

Beginning in Grace

What the Bible teaches about a
Relationship with God

Six Basic Truths for Every Seeker

by
Ed Underwood

For Leaders Only! Before You Begin...

“Thanks! Good job. Well done, good and faithful servant.”

These are precious words faithful servants of Christ will hear at His Judgment Seat (2 Corinthians 5:9-10). Can you imagine the joy these sinners saved by grace will know at His coming? Faithful believers, those Christians who do what He says, will hear their Savior say, “Thanks. You pleased me in this.” That is grace upon grace. Saved by grace, empowered by grace, and then rewarded...in grace!

Congratulations. You have just made a decision that will move you toward that goal. You are following the Master’s plan—one friend telling another friend about Christ. The strategy is simple. Paul put it this way in his second letter to his friend, Timothy:

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2).

I hope you see this as a labor of love. As you guide a friend or group through these materials only your love for Christ and the dear ones He died for will sustain you. Discipling or mentoring is hard work. After stating the basic strategy Paul is quick to remind Timothy of what it will cost.

You must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3).

This is warfare, spiritual warfare. You can be sure that Jesus’ enemy, Satan, is set against you. Every distraction, discouragement, and disappointment will be thrown your way. The devil will use anything to stop you from launching a new believer into a life of eternal significance as a disciple of the Master.

So, count the cost before you begin. Spend some time right now telling God you are ready for the battle. Ask Him to anoint you with His power, encourage you through His word, and give you the strength to finish what you begin. Tell Him you won’t quit.

Whether you call it discipleship or mentoring, you just cannot improve upon the Master’s plan. And He will not forget your obedience. You will hear Him say, “Thank you.”

For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister (Hebrews 6:10).

Encouraged by your obedience,

Ed Underwood
Pastor, Church of the Open Door

Guiding Others through Beginning in Grace

Warning: Do Not Skip to Lesson One!

Right now you are wondering whether you should take the time to read through all the introductory material. You just want to get to it! Please, do not skip this section. These principles for success are vital. Read them carefully and prayerfully. Remember, you are going to be telling another person about the Lord Jesus Christ. You owe it to your disciple to be thoroughly prepared.

✱ Focus on relationship; emphasize grace

The two most important questions for you, the leader will be: Where are we going with this? And, how will we get there? Two words should dominate your thoughts as you guide a friend or group through *Beginning in Grace*—relationship and grace.

These materials are designed to take someone “from the streets” to a growing *relationship* with Jesus Christ. Notice the word *relationship*. That word, *relationship*, is the key to understanding the uniqueness and the overarching purpose of these lessons. Your goal is clear: To guide your friend or group to a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Over the years I have used various approaches to discipleship with some success. But too often I felt I was sharing cold truths about a warm Savior. What was missing? I was teaching truths *about* the Christian life, *about* Christ, *about* God, *about* the Bible. But what is Christianity about? What is the Bible about? What is eternal life about? Eternal life is receiving the life of God and sharing that life with Him forever. It’s all about *relationship*. After all, Christianity is indeed a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Relationship integrates biblical truth. Every doctrine, every story, every truth is designed to draw us into a closer relationship with Christ and others. So each lesson moves the students in that direction—closer to Christ and others.

The best way you can encourage your friends in this process is to be relational. Guard against hypocrisy. If you become the person with all the answers, the one who has it all together, it’s over. Show them that you too are struggling with real life issues but finding comfort and joy in your relationship with Christ. They need to know that they can trust you. We trust people who are open, honest, and authentic.

Now consider where you are going. Your goal is remarkable—to draw your friends into a closer relationship with the Lord Jesus. More than remarkable, your goal is supernatural! You cannot do this on your own. The only way you will reach your goal is the same way you received eternal life and grew in your Christian life—by *grace*. Only God’s Spirit can move a heart closer to Christ.

Grace stimulates Christian growth. Every sin forsaken, every step of obedience, every truth grasped, every attitude changed, every hurt healed is the result of God’s grace. So each move closer to Christ has to happen in this way—by grace, through faith. Spiritual growth requires an atmosphere of *grace*.

