things. It was about Jesus's teachings combined with the Old Testament in conjunction with the power of the Holy Spirit.

There are two things we can take from this simple understanding. First, Jesus is the head of this group of believers, meaning they place Jesus in the highest position or authority within the structure of this group. There is a real danger if a man tries to place himself as the sole leader of the church. What happens is that they remove Jesus as head over the church ([Ephesians 1:22](#)) and place themselves as the point of importance rather than God. These are things to be mindful of as you look for a healthy church: is it really about Jesus or is it about an individual? Find a church that places Jesus on the rightful throne where He deserves to be.

Second, this passage teaches us that the authority for this group was the word(s) of God. Another sign of a healthy church is to examine how they teach. Are they teaching ideas from themselves, more self-help than biblically focused? Are they teaching from the word of God? This is an easy way to know healthy from unhealthy churches. I tell you these things because the spirit that drives that church (either Spirit of God or Spirit of this world) will instruct you, and it's ok to be selective about whom you want to speak and teach in your life. Healthy church culture keeps Christ as the head of the church and teaches the word of God.

### **Fellowship:**

*Acts 2:42- to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and prayer.*

Fellowship simply happens when a group of people with a shared interest spend time together. Life is too short to place yourself around meaningless conversations and people who are focused on themselves. Find a group of people that care about you and God and are striving towards their purpose in Christ. We see that they shared meals together and prayed over one another; these are just a few signs you have a good group of people to do life with.

[1 Thessalonians 5:11](#) - *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

### **Awe & Miracles:**

*Acts 2:43 - Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.*

If you remember back on day 10 we discussed this "awe" factor. Awe is defined as an overwhelming feeling of fearful wonder. It ties into our healthy view of God by having a Holy fear. The early church understood the power and majesty of God! Since we have



previously discussed this awe factor, the only thing I want to point out is that they walked in this understanding about God.

The apostles performed signs and wonders, meaning miracles. Unfortunately, there is a negative view about the idea of miracles because either people have abused this or over-emphasized this particular demonstration of God in certain groups of believers. Regardless of your previous understanding of these things, I want to encourage your attention to one thing, Jesus performed miracles.... a lot of them. Also, His followers did too. We see so many recordings of miracles in both the Old and New Testament, it's just unbiblical to deny them or rationale them away. God is a good Father, who has good gifts, and if He decides to demonstrate His love towards us in the form of a miracle then I say Amen! God provides miracles as an expression of His love and provision to us, so it's ok by faith to believe in a miracle and ask the Father for them. It's important to note that we shouldn't just chase the miracles alone, we should be chasing the miracle maker.

[Acts 3:16](#) | [Deuteronomy 10:21](#) | [Job 5:8-9](#) | [Romans 15:19](#) | [Acts 19:11-12](#) | [Daniel 3:25](#)  
|

### **Unity & Humility:**

*Acts 2:44 - All the believers were together and had everything in common.*

Have you ever noticed the word “community” contains the word “unity” and “unity” starts with “U”. I know that might sound cheesy, and I agree it does, but it also holds a very real truth. We as individuals hold the key to unity, and unity can only be accomplished if we are really "for" one another. To be for one another means we are not "one-upping" each other to make a name for ourselves, but that we are striving to be a servant first to those around us, to be trusted, and to not gossip when someone shares failures, hurts, or prayer requests. Gossip and pride are the two keys that destroy unity and hurt the church very quickly. These sinful practices are encouraged by the enemy and give way to the fallen nature. One of the hardest things for the church is to keep unity, but let me encourage you it is possible. Three of the fruits of the Spirit are “love, peace, & self-control”, so pray that the Spirit helps us as individuals to be mindful of the tactics of the enemy and flesh. Remember that unity begins with you! As the body of Christ let's strive for unification in all things.

[Ephesians 4:3](#) - *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

### **Generosity:**

*Acts 2:45 - They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.*

Historically speaking, especially in early church history, generosity is what made the church stand out in the world. They fed those who were hungry, clothed those who needed clothes, and provide resources to those in need. The church is a place of

selfless individuals that see people through the lens of Christ, meaning that people matter to God, so they matter to the Christian. Can we truly call ourselves followers of God, if we leave a child and brothers or sisters in need? As the body of Christ, we should strive to bless and help those around us. Genuine faith produces good deeds that go hand in hand, as we discussed on Day 3. We love those around us, like we love ourselves ([Luke 10:27](#)).

**Consistency:**

*Acts 2:46 - Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.*

Consistency in our spiritual lives is a must and is tied into the idea of commitment, one of four key pillars in our Christian life. To be committed to something means we have consistency with that "thing" we are committed to. The same goes for us coming together as the church; the regularity of coming together produces greater focus and encouragement in our lives.

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[Hebrews 10:24-25](#) - *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**Gratitude:**

*Acts 2:46 - praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.*

We see that the early church had an attitude of gratitude toward God which was expressed in worship toward God and goodwill toward one another. Our attitudes set the tone for how we interact with God both privately and publicly and with people around us. One key component for us as the body of Christ is to be in a state of worship and gratitude as we meet together, realize what Christ has done for us, and allow that to be the overflow of our lives.

[Psalms 100:2](#) - *Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.*

**Increase:**

*Acts 2:47 - And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

When it comes to thriving churches, we see God will provide the increase (of people) to that body of believers if they are spiritually healthy. I do truly believe that the healthiness of fellowship is a condition placed on the church by the Lord. This is why this particular verse is last in Acts 2. It is to demonstrate that if a church is healthy, God will allow that

church to prosper. Within the same line of thinking, just because a church has "x" number of people going to it, it does not always mean that it has healthy fellowship. Acts 2:42-47 shows a number of important factors that make the church healthy, and a growing number of people is just one aspect of health.

It's true that we all have parts to play within the body of Christ, and those roles are important, but we must NOT elevate any role or person above Christ Himself ([Romans 12:3](#)). It is the Lord's church, His ministry, and He is the one who draws each individual for His glory, and it is God who provides the increase within this process. Our responsibility is to stay unified and humble in fellowship. We should love people towards Christ and disciple them towards maturity in Him ([Colossians 1:28](#)).

# SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Day 13



Welcome to Day 13. Today we will address spiritual gifts. There is mention of "spiritual gifts" both in the Old Testament and New Testament indicating this was not just a New Testament "phenomenon." A spiritual gift is "a gift or endowment characteristic of the presence or enabling of the Holy Spirit." This means God supernaturally gives and enables gifts to humans for His glory through the power of the Holy Spirit. The difference between the Old and New Testaments concerning the gifts is that the Holy Spirit now rests within the believer because of what Jesus

Christ has done. This means the Spirit doesn't just come and go. Below you will see verses that show the power of the Spirit enabling His people both in the Old and New Testaments.

Numbers 11:25-29 - *Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied—but did not do so again.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 - *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.*

## Why Are There Spiritual Gift(s)?

Spiritual gifts or empowerment of Spirit were given to God's people for two purposes:

1) To demonstrate the truthfulness of God.

We see that the truthfulness of God can come in many forms. One of the ways is through prophecy. This is demonstrated in [Acts 2:14-18](#), when the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers at Pentecost. At this moment Peter confronted a small group of people who were saying the apostles were "drunk" because they were speaking in everyone's languages. Peter uses Joel's prophetic words in [Joel 2:28-32](#) to combat these individuals. The prophetic words of Joel were confirmed by Peter in Acts 2, when we see him using the reference to attest to something God spoke through an individual long ago.

## **2) To assist and empower the believer to accomplish God's will on earth.**

[1 Corinthians 12:7](#) - *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

The ministry (*work of restoration*) of God actually started right after sin entered the world. The Spirit's role is not limited to the creation of the world and providing assistance to the believer, but the Spirit is the means to accomplishing the will of God. The coming of Jesus opened up a unique opportunity for God's people to have the Spirit rest upon them. Part of that uniqueness means spiritual gifts would assist the believer's daily life moving forward to accomplish God's will.

## **How Do I Receive Spiritual Gift(s)?**

When you become a Christian, you receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives the gift(s) according to scripture, and we see this in 1 Corinthians. We see in both the Old Testament and New Testament when the "power" of God comes upon the believer they receive empowerment by the Spirit. The only difference between the New and Old Testament is that the Holy Spirit can now rest within the believer since the Spirit doesn't come and go as we see within the Old Testament language. We know the Spirit is the one who distributes the gifts based on 1 Corinthians 12.

[1 Corinthians 12:11](#) - *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.*

## **Spiritual Gifts Are Not A Personality Test**

I make a point on this because there are many assessments out there that claim they can help you find your spiritual gift(s) based on your personality type. Although I truly believe the authors' hearts are in the right place as they are trying to help believers understand God's gifting more clearly, I strongly believe that personality shouldn't be the factor.

If we look at Gideon's life (**Judges 6-8**), God enabled and empowered him as a warrior for His name. If you look at Gideon's personality, you would see a frail and weak-minded person, not capable of leading an army for the Lord, but supernaturally God empowers Him through miraculous signs that enable him to increase his "Faith" to carry out the work that he is called to do. This is just one of many examples that we read in scripture. Spiritual gifts are given by God, not based on mental strength or ability, but through God's demonstration of His power for His glory.

## **Pride & Spiritual Gift(s)**

It is important that we do not become prideful about gift(s) that God has given to us. Remember that the spiritual gift(s) and the assignments that God assigns to you are for His Glory, not yours. Stay humble because no matter the number of people God might enable you to reach for His name's sake, this is all for His glory!

## **What Are The Spiritual Gifts?**

There are many types of spiritual gifts that God gives. (*Spirit Gift list example is below*). Below is probably the most comprehensive list of "spiritual gifts" I have ever found, but I will be the first to tell you, there might even be more gifts than this. The reason I say that is because if we are going by what the Bible describes as "spiritual gifts," which is a supernatural enabling of a person by the Spirit within the human for the glory of God, there may be a variety of ways God wants to move that are not listed or maybe just not identified by this list.