The best way you can provide a healthy atmosphere of grace is to be *gracious*. If you want to be a shepherd you have to learn to tolerate the smell of sheep. Show them the love of Christ. This does not mean you condone irresponsibility or sin. You can be Christlike in your correction. Growth requires change, but grace patiently understands that spiritual growth comes slowly and sometimes painfully.

Focus on relationship. Be their friend; show them Christ's unconditional love. Emphasize grace. Be kind; stay out of the way and let God's Spirit work.

✿ **Get a commitment; monitor capacity**

Commitment and capacity require constant attention. Without commitment this process stalls. This requires balance and discernment from God's Spirit. Asking too much or moving too quickly will overwhelm and discourage those who need extra care. Asking too little or moving too slowly will bore and frustrate those who are on fire to become disciplemakers.

Commitment: Ask for commitment up front. During your first meeting, be sure your student or group agrees to:

- Complete the study of the *Beginning in Grace* workbook each week before the session.
- Memorize the verses for each week before the session.
- Memorize the complete set of verses by the end of the sessions.
- Pray daily for you and the needs you discuss together.
- Participate openly and honestly in each session.
- Keep confidential any personal matters shared during your sessions.

Capacity: Every disciple is different. Attitude is more important than performance. When people sincerely try, exercise grace. Stay alert for these signs of discouragement:

- Limited reading and writing skills: You may need to stretch the lessons out. Be sensitive to those who either cannot read or struggle with English. Adjust your expectations accordingly. Cover only one or two sections of the lesson each week. Just make sure you agree upon how much you will complete weekly.
- Personal trauma: Never press for completion of the lesson with a hurting or sinning believer. Get involved in their life so that you know what is going on. Stress, heartache or guilt will distract even the most committed. Put the lesson on hold and give them the personal attention they need.
- "Inability to memorize" Many adults are convinced that they can no longer remember long sentences. This is absurd, but they really believe it. You need to show them how to break a sentence down into smaller parts, memorizing each part before putting the entire phrase together. The key to memorization is review. Encourage them to use the review sheet.
- Miscalculation: Each course is designed to take about four hours of preparation a week. One hour a day for four days is ample time for most people. This leaves three days to make up for days missed. Still, some will make the commitment only to find that life is just too busy right now. Don't force it. Give them a way out so that you can pursue the course later. Be careful not to drive them away from the process of discipleship.

✿ Come prepared; teach with excellence

Everything depends on your preparation. As the teacher or guide you need to take responsibility for each lesson. It is not their responsibility to “get it.” It is your responsibility to *cause* them to learn. Remember, you teach these lessons for the Savior. He deserves our very best. Whether you are a seasoned teacher with vast experience or a novice, a few simple principles will give your students the best opportunity to learn these life-changing truths.

- Pray for your students daily. Make sure they know that you are praying for their needs daily. One need every student has in common is the need to learn from God’s Spirit through these materials and to draw closer to His Son. Ask God to give them discipline and discernment each day. Carry with you a 3x5 card with your students’ specific requests and pray for them throughout the day.
- Know the material. Your confidence will put your students at ease. This does not mean that you have all the answers. It simply demonstrates that you have gained insight from interaction and personal experiences with the Word of God.
- Memorize and repeat the “irreducible minimum.” Each lesson closes with a **central truth**. This is what educators call the “irreducible minimum.” The irreducible minimum draws together the entire lesson, stating it in one sentence. Memorizing the central truth of each lesson will give you confidence. Repeating this irreducible minimum throughout the lesson drives the central truth deeper into the soul of the students.
- Talk about your life. Illustrations of the truth help us picture how it works. As you prepare, think of personal stories of how this works in your life. Your students will remember your stories far longer than they remember your principles.
- Be honest. Here is a truth that cannot be denied: *You cannot know what you don’t know!* If you do not know the answer to a question, tell them, “I’m not an expert. I am just excited about my relationship with Christ. I really do not know the answer.” Students appreciate humble honesty. Pride-driven bluffing turns everyone off. More mature Christians in your church will know the answer. Ask them for help.
- Know the memory verses letter perfect. “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11). If you take the memory work lightly so will your students. The six selected passages summarize the irreducible minimum of each lesson. This enhances the learning experience greatly. More than that, these verses are the very words God inspired on these subjects. The Holy Spirit uses these words from the heart of God to change the hearts of men and women. Do the memory work.

✿ Name the time and place

Each lesson involves four hours of work for your students. You need to schedule adequate time to review the lesson. For most people, 90 minutes is sufficient. When you teach a group of two or more you may need to set aside two hours. (See group work below)

You need a meeting time that is realistic and a place that is quiet. Uninterrupted time together is your highest priority when deciding on a time and place. This is your opportunity to pray and talk about the most important issues in life. Be sure your place is free from distractions such as a ringing telephone, children under foot, or drop-in visitors.

Schedule your time together on a weekly basis if at all possible. Agree on the time and commit to treating this as you would any important appointment. Make sure there is no confusion concerning the time and place. Every lesson closes with a box to fill in the exact time and place you will be meeting next week. Call to remind your disciple of the first meeting.

✿ Start on time; stay on track; end on time

You must take responsibility for time. Your disciple expects you to lead. Excellence demands time management.

A good lesson starts on time!

You should arrive early to provide for the usual “small talk.” Be clear that you will begin on time. This is especially true with group studies. If you wait for the latecomers they will just show up that much later. This frustrates those who arrive on time.

A good lesson stays on track!

Ninety minutes will fly by...and fly away if you are not organized. Here is a suggested “typical session” lasting from 7:00-8:30

WELCOME – 7:00-7:05 (5 Minutes) Take some time to “warm up” the conversation and get settled. Ask if there is any reason your student is not prepared to do the lesson. Be careful! Every minute you waste here will be lost at the end.

MEMORY VERSES AND REVIEW – 7:05-7:15 (10 Minutes) Most people will not be able to concentrate until they have recited their memory verses. Begin with this week’s verses, then last week’s memory work, then the week before until you are reviewing the first week’s verses. Finally, using the review sheets provided, review the entire course up to now. Make sure you point out the purposeful progression of the lessons to draw them closer to Christ.

DISCUSS THE LESSON – 7:15-8:10 (55 Minutes) Check your student’s workbook. Highlight any unanswered questions for discussion. If there are too many blank spaces you need to find out why. It may be that your student is thoroughly confused. This means you will have to slow the pace.

- **Overview (3 Minutes):** The first page of each lesson begins with a highlighted **OVERVIEW** of the three principles that build the lesson. Pre-teach the truth by reading aloud the three principles. Ask leading and general questions to determine how well your student understood the concepts. “Do you see how these three truths fit together?” “Which one of these did you find most difficult?” “Did this make sense to you?”
- **Introduction (10 Minutes):** The first few pages should surface the need the lesson meets. Monitor these closely. Your student’s response to the opening questions will give you insight into where they really are in relation to this truth. **The Bible Will Be Your Guide** section is designed to make them more familiar with the Bible. You may want to ask them, “Are you feeling more comfortable finding your way around the Bible?” You may want to ask some specific review questions for those who are catching on quickly. “This week we found that the Old Testament is divided into three types of books. What are they?” Always discuss the **Talking to God** closing of each section. Ask how it went when they prayed about this need in their life. One of your highest priorities is to get them talking to God about their lives.
- **Body (30 Minutes):** One chapter is dedicated to each of the three main principles. Be sure to orient them to these principles when reviewing each lesson. “We just finished studying the biblical proof that **God loves you**, now we will look at the biblical evidence that proves that **God wants to give you His life, eternal life**” Briefly overview each section by reading the bold titles. Then, review the principle. Discuss any questions your student may have. Check their understanding by asking a few questions of your own. You may want to read aloud the **let’s review** paragraphs ending each section. These words carefully restate the study in a few sentences. Keep in mind that review is the “mother of all learning!” You simply cannot review too much.
- **Conclusion (10 Minutes):** This is where the action is—where the truth gets worked into life. Be careful not to get so involved in teaching that you forget your purpose—to change a life! Allow at least ten minutes for this section. Quickly review the three principles and state the **central truth**. Then, go through the closing questions with them one at a time. Do they understand the central truth of this lesson? Have they applied this truth to their lives? Close by completing the **Review Sheet** box for that lesson on page 86:

Subject: How to have a relationship with God.