## **Spiritual Gifts/Ministry List:**

Reference From: [The Making Of A Leader - Frank Damazio](#) (pg. 47-52)



<b>Gift/Ministry</b>	<b>Biblical Reference</b>	<b>Definiiton</b>	<b>Function</b>
Apostle	Ephesians 4:1 1 Corinthians 12:28 Acts 2:43	One sent forth with orders A delegate or ambassador Bearerof a commission	- To establish local churches - To ordain elders - To bring forth revelation of the word - To train and discipline ministries - To bring adjustment to counselors - To be a spiritual father to others
Prophet	Ephesians 4:11 Ephesians 2:20 Acts1:27-30 Acts 13:1-4	Foreteller of God's Word and future events Forthteller of God's Word under the inspiration of the Spirit Mouthpiece or spokesman for God An interpreter of God's Word	- To function in the office of a prophet - To pronounce judgment - To confirm direction of ministry - To travel with apostles in team ministry confirming local churches
Prophetsess	Exodus 15:20 Luke 2:36	Female foreteller of God's Word A woman inspired by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God	To Prophecy
Evangelist	Ephesians 4:11 Acts 21:8 2 Timothy 4:5	Preacher of the Gospel (messenger of good news) Preacher having a harvesting ministry	To train soul-winners To win the lost through preaching and miracles To work with apostolic teams in starting and establishing local churches
Pastor/Shepherd	Ephesians 4:11 John 10:16 John 21:16 1 Peter 5:2,3	Herdsmen of God's people An overseer of the Church One who tends, guards, feeds, and guides the flock of God.	To feed the flock To counsel the flock To lead the flock To identify with the flock To oversee a local flock
Teacher	1 Corinthians 12:28 1 Timothy 3:2 2 Timothy 2:2,24	To occasionally foretell future events To speak under the inspiration of God's Spirit A gifted member who inspires, confirms and reinforces revealed truth	To exhort, edify and comfort though inspirational speech To encourage Christians through the anointing of the Spirit
Prophecy	Romans 12:6 1 Corinthians 12:10 1 Corinthians 13:2 & 14:3	To occasionally foretell future events To speak under the inspiration of God's Spirit A gifted member who inspires, confirms, and reinforces the revealed truth	To exhort, edify and comfort though inspirational speech To encourage Christians through the anointing of the Spirit

Discernment	1 Corinthians 12:10 Acts 16:16-18	One who recognizes what spirit (divine, evil, or human) is causing a certain manifestation or activity	To judge accurately what is of the Spirit of God and what is not To have a gifted sensitive spirit that distinguishes between truth and error To know the spiritual source behind something Someone
Tongues	1 Corinthians 12:10 and 14: 5,6,18, 21-23,27,28,39 Acts 2:4,8-1 and 10:46 and 19:6	One who speaks forth a language he does not understand One who speaks by the Spirit in a language that he has not previously learned	To speak out a supernatural utterance which is interpreted by the same or different person in a public gathering for the edification of the Church To speak forth a language not previously learned by formal education, yetis understandable to its hearers To speak forth a heavenly language as a sign of the reception of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for one's personal edification is not the same as the gift of tongues
Interpretation of Tongues	1 Corinthians 12:30 & 14:6-14,27,28 Acts 10:46	One who is given supernatural understanding to interpret the meaning of a message in tongues to the Church	To interpret the meaning of a message given by the gift of tongues in a congregation
Governments	1 Corinthians 12:28 Romans 12:8 1 Timothy 5:17	One who steers, directs or pilots an activity in the Church or a local church	To guide some of the affairs of the Church To operate in the gift of administration
Helps	1 Corinthians 12:28	One who gives relief and help One who lightens the load of leaders by doing certain practical things for them	To help the local church in practical ways To relieve some of the everyday needs of the people in the Church To relieve those who serve in the Word of some of their routine responsibilities



Intercession	Isaiah 59:16 Romans 8:26,27,34 and 11:2 1 Timothy 2:1	One who confers with or entreats another person One who goes to meet a person for conversation, consultation, or supplication	To pray for others with a supernatural revelation of their needs To bring the needs of the Church before the Lord with a special fervency and frequency To have a deep prayer life and the ministry which God uses as a speaking vessel to bring certain needs before Him
Elder	Acts 11:30 and 14:23 1 Timothy 4:14 and 5:17-19	One who is older, or a senior One who has advanced and matured in life	To lead and rule the people of God To shepherd the people of God
Overseer/Bishop	Acts 1:20 Philippians 1:1 1 Timothy 3:1-8 Titus 1:7 1 Peter 2:25	One who watches over, curates or guards others	To watch over the Church To guard protect and help the flock
Deacon	Acts 6:1-6 Romans 16:1 1 Timothy 3:8,12	One who serves guests food and drink at the table	To serve others in practical ways To do menial tasks in the Church To usher, serve communion, or take the offering in a local church service
Singer	I Chronicles 15:16-27 II Chronicles 5:12,13 and 9:11 and 20:21 and 23:13 Ephesians 5:19 Colossians 3:16 Hebrews 2:12	One who supports the priestly function through music One who makes melody to the Lord with his voice	To glorify God in a song To be an active member in the church choir To lead the church's song service To inspire others to sing the Song of the Lord To sing the Song of the Lord with the anointing of the Spirit To edify the Church in song as a soloist
Teacher of Song	I Chronicles 15:22, 27, and 25:6	One who instructs and leads others in the use of their ministry of singing unto the Lord	To teach others to sing the Song of the Lord To instruct the congregation to sing and to play their instruments in harmony unto the Lord To lead a church choir To be an instructor in voice

Ministry	Acts 6:1 Romans 15:31 2 Corinthians 4:1 Romans 12:7	One who attends as a servant A servant to the household of faith One who renders service, aid and relief to others	To serve in any capacity available To show a willing spirit to meet needs at any time To minister to others needs and desires
Teaching	Romans 12:7 2 Timothy 2:2	One who instructs others One who in stills doctrine into another	To lay out material for the edification, exhortation and comfort of others To instruct others in a supportive role to a true ministry
Exhortation	Ephesians 4:11 Acts 20:12 1 Corinthians 14:3 2 Corinthians 1:4,6 Titus 1:9	One who consoles, encourages, strengthens others One who comforts others on a personal level One who encourages the Church with short words of edification	To warm, console or admonish the believers To cheer or comfort the Church in times of stress or need
Giving	Romans 1:11 & 12:8 Ephesians 4:28	One who liberally shares and imparts to others what he has to give One who gives to others out of the abundance that God has given to him	To meet others' needs through giving To believe God for blessings so that others may receive them in turn To give financially and sacrificially to meet the needs of the Church
Ruling	Romans 12:8 1 Thessalonians 5:12 1 Timothy 3:4,5,12	One who presides over various Church functions One who leads by good example and service One who organizes, facilitates and administrates church activities	To protect or guard the flock with a leader's instinct To be a support ministry to the elder's of a local church To organize and carry out activities and programs
Mercy	Romans 12:8 Matthew 5:7 & 6:2-4 James 3:17	One who feels the hurts of others One who is loving and compassionate One who shows sincere, gracious favor to others One who is motivated to encourage and cheer	To minister to the sick, elderly, shut-in, and needy To show kindness and gentleness to the hurt To anonymously give to meet needs

Musician	I Chronicles 15:16 & 16:42 II Chronicles 5:13 & 7:6 & 23:13 & 29:26 & 29:27 & 30:21 & 34:12 Psalm 150	One who glitters from a far (in eminence) One who is a superintendent of the music in the temple services	To play an instrument skillful, unto the Lord Through music, to inspire others to play or sing unto the Lord To edify the people of God through music To be a skillful member of the church orchestra
Doorkeeper	I Chronicles 9:17-26 & 15:18,23,24 & 16:38,42 & 26:1 Psalm 84:10	One who waits at the threshold (the vestibule)	To warmly greet visitors arriving at a church To help people find seats in the church as an usher To serve the congregation at church in similar practical ways
Priest	1 Peter 2:5,9 Revelation 1:6 & 5:10 & 20:6 Hebrews 13:15,16	A born-again Christian in the Church of Jesus Christ	To offer spiritual sacrifices of praise to God as a Christian To offer sacrifices of money fellowship and services to God as a Christian

# GATHERINGS

Day 14



Welcome to day 14 as we uncover the importance of gathering together. There is something special when God's people gather to learn and worship Him. As mentioned before, we were never meant to walk this life alone; that is why God gave us not only the Holy Spirit but brothers and sisters to do life with. We are made in the image of God, and He created us to have relationships, just like God himself desires to be in relationships.

Human interaction is healthy mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It's vital for true spiritual health. I make this point because of a co-worker experience I had many years ago. This person said to me, "I believe in God and I worship Him on my own, I don't need a church to do that." I was very young when I heard that argument and I did not have a great answer, but I knew that didn't seem right. As I matured in my faith I came across a scripture that helped shape my understanding on what I was thinking.

[Matthew 18:20](#) - *For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*

[Hebrews 10:24-25](#) - *24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

## Traps In Gathering Together

In the previous paragraph about the story with my co-worker, if you uncover why she made that comment, many times it's based on false pretenses. One is based on the

idea that "The church wants my money." The second is "I was hurt by someone last time I went to church, you can't trust anyone from churches." I do want to target these two attacks that the church often faces and oftentimes pushes the believer further away from the body of Christ.

### **Money:**

My mother actually had an experience many years ago when she was very young about this very thing. The story goes that when she went to church with my grandmother years ago, the pastor came up to them and said, "You better start tithing, or you need to go to another church." Now, I'm probably giving a very loose translation of what he said, but it stuck with my mother to this very day.

In scenarios like this, the enemy uses greed from an individual or a small group of people to push an agenda that isn't the Lord's. The enemy perverts the truth to make it seem like "*every church*" must be like that. The enemy will do everything to push you away from the truth and as believers, we have to look through that. The truth is this: tithe/giving teaches us to trust God over money, and it's an expression of our gratitude because of everything He has done for us. The enemy doesn't want us to trust God with all aspects of our lives which includes the tithe.

[2 Peter 2:3](#) *In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories.*

[Matthew 6:21](#) *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

### **Hurt:**

Over time, if you hang out in the church long enough, I can assure you there will be a moment when someone fails you or does something that offends you. The reason I know that is because the church is made up of human beings, and we are all flawed. No one is perfect, not even the pastor. It says in Ephesians the following:

[Ephesians 4:32](#) *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

If you are truly walking with Christ daily, I would encourage you to model the Lord's prayer in your own words which is found in Matthew 6. It's very interesting because it prepares us ahead of time that offense will come against us, and we will offend others. That is why the Lord's Prayer says,

[Matthew 6:12](#) "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

It's preparing us ahead of time that because you are human, and you live, work, and fellowship with other humans, it will get ugly at times because we are not perfect. So prepare yourself to be kind and compassionate, forgiving one another, being patient with one another.

### **Conclusion:**

You see, the enemy wants to keep us isolated, away from the body of Christ, away from gathering together. Isolation creates environments of vulnerability where the enemy can attack our thoughts ([Genesis 3:3](#)) and discourage our faith ([John 10:10](#)). Being by yourself is not a bad thing, but consistent isolation can and will feed into such things as depression and hopelessness. As emotional beings, we do feed off of the fellowship, encouragement, and momentum of others around us. Even if you are introverted, the gathering of Christians still matters no matter your personality type. It feeds your emotional and mental health, we shouldn't neglect it. Even if someone has offended you, choose to not be offended, and forgive quickly. Don't allow that one person or that situation to stop you from what God has for you.

## **Denominational Differences**

There will be different expressions of the body of Christ until Jesus comes. You have probably heard that birds of the feather flock together. Well, to a certain extent that is true for the body of Christ. In my experience, you have two opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to styles. In fundamentalists, this group would be described as less emotional and more logically based spirituality. Then at the other end of the spectrum is the Charismatic side, which is sensitive to the emotional side of spirituality, but still roots itself in the logic and framework of scripture.

What this really comes down to is personality type and personal preference. God made us with all different personality types, and that is the beauty of different expressions within the body of Christ. We are different parts, but we are one in Christ. I have learned there is nothing wrong with either (as long as Christ is anchored within these multiple expressions and the word of God is your foundation). I have been a part of both sides, and God uses both groups effectively. They both have pros and cons because humans are involved. Believe it or not, we even see this in 1 Corinthians.

## [1 Corinthians 1:11-17](#)

*11 My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas[a]"; still another, "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

We are all imperfectly trying our best to pursue Christ. Let us be united as one, even though we have different preferences. Let's not tear one another down but build each other up through prayer and encouragement. We are one!

## Types of Gatherings

Lastly, there are many types of gatherings nowadays. There are digital/virtual versus physical gatherings. Let me encourage you again, that "physically" meeting together matters even if you have a great digital church experience. This isn't an attempt to stop church progress, but it's a call to unify the body of Christ even greater. We each have spiritual gifts, and how can those manifest digitally? It requires human interaction, and it hits home more when we are together and are able to encourage and operate within those gift sets.

We also see both gathering sizes, corporate or large gatherings and small groups or gatherings, were present in scripture. A very simple illustration is Acts 2.

*Acts 2:46 "They worshiped together at the Temple each day (large gatherings), met in homes (small groups) for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity."*

Throughout the Bible, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, you will see God's people gathering together to worship God; it's what His people do. We see that worship through songs, prayer, fellowship, communion, ministry, and preaching are part of scripture gatherings. It pleases God that we gather together no matter the size of the group.



# FRIENDSHIPS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Day 15



It's Day 15, which marks our last day focusing on Community. Today we will be looking at two major parts that truly affect your acceleration of spiritual growth: friendships and accountability. I say these two components affect the "acceleration" of growth because they have such a personal impact on the development of your character. You might have heard it said, "You are the average of the top three people you spend the most time with." This is basically saying that you will develop the attitudes, behaviors, and values of the people you interact with the most. This significantly impacts your

mindset and actions. As you develop your spiritual journey with others around you, there are two results people around you will have: they will either encourage you towards or away from Christ. Who is influencing your life? It says this in 1 Corinthians:

[1 Corinthians 15:33](#) - *Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."*

This verse reminds us to be selective about whom we spend time with. You should be very defensive and don't allow just anyone to influence your life. The reality is we are all influenced by someone, so again I ask, who is influencing you and do you want to be influenced by them?

## Friendships

Who we choose to become our close and personal friends really does matter. We must try our best to be honest as we examine our current friendships and to gauge the



healthiness of those relationships with honesty. For new believers, letting go of some long-time friends might be some of the toughest decisions we have to make early in our journey. Some healthy questions you should think about are the following:

- 1) *Does this friend or group of friends have a relationship with God?*
- 2) *Do I find myself drawing closer toward God when I'm around them?*
- 3) *What activities do I find myself involved in when I'm spending time with them?*
- 4) *Do they in any way discourage me or redirect the conversation if we start talking about faith?*

These are just some honest inward reflection questions to think about concerning your current circle of friends. It's important to note that your friends really do matter, and they matter to God. If you find that you have negative influences in your life, I would encourage you to pray for them and encourage them toward Christ and believe in their salvation. I'm not proposing to you to tell them, *"I don't like you anymore because I'm following God.* Please be very careful with that. One thing I can assure you is if you start talking about your relationship with God more, you will quickly find out if that draws them closer to you or away. It's also important to be cautious in how we approach our conversations about God. Be graceful in how we bring up conversations about God. We are not trying to condemn them ([John 3:17](#)) towards the cross, we are trying to love them towards the cross.

What I'm suggesting is (with love) placing greater distance relationally speaking between those unhealthy relationships. Sometimes you need to turn and run away from that friendship completely. Examples of this include gang affiliation, drug abuse, and alcohol abuse to name a few real-life examples. I have seen many cases where this is required. Regardless if we are running quickly away from a certain negative friendship or if we are slowly taking steps back away from that relationship, we must guard the inner circle of our life no matter what. Next, you will see a short list of some examples of friendship types to give greater awareness to this topic.

[Proverbs 18:24](#) - *One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

#### Types Of Friendships:

1. **Acquaintances:** People you know of and might interact with occasionally, but don't have a strong personal bond with.
2. **Casual Friends:** Individuals you spend time with in certain social contexts, like coworkers or classmates. Your interactions are generally light and centered around specific activities.
3. **Friends:** People you engage with on a more regular basis, share common interests with, and might spend time with outside of the initial social context.

4. **Close Friends (inner circle):** These are friends with whom you share a deeper level of trust, understanding, and emotional connection. You confide in each other and offer support through life's ups and downs.
5. **Best Friends (inner circle):** Often considered as "ride or die" friends, best friends have an incredibly close bond. They know each other's secrets, provide unwavering support, and can often feel like family.

As you examine this list, think about what categories your current friendships are in. Ask the Holy Spirit for discernment on the types of friendships you have. Depending on when you are reading this, you might find out that you really don't have "close" or "best" friends after your examination of current relationships. Let me encourage you, God is faithful, ask Him to help you find that inner circle. Be patient in your pursuit of the inner circle, be selective, and guard personal information with new friend;; allow time and get to know their character as you develop that trusting relationship.

[Ecclesiastes 4:9-10](#) - *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:10 If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.*

## Accountability & Mentorship

The idea of accountability and mentorship is sprinkled throughout both the Old and New Testaments. We need brothers and sisters in our lives that help us to grow toward maturity. Authentic accountability and mentorship is displayed if that person is willing to tell you the truth with grace and love, to make you better, not to hurt you. If you still haven't found a good mentor or close friend for accountability, please connect with your pastor or leader of your church. They will love to help you along that journey.

Please be very, very careful with this selection. Examine this person closely before opening up. That is why I encourage you to get connected in a church to find a pastor to help you find a good mentor. If it's a friend, vet them well before the process begins. In this close relationship, you will have to be vulnerable and open about all areas in your life, if you want real freedom. This produces in us healthier results and expedites the freedom from the sin that entangles us.

You should be looking for someone who is further in their journey than you are. This person demonstrates a strong walk with God and their character backs up their talk. They desire to make the time to meet with you and sincerely want God's best in your life. As we wrap up today's conversation I want to point you to some really great verses that talk about accountability and friendship.

[Proverbs 27:17](#) - *As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*

[James 5:16](#) - *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

[Galatians 6:1-2](#) - *Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

[Ephesians 4:25](#) - *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*

# STARTING WEEK 4 VIDEO:



As we begin day 16 we are going to move to a new concentration within your spiritual life called **Mission**. The idea of "mission" is derived from Matthew 28:18-20 where Jesus gives us the famous command to "Go and make disciples of all nations." This last charge of Jesus before His death and resurrection is known as the "Great Commission." If we define the word commission it means "an instruction, command, or duty given to a person or group of people." Jesus could have said anything in His final address, but he chose to give us a clear

directive toward a mission He wanted us to accomplish with His assistance and guidance. You can see the picture of a person looking like they are drowning. This is a great representation of the world around us. We are a part of this rescue mission, but we are called to engage in this!

# Multiply

One aspect of the Great Commission is the idea of multiplying. You and I are to go out and share the good news with others, which leads to salvation through the power of the Holy Spirit's conviction. After salvation, we have the responsibility to guide new believers to understand their new-found faith. As they mature in their faith, they are to grow to maturity and are called to do the same. This is the concept of multiplication.

[Acts 6:7](#) - *So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.*

**As a believer, If multiplication is not taking place in your life, then there is most likely one of two things going on.**

- 1) You have fallen out of a relationship with God, so His mission is becoming secondary or non-existent.
- 2) You don't know how to develop new Christians.

Remember, heaven and hell are on the line for the souls that surround you each day. ([Proverbs 24:11](#)) You never know how much time you and or the person next to you have. ([Job 14:2](#)) There must be a certain sense of urgency in the believer's life for those around them. ([Romans 13:11-12](#)) When our relationship with God was restored, we should be willing to assist others to full restoration with Him as well. This does not imply that we shove Jesus into someone's face, but that we love them unconditionally toward the cross while sharing what the Lord has done in our own life (build a relationship).

The second reason is "not knowing how to develop new Christians." This is the most difficult problem of Jesus followers in our day and age; too many people do not understand what they believe and how to guide others on the path towards God. Jesus DIDN'T say, "Pastors go and disciple all people," he actually calls all believers to go make disciples....EVERYONE. One major reason I actually recreated After Salvation over the last few years was to bring a tool to all believers for equipping them for the work of the ministry.

In [Proverbs 19:2](#) it says, "*Desire without knowledge is not good—how much more will hasty feet miss the way!*" This is why we talk about there being no shortcuts to spiritual maturity. It takes effort to learn and to grow in understanding and obedience. As you go through these 25 days, learn what we are talking about and take your time to understand the scriptures and some of the things discussed in this so you will be equipped to help others when the time comes.

[1 Peter 3:15](#) - *15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

## **We Are Acts 1:8**

At the very end of Matthew 28:20 (The Great Commission), Jesus says, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." During this statement Jesus knew that the Holy Spirit was coming, which is why he could say this with such great confidence. Acts 1:8 confirms this again when Jesus makes a very profound statement right before His ascension.