Memory Verse: *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Ephesians 2:8-9

Central Truth: You can have a relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ His Son.

- **Prepare for Next Time (2 Minutes):** Write down your next meeting time and the exact assignment, including the memory verse. If your student is having trouble with the lessons, tailor the next assignment to his or her capacity. “This is pretty deep. Let’s just cover pages 30-35 next time.” Or, “I don’t feel we are quite comfortable with this lesson yet. Why not go over the same material again for next week? This time through, pay special attention to the questions you found so confusing. Hopefully our time together today has given you some insight.”

SHARING AND PRAYER – 8:10-8:30 Talk about your life first. Share a real prayer request with your student. “My wife and I seem to be arguing a lot lately. Would you put us on your prayer list?” Or, “I’m feeling a little insecure at work right now. My supervisor seems to be avoiding me. Would you mind praying for me this week? I’m asking God to give me just the right opportunity to talk with him.” You need to open up first. Remember, Christianity is for real people. Be real.

Ask for their prayer requests. You should not expect transparent openness the first few sessions. As you earn their trust, they will open up.

Write down your prayer requests on the prayer sheet in the back of the book. Be sure to monitor how God has answered prayers over the weeks.

Question: What if our sharing time surfaces a hurt or a problem we need to talk about in depth? Schedule your next meeting to discuss and pray for this personal need. Then spend some time researching the need before your next meeting. If your next meeting does not help your student enough to move on with *Beginning in Grace* you probably need help. Call your mentor or pastor for guidance. It may be that you will need to refer your disciple to a good Christian counselor.

A good lesson ends on time!

Too much of a good thing is a bad thing. When your time is up...stop! No matter how interesting the discussion is...stop! Your student may feel like he or she really wants to continue, but you want them to come back next week. When they know they can trust you with the time they will come back. A meeting that is so exciting you do not want to quit is the best possible experience your student can have. A meeting that never ends, never brings people back.

✿ **“Review, review,” and again I say, “Review!”**

Review is the mother of all learning. You simply cannot review too much. This is why memorizing the irreducible minimum and the verse is so critical. As you memorize your mind dwells on the central truths. You can then insert these bullets throughout your time with your student.

Each lesson is sprinkled with review sections. Sometimes we feel like we are repeating ourselves too much. You cannot repeat yourself too much. Make sure you spend time on these reviews. Read them aloud whenever possible.

Review the **Central Truths** of every completed lesson each week. This keeps the “big picture” in front of your

student. The lessons move toward our goal of drawing us closer to the Lord Jesus. Show them this progression using the review sheets provided. Fill in the blanks each week as you add a lesson.

✿ Stay in contact

Emphasize relationship. Remember, this is more than a study course. This is one friend telling another friend about Jesus Christ. I recommend three “contact” goals as a minimum:

- **Weekly contact—encouragement.** A phone call each week will encourage your new friend tremendously. “Any problems with the lesson I could help you with?” “I’m praying for your problem, any progress this week?” “How is God showing Himself strong for you this week?”
- **Contact their world—the visit.** People love to share their life. One time during the six weeks arrange to meet *them* where *they* work. “I just want to see you in your everyday life so that I can pray more effectively for you. Mind if I come by, tour your office and then take you to lunch?” And when you meet leave *your* agenda behind. You do a lot of talking every time you meet to discuss the lessons. This time you meet, *you* listen...a lot!
- **Future contact—graduation dinner.** When your disciple finishes the course, have a graduation dinner at your house. If married, invite the spouse too. Tell them how much you appreciate their hard work and their friendship. Make sure they know that you still want to be there for them. Discipleship is an ongoing commitment. It doesn’t end with the last lesson. Buy them a special gift to help them grow like a favorite Christian book or a Bible.