[Acts 1:8](#) - *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

### **2 Things I Want You To Catch In Acts 1:8**

#### **1) Receive Power:**

When you became a Christian, you receive the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. The Holy Spirit plays various roles in a believer's life and sometimes it is the most underutilized and undervalued part of a believer's spiritual life. Realize that Jesus even said, it is better that he goes so that you can receive the Holy Spirit or the Helper ([John 16:7](#)). The Holy Spirit is literally the helper and power you need so you can be successful in the mission that Jesus has called us to!

#### **2) Witnesses:**

A witness is someone who testifies to what God has done in their life. I encourage you to write your story down on how you became a Christian. We are charged to let the whole world know who Jesus truly is. By the power of the Holy Spirit and our testimony, we can literally change the world with the power of the Holy Spirit. Our job is not to save people, but to share what He has done in our lives and encourage others toward the cross.

We see the fulfillment of Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2...

[Acts 2:1-4](#) - *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them.*

So you and I have the power of God in our lives through the Holy Spirit to carry on His mission, which is called the "Great Commission." Now that we see how this idea of mission comes together I can't help but share with you that some of my greatest experiences and testimonies with God are when I stepped out in faith to share Jesus or to pray for someone. Do the same, step out in faith, and learn to trust God in carrying His word to those around you. If you have blurry eyes you know how helpful glasses are when you put them on (as long as they are the right prescription). In the same way, when we accept Christ, we look through the new lenses of Christ, to see people the way He sees them. As we wrap up today's session let us be reminded by scripture what our goal should be within His mission.

[Acts 2:46-47](#) - *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*



# DISCIPLE

## Day 17



Welcome to Day 17. We will be focusing on understanding what a disciple is today. We all understand we are on a mission now. All of us (Christians) have a part to play in His rescue plan. So what is our role, and how do we prepare for mission success? What is required of the believer, and how do we know we are truly a disciple of Jesus Christ? Today we will answer these questions and more.

## What Is A Disciple?

If you start in the book of Matthew you will see that Jesus started off with an original 12 "disciples." The term "disciple" is derived from the Greek word "mathētēs," which means a student who adheres to (and travels with) a teacher in the form of a teaching relationship. As you might have guessed, Jesus and His disciples actually lived life together, and they learned from Jesus daily.

The same model applies to us today; we are called to walk with Jesus daily. The only difference is we do not have Jesus in physical form, we have two other things, the scripture (which are His words) and the Holy Spirit. We can successfully have a relationship that the disciples had with those two things active in our lives. Just as the original disciples, we are also called to learn and apply what He commands us to do.

# Signs Of An Authentic Disciple

Since we have defined the word disciple, how do we know we are one, what is required, and what does it look like? Scripture is very clear about this, so let's dive into some specifics.

## **A person who believes in and follows Jesus Christ.**

[Matthew 4:19](#) - *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."*

## **A person who is consistent in their obedience.**

[John 14:23](#) - *Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."*

## **A person who produces good fruit.**

[John 15:8](#) - *This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

## **A person who loves others.**

[John 13:35](#) - *By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

## **A person who is truly committed to God's rescue mission (making other disciples, multiplying).**

[Matthew 28:19](#) - *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*

When it comes to signs of an authentic disciple, all these are pretty easy to understand, but what does it mean to "produce good fruit"? Jesus and biblical authors use this analogy of fruit-bearing in a few different places within scripture, and it's meant to refer to spiritual health. As an example, a healthy tree produces good fruit; likewise, a person who is spiritually healthy should produce Christ-like character and actions. A healthy Christian allows the Holy Spirit and scripture to positively impact and transform their mind, which in return creates a Christ-like character and desire for God's will for the glory of God in one's life. How do you know you are producing good fruit? We will display Jesus-like character and attributes that bring glory to God.

[1 John 2:3-6](#) - *We know that we have come to know him if we keep His commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know Him," but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth*

*is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in Him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.- A*

## How do we make disciples?

So now that we know what a disciple is and some of the signs of a true disciple, how do we go and make disciples? The best example I can think of is Jesus himself. Since He is the one that calls us to do so, how did He model it for us?

### 1) We Invite.

Jesus would invite those to follow Him, not just hope people would follow Him ([Matthew 4:19](#)). We should be aware when we see signs of spiritual hunger and open hearts around us. It starts with recognizing and just simply asking. If we desire to make disciples we look for opportunities to invite people into our lives.

### 2) Keep It Small.

Jesus had a small group of people He focused on called "disciples," but He also ministered one on one. I can tell you from personal experience when I was young in my faith, I grew the most from one on one interaction or small group interaction. The reason being is I had to be fully engaged, meaning interacting and participating within the conversations, and I had to make it personal, which in return made me examine my faith deeper.

### 3) Have A Plan.

Jesus would teach His disciples with intentionality and we should too. Jesus actually says in [Matthew 28:20](#), *"teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Believe it or not, you have actually already been a part of an intentional discipleship plan since you started this 17 days ago. I will be the first to tell you that there are many variations and approaches towards making disciples, and this resource is just one way of that. **AfterSalvation.com** was created to be an easy-to-use tool that helps build the foundation of a new believer. Secondly, this was created so that Christians could have a game plan and go make other disciples. I pray that after you complete this, you will be encouraged to use this as a tool or resource to help others on their journey. Check out the [leader guide](#) to understand more about taking people on this journey!

#### **4) Commit To Spiritual Maturity.**

We know what Jesus commands us to do, but what is the goal of disciplining someone? One of the best pieces of scripture I have ever found is the following:

[Colossians 1:28](#) - *He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.*

My definition of a "fully mature" believer is one who has full dependence on God. He or she knows it's about God's will, not theirs. They also understand the importance of their relationship with God, the community of believers, and the mission, and are fully committed to following after Jesus.

We should sincerely lock arms with these individuals or this small group of people, and help encourage them towards full maturity in Christ. This means being available to talk and text, to pray, and to encourage. We should model for them the love of Christ.

#### **5) Challenge Them To Replicate/Reproduce (Multiply).**

This one is very simple, and we hit on this topic yesterday. We saw that Jesus poured out His life into the 12 disciples, and then He empowered them to go reproduce what they experienced with Him. We should empower and challenge those we are leading to go out and do what we just did with them. One way of making that happen at the end of the 25 days of After Salvation is to go out and "Invite." Be aware of the spiritual hunger around them and invest into someone else.

[Matthew 4:19](#) - *"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."*



# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Day 18



It's Day 18, and we are in the middle of understanding the mission of God. One of the most under-communicated concepts is the spiritual battle we all face as Christians. Yes, we do fight with our human nature, we struggle to submit to God at times, but that is not all. There is a real active force fighting within the spiritual realms of things we cannot see. With that said, I'm not trying to put fear into you or imply that every negative thing happens because of Satan. Sometimes the choices we make have negative consequences, or we have a lack of self-control which can cause harm to us or put us in a depressed state.

I heard it said many years ago that this battle exists because "eternity is on the line." Souls will have a destination after this life. It will be either heaven or hell, and a war rages for all souls, even those who are evil people. There is a stigma on spiritual warfare because certain Christians have taken this topic way out of context or emphasized it so much that it feels like satan is an unstoppable force. The truth is that the enemy doesn't want us to understand the power, freedom, and authority we now possess. If we understood, and actually tapped into that potential, our lives would completely change, and we would become dangerous towards the kingdom of darkness. Could you imagine if Christians were all in, not just a little, but 100%, and knew how to fight this battle?

## Battle With The Sinful Nature:

As we have highlighted on Day 4, we are in a battle between two forces, and they are

the Sinful Nature ("*the flesh*") and the Spirit. The **best scriptural example of the sinful nature comes out of Romans 7...**

[Romans 7:14-25](#) - *14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16 And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18 For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. 21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*

What Paul is saying here is we will live with the pull or bend in our human nature towards sin until we meet Jesus. The good news is this (verse 25), we have deliverance through Jesus Christ. We can stand up to the pull of sin, through the power of the Holy Spirit. If you do not remember how to fight through sin, look back at [Day 2](#). We will not spend too much time on this because of our previous discussions, but I did want to bring this back to your attention as we talk about the battle, because the enemy will try to use our nature against us constantly.

## The Spiritual Battle:

The spiritual battle is so real, we do have the ability to see it raging in front of us, but we have to have eyes to see (spiritual eyes). The more in tune with the Holy Spirit we are, the greater this reality becomes, but also the greater peace, life, and understanding we will have ([Romans 8:6](#)). With that said, it's not like the devil is behind every corner or under every rock. Do not live in paranoia or fear because we have victory through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Below are some verses to help us on struggles of fear, or if we feel like we are defeated at times.

[2 Timothy 1:7](#) - *For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.*

[Romans 8:37-39](#) - *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,*

*neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

[1 Corinthians 15:57](#) - *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Since we now know we have victory through Christ Jesus, we should start to understand how the enemy attacks. He usually attacks us when we are vulnerable, off guard, or tired. I can promise you one thing, these first few months are especially vulnerable because you are new to your faith, and you are really pressing into God. The enemy will do everything he can to pull you away from God.

[1 Peter 5:8](#) - *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

Remember you already have the victory, but you have to walk in it. So how is it possible that we stay on guard at all times? One of the most effective ways to think of this idea of being on guard is to understand how a soldier thinks. Does the soldier show up daily to war with shorts, sandals, and a t-shirt? No!!! He shows up in battle gear ready to go and take on the day. We as Christians have to have the same mindset. We should put on our "spiritual armor" every day and have the awareness that the battle is raging daily. The best way to do this is to wake up each morning to spend time with God and remind yourself of what it says in the book of Ephesians.

[Ephesians 6:10-13](#) - *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.*

## **SPIRITUAL ARMOR:**

**We have spiritual armor to fight this battle and here are the verses that help us to understand what we have.**

[Ephesians 6:14-17](#) - *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the*



*shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17  
Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

### **The Belt of Truth:**

Truth holds us together, very much like a belt. The truth of God is manifested in our lives in the form of stability, integrity, and honesty. These are character-guiding attributes of the believer, but they are also the reflection of who Christ is. As you read this section of scripture, Paul is describing the Roman soldier's armor. One part of their uniform was a "belt" which supported the sword, balanced out their armor, and helped secure the breastplate. Below you will see that the breastplate represents "righteousness," but righteousness cannot exist if the believer is not walking in the truth. The believer will also not be able to use the sword of the spirit because this is the word of God and this represents the truth of God. The "belt of truth" balances out the entire armor of the believer. Without truth, we will be ill-prepared for battle and will be off-balanced.

### **The Breastplate of Righteousness:**

The Roman soldier's breastplate protected the heart, lungs, and other vital organs in battle. As believers, Paul refers to this as the "breastplate of righteousness." Righteousness can be defined as the quality, state, and characteristic of being in the right or just, simply put, doing what is right. We cannot know what is right unless we know the word of God and are guided by the Holy Spirit. Following God's word and His spirit will protect our lives both spiritually and physically. Within this battle that we face, we put on His righteousness or "right living," which will help us to avoid and defend against the schemes and attacks of the enemy. Remember in John 10:10, the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy; he is not playing around, and neither should we as believers.

### **Feet Fitted With The Gospel of Peace:**

We as believers in this battle are trying to bring the Good News or the gospel to those around us. In the midst of this, we are in a real battle that is spiritually and physically violent. The gospel gives peace to those who are in spiritual turmoil. Only through a relationship with Christ can humans find true peace, security, and freedom. Roman soldiers also had sandals as a part of their battle dress uniform and believers should have themselves fitted and ready to bring the good news of Jesus to those in the spiritual struggle. Allow peace to guide you. The enemy wants to disrupt our peace by frustrating us, but don't let him.

### **The Shield of Faith:**

The shield is a very easy-to-understand part of Roman armor. It was used to protect the soldier from arrows, swords, and other weaponry. The enemy will come at the Christian from all angles, and this is the advantage of the shield. It's mobile and allows you to defend all angles of attack. In the same way, our faith covers us in all aspects of attack

from the enemy. Remember faith is trust and reliance on something or someone, so in this sense, we have trust in God that protects us from the enemy. He is our shield. Specifically, this passage talks about flaming arrows, but it says the shield of faith can extinguish "All" if our trust (faith) is fully reliant on God.

### **The Helmet of Salvation:**

Just as a physical helmet protects the head of a soldier, Paul recommends the "helmet of salvation" to protect the believer's mind and thoughts. This helmet represents the assurance of salvation and the hope of eternal life in Christ. This in return gives confidence to the believer in who he or she is in Christ. This also provides mental and spiritual stability within our thoughts. Satan is a thought caster as we see in Genesis 3 when he tells Eve, "*Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'*" The battle of the mind is real and the enemy will try to convince you of so many things, but knowing who we are and the security we have in Christ establishes a great confidence in our new identity.

### **The Sword of the Spirit:**

Lastly, this is the first and only offensive weapon mentioned within the passage. It symbolizes the Word of God, which is a powerful weapon for believers to use in combating spiritual challenges such as temptation and deception. As mentioned previously we see Jesus himself use scripture to fight off and defend himself against the enemy, and he does this throughout His ministry. Take note, as Jesus is being tempted in the wilderness, Jesus says out loud the scripture. We must not only declare the word of God internally, but it's necessary at times to verbalize out loud the truth of God's words over us in prayer or during moments of being attacked. There is power in His word!

# KINGDOM & CALLING

Day 19



We are on day 19, and we only have 6 days left. I'm very proud of you! Today I want to unpack and emphasize the importance of the Kingdom of God and how your calling plays a part in God's ultimate plan. The Kingdom of God was something I kept reading about in the Bible and heard preachers talk about, but when I was young in faith, I had no idea what that meant and why that was important for me to understand! I would read verses like the following:

[Matthew 6:33](#) - *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

[Matthew 6:9-10](#) - *"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

[Luke 4:43](#) - *"But he said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also because that is why I was sent."*

One of the best and simplest understandings of this topic "The Kingdom of God" I have ever heard was from a resource I use called the "Lexham Survey of Theology," which states, *"On the most basic level, we may say the kingdom of God is present wherever the king is to be found. Jesus is present by his Spirit both in the church and in the world."* So technically Christians and the Spirit itself represent the Kingdom of God wherever they go. In other words, since our faith is in Jesus, and we are sealed by the Holy Spirit, **we are ambassadors** of the kingdom of God.

# Ambassadors Of Christ

So what is an ambassador? An ambassador is a high-ranking diplomat who represents a state or government. They are usually assigned to another sovereign state or international organization. So in plain terms, just as ambassadors represent their respective countries or governments, Christians represent Christ here on earth. Scripture talks about us being ambassadors for Christ in 2 Corinthians 5 which says,

[2 Corinthians 5:20](#) - *"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."*

What this verse is saying is that God desires that "humans" become His representatives here on earth to proclaim or to tell the world the good news of Jesus Christ. When Christians get a hold of this truth, it is very powerful within their spiritual life. It informs and gives purpose to their actions because now everything they do is not just for themselves, but for Christ everywhere they go and everything they do. There is another great verse in 1 Peter that says,

[1 Peter 2:9-10](#) - *"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."*

We are a part of God's family and because of the overwhelming truth of His mercy, love, and forgiveness, it should propel us to be proud (not prideful) and confident (not arrogant) in who we represent here on earth and in the message we should share with the world.

[Romans 1:16](#) - *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."*

# Kingdom Advancement

Advancing the Kingdom of God calls us as believers to align our life with God's purposes, which in return will assist in accomplishing God's will on earth until His return. He doesn't need our help, but He has chosen that we assist to help accomplish His will. Remember we do not save anyone—it is the Spirit that works in and through us to convict the world that they need Him ([John 16:8](#) & [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#)). We are the vessels that God uses to carry that message, and we are the hands that help encourage and assist people along their spiritual journey.

As Christians, we have the key that unlocks life and purpose for every soul here on earth, and we should be willing to share the key with everyone who wants it (the key is salvation in Jesus Christ). Jesus has given us victory and authority over the things of this world. In Matthew 16 it says this:

[Matthew 16:19](#) - *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

As Christians, we have been given authority through Christ to carry out God's will on earth. That is why in [Matthew 28:18-19](#) it says, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations."* Jesus is letting us know that He is passing down His authority to us at this moment. Now that Jesus gives us our directive in Matthew 28, can we be confident that we will have victory in accomplishing this task? Absolutely, we have victory through Christ! Here are some verses that speak on the idea of victory for the believer.

[John 16:33](#) - *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

[1 John 5:4](#) - *"for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."*

[Romans 8:31-32](#) - *"What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"*

[Proverbs 21:31](#) - *"The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the Lord."*

[1 Corinthians 15:57](#) - *"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

## Our Calling

As believers, **we are all called** to participate in the advancement of the kingdom. So many times the body of Christ (the church) leaves the responsibility of developing disciples and the work of the ministry to the church leaders. At the same time, church leaders have just accepted that role for various reasons. If we look closely at scripture we can see a major flaw in this understanding that has taken place in the current church.

[Ephesians 4:11-12](#) - "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up**"

Friends, we have to change the way we see our role as the church. The true role of the church leaders is to equip or train the church for the work of the ministry (to make disciples). When this proper alignment happens, the church (you) can go make disciples (*along with the church leaders*) and will see an Acts 2 movement take place ([Acts 2:42-47](#)).

This is not a spectator sport, this is all hands on deck! The reason so many Christians feel like they are missing something in their spiritual life is that they are not engaged in the calling of the mission that is at hand. They have a relationship with God, and they go to church, but at the end of the day they still feel empty. The mission fills this gap in the heart of man. The Christian has the Holy Spirit, and with His presence, if you are not engaged in the mission you are going against the Spirit's leading. The Spirit is always leading us towards the will of the Father, and a major part of God's will is to save that which is lost, those who are far from Him.

[2 Peter 3:9](#) - "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**"

This is another reason I have created this tool ([www.aftersalvation.com](http://www.aftersalvation.com) or After Salvation App). I want you to feel confident and equipped to help others on their journey. You do not need a seminary degree to make disciples, you just need the desire, boldness, and commitment to step out in faith and do it. We are the only ones who can be accountable for our faith, so it is up to us to know what we believe and how to live out our faith. Also, I have heard many times, "Roger, I'm not a very influential person, who will I disciple?" The truth is everyone has some type of circle of influence. Some are small, and some are big. Regardless, be faithful to those that the Lord has placed in front of you and contribute towards their spiritual growth.



# TESTIMONY

Day 20



## YOUR TESTIMONY

Today's lesson will be a little different in that it does not include much reading, but will leave you time to write. Your testimony matters because it is your personal account about who Christ is in your life and what He has done for you.

In [1 Peter 3:15](#) it says, *"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect"*.

Today I want to challenge you to write out your testimony and to share it with your mentor or small group. Even if you feel like you know it well enough, I still challenge you to think it out and write it down. If you don't know how to explain your testimony, here are a few pointers to think about.

### 1) Origin Story:

What was your upbringing like? Who were your parents and siblings and what were the early years of your life like? What were your family dynamics, for example, *"I grew up in \_\_\_\_\_ . I have 2 brothers and my mom and dad were a happy couple, but one day my parents divorced."* Expand this in your words with greater detail. How did your early childhood affect who you became? What did your family value? What did you

value growing up? Was church a part of your life? Did you have a relationship with God in your life early on? These are some example questions and statements to help you to get started.

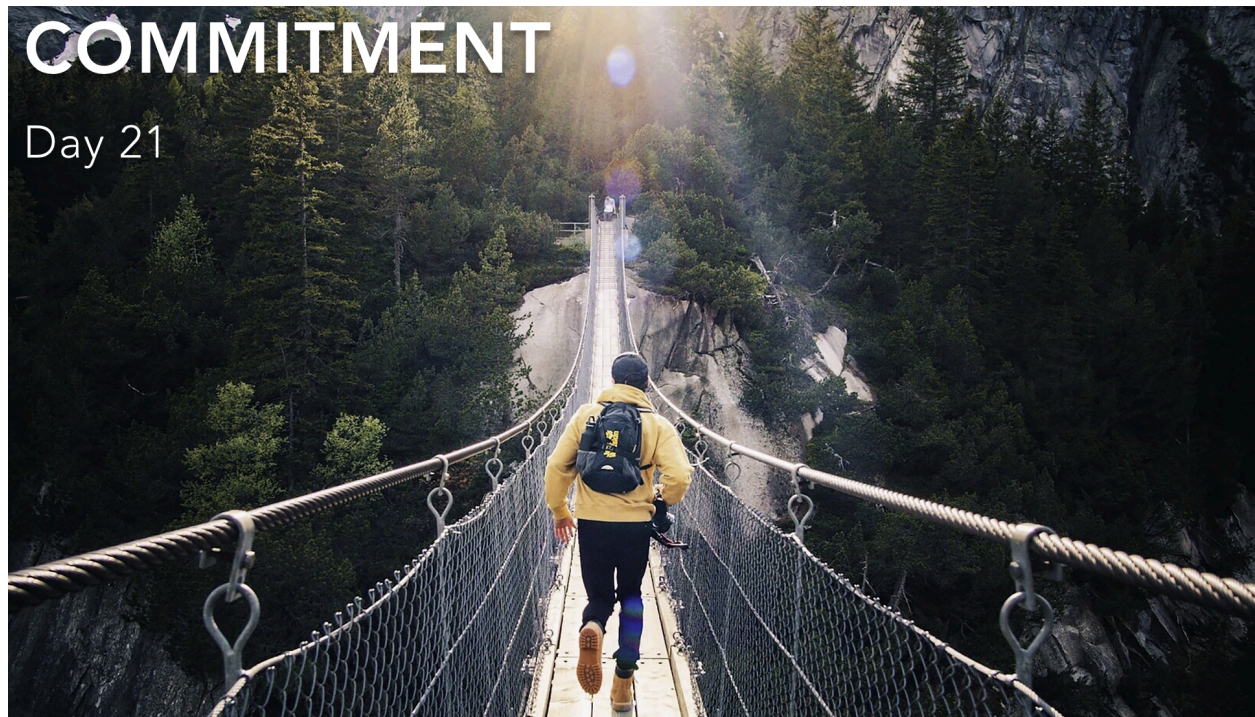
## **2) Life Before Christ:**

A lot of times we had very specific moments that built up to accepting Christ. What was it for you? Sometimes it was a crisis, other times curiosity drew you into faith, or maybe your upbringing was the leading factor before your decision for Christ. Give great detail about the build-up to that point.