✿ Sell the vision—a ministry of multiplication

From the very beginning emphasize your expectation that your student will become a teacher, a disciplemaker. “When you show this verse to your friends, be sure to point out this word.” “How are you going to explain this to a newer believer when you teach this?” Build on this expectation by encouraging them to:

- **See the potential.** Ask them to calculate the potential of their life if they dedicate themselves to a ministry of multiplication. Say this sentence over and over again: *Two a year is all I ask.* Then explain: “If you disciple two people this year and encourage each of them to reach two people per year and so on, how many people will you reach the first year? The second, third, fourth, tenth...?” The impact is of course staggering. 2, 8, 22...thousands can be reached effectively if we will follow the Master’s Plan.
- **Begin praying immediately.** During your first lesson ask them to begin praying for a friend to take through these materials. They should pray for this friend by name. If they cannot think of someone, tell them to simply pray for a person they do not even know yet. You will be amazed at how quickly God will bring them someone to disciple.
- **Solo early.** Help them find someone to take through the lessons as early as possible. The best way to learn any truth is to teach it. Early success with disciplmaking leads to a lifetime addiction! Remember, nobody ever feels “ready.” Discipling is like getting used to cold water. The best way is to jump in. Of course you are going to jump in with them!

✿ Do it again

Always be on the lookout for a new disciple. Be aggressive for Christ. Never stop praying for a new person to draw closer to Christ. While you teach one, ask another, and another, and another. The most successful disciplers pursue every lead to experience the joy of seeing another friend walk with the Savior.

Group work

Beginning in Grace works well in small groups *if* you plan for the uniqueness of the lessons. Since *Beginning in Grace* is intensive and demanding, most people will need personalized care and guidance. However, a seasoned and mature believer can lead a small group through the course. Here are some guidelines:

- **Apprentices:** These are students with more capacity because of prior training or Christian experience. We recommend an apprentice for every two students. The leader should prepare the apprentices before the sessions.
- **Schedule:** In each session the leader presents an overview of the lesson first. Then the group breaks down into 3-person teams led by the apprentices. Finally, the group meets again to review, share, ask questions, and receive next week's assignment.

Graduation: The adventure is just beginning!

The closing pages of *Beginning in Grace* encourage your disciple to take the step of baptism. This will raise many questions. You will find an overview of the ordinances of the church in the Appendix that should help you explain why baptism is an important commitment for every believer.

How to Have a Relationship with God

Lesson 1

OVERVIEW

- God loves you
- God wants to give you His life, eternal life
- You can know that you have eternal life

RELATING TO GOD WILL BE RADICALLY DIFFERENT

Preparing to teach Lesson 1

How do the three bullets in the overview fit with the purpose of the lesson?

Be sure that you can think through the logical sequence of the three bullets:

- God loves you
- God wants to give you his life, eternal life
- You can know that you have eternal life

Central Truth of Lesson One:

You can have a relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ His Son.

How does this central truth relate to the three bullets in the overview?

How does the memory passage, Ephesians 2:8-9 relate to the central truth?

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves;
it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

How does it relate to the three bullets in the overview?

Review the audio tape, "How to teach Lesson 1." If you still have questions, call the person who taught you Lesson 1 for help.

Pray for your student very specifically asking God to use these materials to persuade your student to trust Christ and, having trusted Christ, that he/she has assurance of salvation.

Teaching Lesson 1

Relating To God Will Be Radically Different: This introductory section points out the difference between God and us, especially the way we relate. This will be extremely important for most people. Those whose trust has been violated by loved ones need to know God is different. Try to think of a relationship in life that has been disappointing to you. Sharing your personal pain will encourage your student's transparency. Make sure your student has been able to find John 3:16 (p 3) and has recorded their feelings after talking to God (p 3).

God Invites You To Receive His Life: Point out how the body of the lesson develops. This is a good opportunity to once again review the three main bullets, the memory verse, and the central idea.