## **3) Life After Christ:**

Since you accepted Christ, have you seen a change in your life? What has specifically changed? How would you describe your life with Jesus? Why would you encourage other people to make the same decision that you made? Remember there is no time limit on this nor a specific length of writing you need to accomplish. The only thing I would recommend is to really think it out and to really write it down!

# STARTING WEEK 5 VIDEO:



Welcome to Day 21. Today we are going to talk about the last pillar of our faith, which is Commitment. This pillar is the number one issue I feel that is plaguing the modern Christian. I don't say that to sound judgmental. We all go through moments in life where we get tired; that's normal as a human. What I'm more concerned with is how culture is currently telling us the way to process the concept of commitment, which I strongly believe hinders the Christians' commitment. The thought of being committed to something in our modern-day culture is not a strong virtue. You might

hear things like "If it's not working, change it" or "FoMO (Fear of Missing Out)." We live in a very rapidly changing world where we are focused on getting things "fast" and "now," or on the other side, worrying about "missing it." Although some aspects of "now" are very nice at times, there are major spiritual and mental benefits for long-term commitments.

The reason this mentality of "fast and now" is dangerous, especially to the Christian, is because there is a maturity process that has to take place within the believer. There is no substitute for time. You will find that scripture and the Holy Spirit will constantly challenge the inward being throughout the course of lives. Our being and will (or desires) are very stubborn, and it takes time to be shaped in the image of Christ. We are shaped by our obedience to what God is calling us to do. Many times when this is happening, it is extremely tough (emotionally/mentally), because God is working things out in us. If we lack commitment in these moments because we are not seeing the spiritual results we want "right now." we miss what God is teaching us, and it delays our spiritual maturity,

Scripture has a tendency to shred and reshape our worldview in a major way. The Holy Spirit will challenge us to do things outside our comfort zone and convict us of things we need to get rid of. Again, if we lack spiritual commitment within those moments, we will find ourselves frustrated and discouraged, which will make us think this "God thing" is not working. We play an important role within our own spiritual development, but thankfully we do have help to break the cycle of our sinful nature, which comes from the power of His Word and Spirit.

## Abiding

As we begin to shape our understanding of biblical commitment, the word abiding is a powerful word for us to understand. To abide simply means "to accept or act in accordance with." This word has a greater meaning for the Christian because Jesus himself used similar terminology to describe our relationship with Him. In John 15 it says this:

[John 15:4-5](#) - *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me, you can do nothing.*

When you think of a vine and branches, these two parts are woven so perfectly together they have this unbelievable strength. Since our life is now supposed to be hidden in Christ ([Colossians 3:3](#)), we should be woven so tightly together just like a vine and branch that we become "spiritually" strong in Christ. If we are apart from Christ, we will not be able to see the blessings (fruit) of God in our lives. When I say blessings, I want



you to understand that this can be identified as physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual health. God is not a genie in a bottle or a lottery ticket; He is "Abba"(father) and you are his children, and He loves us so much and wants to provide for you ([Matthew 6:26](#)). There will be times when God answers prayers in a financial sense, but it is important to acknowledge and see the emotional, physical, and spiritual provisions He provides us as well.

Also, if we find ourselves apart from God, we will not be able to live out the life He intends: "*apart from me, you can do nothing.*" We need to have a strong trust and dependence on God; that trust and dependence is what forms this strong bond in our relationship with God. That is why when people say they need to "fix themselves" before coming to God, this is completely backward from what God wants us to do. He actually wants us to come to Him first and accept Him as Lord in our lives, then through this new bond we can start to be transformed by Him. This is possible because He now lives in us. Next, we will see that we are healthy within our commitment to Christ.

## Remaining Healthy

How do we know we are healthy (spiritually speaking) within our commitment to God? If you think about the Pharisees and Sadducees, they were "spiritually committed" but were actually unhealthy and did not really know God ([Matthew 23:27-28](#)). Unfortunately, there is a mindset (especially in the U.S.) that once I accept Jesus and get baptized, "I'm good." The reality is we gave our lives to Christ in the form of a commitment to follow Him. I have seen this pattern within many Christians after salvation and being baptized where they will very quickly say such things as, "I don't sense God's presence" or "I don't see God working in my life." The reason this happens is very simple; they're not abiding in Him. There is no sense of commitment towards God outside just believing in Him. I have mentioned this once before, but want to reiterate that [James 2:19](#) says, "*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*" What James is saying here is that real faith is demonstrated with not only thought, but action. For us to remain healthy within our commitment, action is required on the part of the believer.

Secondly, we must follow Jesus's example to remain healthy. In 1 John 2 it says, [1 John 2:4-6](#) - *3 We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*

In this verse it doesn't say, believe in God, but do whatever you please; it says we must walk as Jesus did. Living like Jesus is impossible if you are not committed to His leading and direction. This is where the understanding of abiding really comes into play, but it's equally important to identify what did Jesus actually commit His life to? As mentioned previously we have His Word (the Bible) and the Holy Spirit to help us. Since we have God living inside of us (Holy Spirit), it is possible for us to live like Jesus, but we must engage our will to be committed to His ways. When you think of the 4 pillars we have discussed over the last few weeks (*Relationship. Community. Mission. Commitment*) this is actually what Jesus demonstrated for us!

**Relationship:** Jesus modeled for us the perfect example of what a relationship and life with God would look like. ([Matthew 4:1](#), [Matthew 11:27](#), [Romans 8:11](#), [John 5:19-20](#), [Matthew 6:5-14](#), [John 13:15](#), [1 Peter 2:21](#),)

**Community:** Jesus established His community, which is called the church, through His disciples. The church would become a movement of people who carry the "Good News" to the world. They accomplish this by teaching and equipping the saints for the work of the ministry through the power of the Holy Spirit. ([Matthew 16:18](#), [Matthew 28:18-20](#), [Ephesians 4:11-12](#), [Acts 2:42-47](#), [John 16:7](#), [Acts 1:8](#))

**Mission:** Jesus had a mission to die on the cross for our sins so that we could be saved. His goal was to provide a way and restore our relationship with God the Father. ([Matthew 20:28](#), [John 3:16-17](#), [1 John 4:9-10](#), [John 14:6](#))

**Commitment:** With just these few verses listed above, we can clearly see Jesus was committed to showing us how to live on earth in relationship with the Father. He was also committed to the success of His community, the church, by teaching, modeling, and by sending the Spirit of God to equip and guide them. Lastly, Jesus was committed to His mission of conquering sin and death through the power of His resurrection, to set people free from the bondage of sin.

If you take these concentrations of relationship, community, mission, and commitment seriously, there is no doubt that you will see spiritual health and growth in your life. But just as we started our relationship with God in the form of a commitment, we must remain committed to Him in these areas for the duration of our life. r attached and based on the good news and life of Jesus Christ.



# RADICAL

Day 22



As we begin Day 22 we are going to uncover how we should prioritize our life. Some reading this might feel that this is a pretty radical change within their life. In life, no matter the age, you have priorities, meaning you have things that you place a greater importance on than others. This could be family, relationships, careers, school, or sports, but everyone is different depending on what you value the most in your life currently. In different seasons of life our priorities do change, but specifically when we accept Christ in our lives there is actually a calling to reprioritize what we value most.

From the beginning of time, it has always been about God. He wants to be the number one priority in our lives. God created us, and as we have learned, He desires us to be in fellowship with Him. If we go back to the Old Testament we can see this very clearly.

[Exodus 20:3](#) - *"You shall have no other gods before me."*

[Deuteronomy 6:5](#) - *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."*

Just from these few passages, we can see there is a call for humans to have this "complete devotion" to God. Since we know what scripture says, how do we know what is required by the believer? That is what I want to dive into next.

# Idols In Our Life

What are idols? An idol is a pagan and material effigy that is worshiped as a representation or in lieu of a deity. So in simpler terms, an idol is anything we worship and place a higher value on over God. This could literally mean pagan idol(s) or as the bible references it the "gods" of this world. In [Deuteronomy 6:14](#) it says, *"Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you."* This is speaking directly to the world religions.

I think it's important to note that within this same line of thinking, sorcery and fortune-telling would also need to be considered as idol worship. [Deuteronomy 18:10-11](#) *"Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, 11 or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead."*

In addition, I want to make you aware that this would actually include astrology. In [Isaiah 47:13-14](#) it says, *"All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. 14 Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up."* This verse is referencing a judgment being passed against those who practice this type of worship.

The last point on this topic that I want to make is we can make idols out of anything in our lives. Whatever we give most value and credibility to can be idols. As an example:

- When a mother makes her children her world and nothing else matters.
- The athlete who places a priority on perfecting that sport to a point where he drowns out all distractions in his or her life.
- The man who values his worth by the money he makes, and places his focus and attention solely on his bank account.
- The musician that plays and practices, eats, sleeps, and lives music.

I already know what you are thinking, "Some of these things are not that bad," and you are right. If these desires are rightly prioritized within us, they are not bad. It is not bad to be a great mom and love your family well. It's not bad to have a desire and passion to play a sport or music and be amazing at it. There is nothing wrong with providing for yourself and your family financially. We just have to make sure that these do not become idols in our lives. The sinful nature has a tendency to place everything but God in its rightful spot. Remember, it is God who gives us the ability to have and care for our children. It is God who makes us healthy enough to play sports or music, or to make mo

ney. It is all His anyway! He created all these things, so be careful not to worship the gifts that the gift giver gave to you. I encourage you to be very careful in what you worship in your life and place your Savior, our God, at the top of the priority list.

## A Radical Commitment

I would ask you to please read [Luke 14:25-35](#) at this time.

Luke 14 is a strong call that might make you question Jesus on what He is saying. I wanted to bring this scripture to you now, so later in your journey with God you won't be caught off guard by it, and we can process it now. To really follow Jesus takes a radical commitment. This scripture points out the reality of the following ideas:

- Your love and commitment towards God should not have any equals,
- There is a cost to truly follow Jesus.
- We must constantly gauge how we are doing.

The biggest thing that caught my attention when I first read this was the word "hate". At first, I didn't understand why Jesus would use such strong language, especially towards the family. It honestly caused me some confusion. Over a period of researching and asking questions about why the word "hate" was used, I gathered two important takeaways. First, I truly believe Jesus wanted them to have a deep sense of "introspection." Introspection means examining one's own thoughts and feelings or "soul-searching." This forced not only His disciples at that moment, but the crowd as well to look deep inside, to see if their loyalty was to God or man. It purified their hearts' attentions towards God, and made them examine if they were really "all-in." To this day, Jesus's words from this passage still have the same effect on us today. It puts a pause within us, to reflect on our personal commitment to Him.

Secondly, Jesus is using the word "hate" to show a strong separation between our earthly relationships and our relationship with God. Our love for God should be on an entirely different level than our current love for family, life, and material possessions. Also, you will be able to love those around you like you never have before. You will see them through the lens of Christ. The same goes for your life and possessions as well. Through radical commitment, a real transformation takes place within our mind in how we view God and life. When you have a radical commitment, you are trusting Jesus above all things, and nothing holds higher value in your life. For most people, there are four main priorities: family, friends, career, and possessions. Shouldn't these things come secondary to the One who gave you all these wonderful gifts in the first place? Following Jesus is a true sacrifice, but in return, we will have life, and we will experience it to the fullest ([John 10:10](#)).

# GOD'S WILL

Day 23



We are on Day 23, and we will be discussing God's will today. This is probably one of the most asked questions I get from people. The question will go something like this, "How do I know God's will for my life?" or "What is my purpose in life?" I believe these 2 questions are really one and the same because we cannot understand our TRUE purpose without God, and if we really know God, it leads us to understand God's will. I think it's important to build some framework behind this concept of God's will for your life, so let's get right into it!

To Follow God's Will Starts With Genuine Faith & Commitment

As we have read about in Day 3, our practice of faith really matters in our daily life. Faith not only pleases God ([Hebrews 11:6](#)), but genuine faith propels us to a place where commitment to God comes naturally, not forced. That is why verses like Proverbs 3 are so helpful.

Proverbs 3:5-6 - *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways submit to him, and He will make your paths straight.*

In verse 5 the word "trust" communicates belief or faith in God. Next, the phrase "with all your heart" expresses the thought of a full commitment to your belief or faith. After that, it says, "lean not on your own understanding." This helps the believer to identify that when we have genuine faith we shift our priority from trusting ourselves only to trusting

God fully. Starting in verse 6, it says "in all your ways submit." This again pushes us to be fully committed and surrender our thoughts, ideas, desires, etc., before the Lord. If we do this there is a promise that follows at the end of verse 6, "He will make your paths straight." Making our paths straight means God has full control of every part of our life; therefore, we are in a posture of active listening and willing to be obedient to what He says to us. If all the conditions that we just talked about are met, this enables God to show us His will and purpose for our lives.

As you can see, this verse helps us as Christians to identify the connection between our faith and commitment and God's will. This again is why personal commitment within the believer matters. I pray that you are seeing that your faith is more than just a prayer to Jesus, it's a commitment. It's vital that we understand our role within our faith, and that our level of commitment to God is what unlocks maturity within our faith. Now, with that said, there are other variables that play into the growth and maturity of our spiritual lives but without commitment, we will never see it.

## God's Will, Not Mine

Next, I want to share a verse that completely informed and transformed my understanding of the topic of commitment. When I was in high school I read this verse, and it wrecked me (in a good way). In Matthew 7:21-23 it says,

[Matthew 7:21-23](#) - *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!*

Let's break down these verses before we get to the heart of the matter. What stands out to most people is the phrase "*Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom.*" This means that not everyone who believes in God will be saved or will enter the kingdom of heaven. You might ask, well, how is that? In [James 2:19](#) it says, "*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*" Just because someone believes that God exists doesn't mean they really know God. Matthew 7:21 targets and reveals a common misconception, that belief in God is everything. When you accept Jesus, you first **believe** in your heart and then you **confess** with your mouth that He is the Son of God and that He arose three days later and beat death. Lastly, to accept Christ in your life, you are acknowledging Him as King of your life, ruler of your desires, will, emotions, actions, and thoughts. It's a surrendering of one's life to God. Mere belief in God is just one aspect of real faith. You are handing over your life to God because you know that what He is able to do in your life far outweighs anything you are able to do within your own strength.



In the second half of verse 21 it says "*but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*" The part to pay attention to is the "will of my Father". Only God knows what His will is, meaning, what He desires to accomplish for His glory. No human can break down the depth or understanding of how exactly that will play out. So to accomplish the will of the Father requires that we really know the Father, intimately. This is why on the diagram that you see every day you find "Relationship" at the top, because a relationship is really that important. That is also why we have spent the bulk of our time together understanding our relationship with God. Although God's providential will (*meaning His ultimate plan*) will come to pass, God's will for your life, individually, will look different from your friend, family member, or pastor. We cannot inherit our faith nor borrow from others' experiences to understand His will. There are no patterns or shortcuts. The Father's will for us is developed through a close relationship over a lifetime with Him alone. Stay close to Him and I can assure you that you will not miss His will for your life.

In verse 22 it shows these amazing "works" being done, like casting out demons, miracles, and prophesying. At first glance, it looks like these people are spiritual leaders because of what they are doing in the name of Jesus, but verse 23 clears that up quickly. It says, "*I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers.*" You might be asking yourself how they can be doing those types of works and Jesus says He never knew them. Again, remember on Day 3 we talked about faith and actions. The idea of "doing the work of ministry" or being a good person doesn't save us; it is what Christ has done for us. The interpretation of this passage shows us that there seems to be an underlying motive behind the individuals doing these works. It seems that they were doing things in the name of Jesus to have influence and importance, and to build up their spiritual authority on earth. The reason they were able to do signs and wonders is because God's word never returns void ([Isaiah 55:11](#)). Behind the scenes God knew their heart. They were far from Him, only seeming to be good spiritual leaders on the outside, but evil within their intentions and desires to glorify themselves.

## **God's Will Is Not A Destination**

Lastly, I think one of the most common questions that come after learning Matthew 7:21-23 is, "How do I know God's will for my life?" The answer to this is very simple, but I want to clear up the biggest misconceptions at first. A majority of people I have ever talked to think they will at some point arrive at "God's will." God's will is not a destination—it's not like one day you wake up, and you realize you have arrived. Pastor and author Eugene Peterson who has now passed away says it best within the title of one of His books, "Long Obedience in the Same Direction." The way to understand God's will is a path of consistently and faithfully following God over the course of your life. It's really simple, yet very difficult to accomplish.



Please don't misunderstand, there will be tough seasons in your life, or moments you mess up and miss it, or you find yourself unfaithful to God. I don't want you to feel like you have to "earn" heaven; that is simply not true. Jesus has already done the work on your behalf. Again, what Jesus was talking about in Matthew 7 was getting to those who had false motives using the name of God to benefit themselves and calling them out. There were a lot of religious leaders misguiding people because they didn't know Jesus, He was calling them out.

To wrap this section up we need to think of it like this. Just by hanging out with friends or family, we do get influenced by them. We start to like what they like, talk as they talk, and do as they do. In the same way, true salvation turns us to God and within that personal commitment we get to know Him, and the more we know Him our desires, our walk, and our talk will become more like His ([1 John 2:4-6](#)), and our faith will manifest itself more within our lives. If you truly surrender your life to Him, it would be impossible to miss God's will in your life.

# MATURITY

Day 24



It's Day 24, and today we will get into the topic of spiritual maturity. Over the last few days, we have talked about some very deep topics that will take time to truly develop and implement in your life. For the believer, what is spiritual maturity, and how do we mature? In [Colossians 1:28](#) it says, *"He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ."* This verse right here is the theme verse for After Salvation because we exist to develop and equip every believer to reach their full potential in Christ.

Below we will define and bring insight into what makes a Christian mature.

## How Do We Define Christian Spiritual Maturity

Someone who is spiritually mature, in my mind, **is not** one who strives to be perfect in the practice of his or her understanding, execution, and approach to life; that produces a religious person. Below are some great quotes from other believers about spiritual maturity, and then I will share mine.

- *"Spiritual maturity is not reached by the passing of the years, but by obedience to the will of God." — Oswald Chambers*

- *"Maturity comes not with age but with the acceptance of responsibility. You are only young once, but you can be immature indefinitely." — John C. Maxwell*
- *"The mark of spiritual maturity is the ability to see God in every circumstance." — Oswald Chambers*
- *"The path to spiritual maturity is a journey of faith that takes time, patience, and a willingness to learn and grow from our experiences." — Author Unknown*
- *"Maturity in Christ is not measured by how much you know about the Bible, but by how much of the Bible is manifested in your life." — Author Unknown*
- *"Spiritual maturity is not about becoming religious; it's about becoming more like Jesus." — Rick Warren*
- *"Spiritual maturity is not a destination; it's a lifelong journey of becoming more Christ-like in our thoughts, words, and actions." — Author Unknown*

These are all great quotes from amazing Christian leaders and there is nothing wrong with them in my opinion. Personally, my definition for spiritual maturity means the following, ***"Spiritual maturity is a consistent awareness of our need for Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives combined with a relentless resistance to anything that opposes or hinders God's will within us."*** Below, I would like to break this down for us, so we can get the full picture of what I'm trying to build in this statement.