Amazing Love—God loves you (pp 4-5). Your student must understand that eternal life is free to us but costly to God. His Son gave His life so that we might live. This is unconditional love. When you read the review section (p 5) read the last paragraph as a bridge or a transition to the next lesson.

All Who Believe Receive—God wants to give you His life—eternal life (pp 6-7). This is the most eternally important section in the book. The review section on page 7 will help you explain the transaction of eternal life. **Do not assume your student is a Christian just because they know a lot about the Bible or seem comfortable with church culture. Only those who believe receive eternal life!** Be prepared to share the Gospel clearly and confidently. Your training from chapter 5, *Telling Others How to Have a Relationship with Christ*, will be invaluable here. Review the tract, *Life's Most Important Question* and make sure you are ready to take your student through the material if he or she still hesitates to believe.

It's Yours Forever—You can know you have eternal life (pp8-9). Eternal security and assurance of salvation are not the same. *Eternal security* is the work of God which guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received, is forever and can never be lost. *Assurance* is the realization that one possesses eternal life. When your student believed they were eternally secure. That is God's promise and He cannot lie. But do they know they are secure? The purpose of this section is to help the already secure believer understand and rejoice in their security. Lack of assurance brings unnecessary but terrible doubt and trauma into a believer's life. Carefully guide them through the three assurance passages: John 10:26-30, Romans 8:35-39, and 1 John 5:11-13. I have given you a lot of help for this section on the tape, so be sure to review thoroughly. The very last blank we ask them to fill in is supremely critical (p 9). Make sure you pinpoint their assurance or lack of it through that sentence based on the teaching of 1 John 5:13.

How Do You Have a Relationship with God? These concluding pages (10-11) give you the opportunity to interact with your student on a more personal basis. You should review the three bullets again showing how they fit together. In this section you need to go over every question. Find out how your student is handling all this new information. Remember to monitor capacity. Have they struggled with this lesson? Do they fully grasp the concepts? Make sure your student has believed in Jesus and that they feel secure in the relationship. **The helpful note on page 11 highlights the connection between belief and security.**

Following Lesson 1

- Fill out the "Next Time" box on page 11. Be very specific. If you feel your student is struggling with the material, only assign pages 12-20. This divides Lesson Two nicely.
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Salvation*.

- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. Begin now recording your student's prayer requests.
- Pray together. Do not pressure a new believer to pray; this comes later. Model how to pray being careful not to use a lot of Christian jargon.
- Affirm your student. Tell them what a joy it is to grow together with them and that you will be praying for them next week.

The Purpose of Your Relationship with God

Lesson 2

OVERVIEW

- You have great potential in Christ
- You have two options in realizing your potential in Christ
- God gives you four motivations for developing your potential in Christ

RELATING TO GOD WILL BRING NEW MEANING AND PURPOSE TO YOUR LIFE

Preparing to teach Lesson 2

Purpose of Lesson 2: Understanding the purpose of their salvation, the student will want to pursue their eternally significant destiny in Christ Jesus.

How do the three bullets in the overview fit with the purpose of the lesson?

Central Truth of Lesson Two:

The purpose of your relationship with God is to accomplish eternally significant works for Him.

Spend some time meditating on the lesson as a whole. Do you see how the three main points fit together to build the main idea expressed in the central truth?

- You have great potential in Christ
- You have two options in realizing your potential in Christ
- God gives you four motivations for developing your potential in Christ

How does the memory passage, Ephesians 2:10, relate to the central truth?

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

In two sentences, how does this week's verse build off of the previous verses from lesson 1?

Why is it important that your student see the relationship between Ephesians 2:8-9 and 10?

Review the CD, “How to teach Lesson 2.” If you still have questions, call the person who taught you Lesson 2 for help.

Pray for your student very specifically asking God to use these materials to motivate your disciple to make the most of his or her Christian life—to want to please God fully by fulfilling his or her destiny in Christ Jesus.

Teaching Lesson 2

Relating to God will bring new meaning and purpose to your life (pp 13-15). These beginning paragraphs and questions should introduce your student to the exciting truth that God had wonderful plans in mind when He saved them. Notice that there is a lot more independent work in the first few questions. You should be very careful to help your student gain confidence in making “personal observations” (p 13). No matter what they have written down, affirm and encourage!

The “Something you should know” note at the bottom of page 13 is critical. The little word “for” in Ephesians 2:10, when properly understood, generates biblical and healthy expectations for believers.

Page 14 divides into two sections which go together. New Christians need to develop confidence in the Bible as their guide, but they also need some enthusiasm for the places the Bible will take them. Be sure you feel confident in making this connection for your student.

Page 15 closes out the introduction with the next “survey” of the Bible and the time of prayer. This week your student will learn how the New Testament is put together and spend time talking with God about their new destiny in Christ. Be sure you pause at the bottom of page 15 to read their response to this time in prayer.

God invites you to a life of eternal significance: Before you jump into the meat of the lesson, take some time to orient your student to the contents. Review the bullets, the central idea and the memory verse as aspects of this invitation to eternal significance.

Now That You’ve Believed—You have great potential in Christ (pp 16-18). A healthy self-image should be no problem for a Christian. We are new creatures...*in Christ*. The tragedy for most believers is that we live our Christian life unaware of what our union with Christ means to our everyday experience. The “Something you should know” note on page 16 gives you the doctrine in a nutshell, and the section unfolds the wonder of the truth. Our position in Christ means nothing should ever be the same. We now have a new life with new opportunities and new power. Notice that your student will receive a lot more guidance in the margins during lesson 2. Be careful to avoid stalling over the subjects of the Trinity or the Holy Spirit (p 18). I have tried to give the new Christian just enough information so that the concept of the Trinity and the ministry of the Holy Spirit will become real in their lives.

Grow Up and Bear Fruit for Christ—You have two options in realizing your potential in Christ (pp 19-20). Your student will confront two questions every believer must answer: 1) Am I going to grow up and mature as a Christian, or will I remain a babe in Christ? 2) Am I going to cooperate with the power of God in my life allowing Christ to live His life through me, or will I resist God’s invitation to live by faith clinging to my own power and control? The two, of course, are interrelated.

Spiritual maturity—Your choice (pp 18-19). These paragraphs take your student to the passage in God’s Word that contrasts the two types of believers—carnal and spiritual, babies and mature. Help them with the chart on page 19. They should be able to identify a few sentences. For your own use, you will notice that these have been contrasted in the next section on page 20: “You have two options. You can grow up and fulfill your potential in Christ—becoming a discerning, mature believer, fruitful in good works and intimate with your Savior. Or, you can remain a babe in Christ—confused and self-centered, fighting with other Christians and feeling far away from your Savior.” Keep this in mind as you help your stu-

dent see the differences between a carnal and a spiritual believer. You may also want to offer some of your own experiences with the process and how you have grown past some of your fleshly ways.

God's power—Your choice (p19). This reminds your student that this is a cooperative process. Galatians 2:20 is the classic verse that describes this process we call "progressive sanctification" the experience of becoming more like Christ. Be careful, we're not speaking of legalism (works-righteousness). This is releasing the power of Christ in us through faith—believing God is working through every circumstance in life to grow us and bless us.

You may want to break the lesson into two parts for new believers. If so, **make the break here**. Review the first two sections of the body and introduce the next section on motivation. Close your time together reviewing the memory verses up to here and sharing prayer requests.

Reasons You Should Grow Up and Bear Fruit—God gives you four motivations for developing your potential in Christ (pp 21-23). So many times we tell new Christians what to do before telling them why. This section provides the *why*, biblically speaking. There are many motivations to grow as a believer but the four highlighted on these pages are mentioned most in the Bible. Overview the section by showing how the four motives are related. Then, dive in!

Gratitude for grace (p 21). Reviewing Galatians 2:20 and teaching Romans 12:1, help your student to see how powerful this dynamic can be to a newly-forgiven heart. Be ready to share what Christ's love means to you personally and how the Spirit uses your appreciation of grace in your walk with the Lord.