- **Consistent** - The spiritually mature believer is consistent in everything they do, not perfect in everything they do. They understand that consistency (*commitment*) within their connection to God, His church, and His mission will make a difference in his or her spiritual growth. This is honestly one of the hardest spiritual disciplines to develop within our lives but is a key to the mature believer. The concept of consistency blends into what we have been learning in After Salvation. Below is a re-emphasis on the diagram we see daily. If we are consistent within these areas, spiritual maturity will be the outcome.



- **Awareness** - As we mature (naturally speaking) we become more aware of the world around us, and we should be able to understand how to work within the context of the culture we find ourselves in. The same should be understood about the spiritual life. We should become more aware of our need for God and the power of His Holy Spirit and of the spiritual and fleshly battles that take place within and around us. Awareness is what separates children from adults both in the natural sense and spiritual sense, and we become aware by processing knowledge, life events, and practice (obedience).
- **Relentless Resistance** - Within the mind of spiritually mature people, they make commitments to die to themselves daily. They resist the devil and his temptations with a relentless and unwavering mental and physical commitment. This goes back to putting on the full armor of God, remember it is up to us to put on the armor of God daily. They understand the seriousness of sin and the destruction it causes. We have the power of the Spirit which manifests the fruit of the Spirit in our lives and the last fruit that is listed is self-control. Sin slows the progress of maturity and can sometimes completely paralyze the believer's spiritual life if they allow sin to overtake them.
- **God's Will** - As we alluded to yesterday, to really know God is to know God's will. The mature believer has a Kingdom-focused mindset, understanding the importance of a one-track mind in Christ. This doesn't mean we aren't allowed to have fun, as not everything has to be ministry. This means that God is at the center of their world and everything they have and everything they do is for His glory. They understand that the most important thing is being obedient to God's direction and purposes in their life.

# Scripture And Spiritual Maturity

Below are several verses that help shape our understanding of spiritual maturity.

## [Ephesians 4:13](#)

*"until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."*

## [Hebrews 6:1](#)

*"Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God."*

## [James 1:2-4](#)

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

## [1 Corinthians 13:11](#)

*"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me."*

## [1 Peter 2:2](#)

*"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation."*

## [2 Peter 3:18](#)

*"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."*

## [Philippians 3:12-14](#)

*"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

## [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

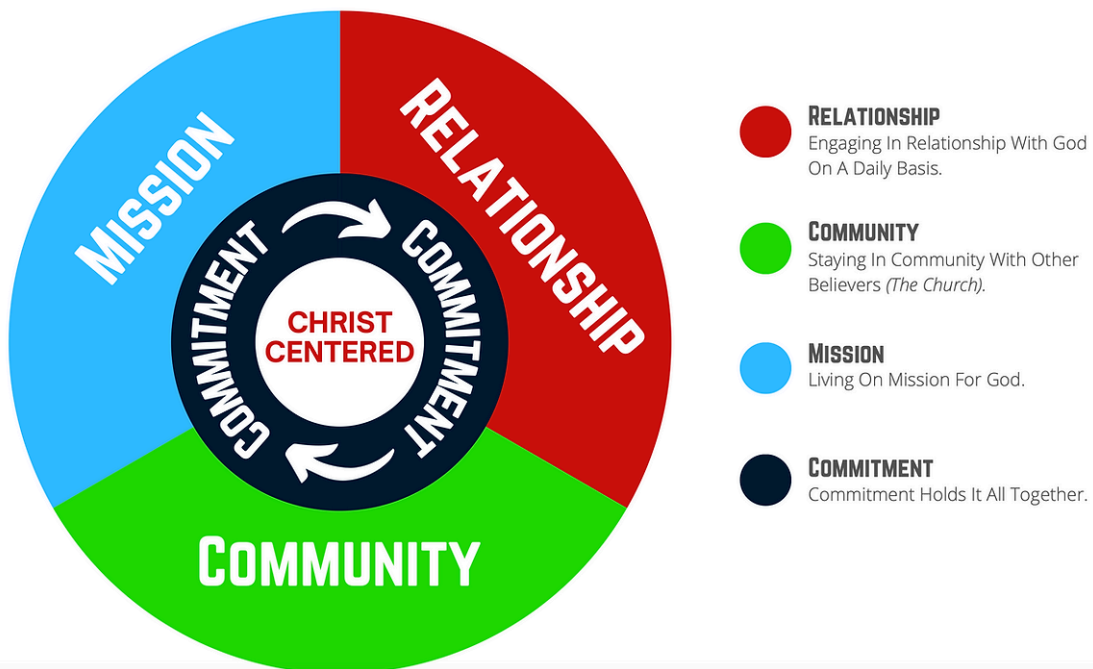
*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

# REMEMBER

Day 25



## HOW THE 4 PILLARS WORK TOGETHER



Congratulations, you have officially made it to the last day of After Salvation! I want to thank you so much for trusting me with your valuable time. Please know that I have prayed for you in advance that God will grow and mold you more into His image daily. Today I wanted to share some personal takeaways from my journey that I hope will be helpful as you continue on your journey with God. Commitment to God is not an easy road and scripture reminds us just how hard it is to follow God.



Matthew 7:13-14 - *“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

You made it to Day 25, which alone should speak to your level of commitment to God—I think that is amazing. As you might have heard me say a few times throughout our journey together, no shortcuts exist to becoming spiritually mature. Growth takes effort. Following God is not easy because the world and our flesh are constantly trying to fight for our attention and interest. That is why I desire to share a few more things as we wrap up our study on commitment.

## Seasons

Life happens! You’ll have good times and bad times, as we all do. In Ecclesiastes 3:1 it says, *“There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.”* This is speaking about life, basically saying that things will happen, so don't be surprised when they do. Be careful and don't allow the difficulty of those life events to sway or push you away from God. The Lord is our anchor and in Hebrews 6:19 it says, *“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”* Jesus never promises a life without difficult times. In fact, He tells us there will be trouble, but there is good news in even knowing this. In John 16:33, He says, *“I have told you these things, so that in me, you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

I think an important aspect to realize as humans is we cannot control all events and circumstances. What we can control is this, staying connected and committed to God and relying on the Spirit of God for help and strength. I've been through a very difficult season in life, so I can attest to it. These moments affect us in one of two ways: either it pushes us to greater levels of faith in God or drives us away from God. Mentally, we have to be prepared for anything while not putting so much thought into *“what could happen”* that it leads us to anxiety. God wants you to know that no matter what you face, even death itself, He has overcome it all, so take heart, our hope is not in this world but in our eternal destiny.

## Don't Quench the Holy Spirit

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19, it says, *“Do not quench the Spirit.”* This is probably one of the hardest things to be sensitive to as a committed Christian. How do we know if we are quenching the Spirit of God in our lives? The tension comes when the believers become out of balance within their spiritual life. To quench the Holy Spirit means we stop listening to the correction and guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The question is, if the Holy Spirit is not leading, who is?

That means our flesh is leading us, and the danger is that this will drive us further away from God inevitably. In return, this will directly affect us walking in our purpose and understanding His will for our lives. This goes back to Day 24 where we discuss how spiritual awareness helps to bring about spiritual maturity in our lives. Be faithful and aware to the leading of the Holy Spirit and don't drown out the voice of God in your life; the Holy Spirit is your advocate, your helper!

Other times we can put too much emphasis on one area of our spiritual life and neglect the Holy Spirit. For example, the background I was raised in created an environment where the Word of God was elevated to a place where it seemed to take precedence over the Holy Spirit (which is God in the form of the Spirit). In fact, we hardly spoke of the Holy Spirit within our services. Please don't hear me incorrectly, there is a tremendous value in knowing the Word of God, and it is what forms and shapes us as believers. Hopefully, over the last 25 days, you have gotten a good introduction to scripture, but there is something to be said about being obedient to how the Holy Spirit is leading you in your life as well. In John 4, it describes this balance well and Jesus uses the language of "Spirit" and in "truth".

*John 4:23-24 - "23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."*

So we worship God in both Spirit (Holy Spirit) and in truth (Bible/God's Word). These both are required for the believer to have spiritual success and growth. I would encourage you to learn how to hear God through His Word and by His Spirit. Remember the Holy Spirit is actually part of the Trinity and so pay special attention to this part of your spiritual life. When Jesus even says it would be better for Him to leave, so the Father could send the helper, the Holy Spirit, we should pay special attention to that (John 14:25-27)!

## **Your Emotions Are Not God**

Lastly, we all struggle with emotions, obviously. Some show it more than others, but we all do. Specifically, when times get tough or things are not going our way, we all seem to get emotionally frustrated. It's important that we learn how to separate our emotions. What I mean by that is, that just because you're having a rough day, it doesn't mean God is mad at you. Also, just because you might not be in the job or role that you want to be in, it doesn't mean God is trying to hold out on you because you must not have great faith. In Hebrews 13:8 it says, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" This is important to recognize because how we feel doesn't mean that is how God feels about us.

I have talked to people who say they missed one day of reading their Bible and their day is going terribly, so "God must be mad at me." A lot of times that is the failure of our inward expectations expressed by a non-connecting outward circumstance. God is not mad at us if we don't read our Bible every day. What did the disciples do before the Gutenberg press was created in the 1400s? They didn't have pocket Bibles everywhere they went. They relied on the Holy Spirit, and they did get into the Word as much as they could through temple gatherings when they gathered together in homes. They shared the disciples' letters to the churches, which we now call the New Testament.

If we do feel that way in our lives, what you're experiencing is an inward guilt that convinces you that you need to perform for God's love and favor, which simply is an incorrect way of viewing God. Should we read our Bibles? Absolutely! But, be careful that you don't become subject to what I call the "good and bad scale." It's this idea that if you do enough good for God, He will love you more and if you don't do enough religious activities for God that day He will be mad or disappointed in you.

That is not how God operates. He operates out of grace and consistency. He is a just God, and He knows our heart's attention. It says in Deuteronomy 32:4, "*He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He.*" Then in Psalms 139:2-3 it says, "*You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.*" God's love for you doesn't change based on your emotional state. God is the most consistent aspect of our life—He does not change. Your current emotional state does not affect God's love for you or your salvation. You are secure in Christ!

**I love you, and I'm praying for you all.**

**Please contact me if I can help answer any questions directly for you at [roger@aftersalvation.com](mailto:roger@aftersalvation.com).**

**If this ministry has blessed you we would humbly ask for your support at our website [www.aftersalvation.com](http://www.aftersalvation.com)**

**Blessings, and may your journey with God be life-changing and everlasting!**