Blessing and discipline (pp 21-22). Putting this in the context of a father's love will help most students picture the process better. But, be on the alert for those who came from abusive homes. Their picture of a father's love will be foreign to the biblical portrayal of our Heavenly Father's loyal and unconditional love. Some may feel uncomfortable speaking of God's discipline. Still, this is a powerful regulator of our lives the Bible teaches. A little fear of God as the loving Father who will not put up with disobedience will often keep believers on the righteous side of temptation.

Rewards (pp 22-23). Though many church leaders consider this "deep doctrine," the Bible presents rewards as a universal motivator. The Lord promised rewards to His immature followers and Paul taught the doctrine of rewards in every letter he wrote. We dare not cheat our disciples of a truly biblical incentive to please Christ. Be sure to make the distinction between the reward itself and what it represents. A reward from the Lord is simply His way of showing His appreciation for a life pleasing to Him. Don't be intimidated by those who say, "I don't think this is holy." Seeking rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ is not self-serving or self-glorifying. Those believers who know their Bible live to hear their Lord's affirmation at His Judgment Seat.

Intimacy with Christ (p 23). Returning to the Upper Room and the Lord's offer of intimacy to those who obey Him, show your disciple how important this is to his or her life. The greatest joy for any believer is to draw close to a loving Savior and walk with Him through life.

What Is the Purpose of Your Relationship with God? (pp 24-25) The closing paragraphs of lesson two guide your student toward a personal reckoning with the truths he or she has studied. Take some time to review the bullets, the central truth and the memory verse. Look very carefully at their answers on these pages. Their responses to these probing questions will give you a sense of where they find themselves in relation to the concept of maximizing their life for God. Be sure to spend some time with the "A little help" note on page 25. The meaning of the word "workmanship" should excite them if they are truly understanding this lesson.

Following Lesson 2

- Fill out the “Next Time” box on page 25. Be very specific. The next lesson is not as long, so there should be no need to divide it.
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Purpose*.
- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. Review the requests from last week. Ask them how they felt last week knowing that you were praying for them. “Did it make any difference? How?”
- Pray together. Tell them that you are going to ask them to pray with you “out loud” next time. But for now, you will take these petitions before the Lord’s throne of grace.
- Affirm your student. Praise them for their diligence in completing such a long lesson. Tell them the truth: “Very few young Christians have ever come this far so fast in their walk with God.”

Deepening Your Relationship with God

Lesson 3

OVERVIEW

- God talks to you through His Word, the Bible
- You talk to God through prayer
- If you want to be close to God, you must learn to trust and obey Him

RELATING TO GOD WILL BRING NEW JOY AND SATISFACTION TO YOUR LIFE

Preparing to teach Lesson 3

Purpose of Lesson 3: Desiring intimacy with Christ, the student will begin to practice the disciplines of the Christian life.

Notice how important the memory verse is to this lesson! Christ's invitation to intimacy draws us toward these disciplines.

Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me .
(Revelation 3:20)

We are not doing this because this is what Christians do; we're doing these things because we want to know Jesus as our Friend. Be sure you can, in your own mind, grasp this reality and how it should make a difference on every page of this lesson.

Central Truth of Lesson Three:

You deepen your relationship with God by communicating with Him through studying His Word and praying, and trusting Him enough to do what He says.

Do you see the logical connections linking the three main points expressed in the bullets?

- God talks to you through His Word, the Bible
- You talk to God through prayer
- If you want to be close to God, you must learn to trust and obey Him

Review the audio tape, "How to teach Lesson 3." If you still have questions, you know who to call—your mentor!

Pray for your student very specifically asking God to use this lesson to teach them how to draw near to Christ to experience the intimacy with Him He invites all believers to in Revelation 3:20.

Teaching Lesson 3

Relating to God will bring new joy and satisfaction to your life (pp 27-29). The introductory pages of Lesson Three should surface the deepest need of every forgiven heart—to relate to Christ as a close Friend. Every mentor who teaches this lesson should consider if they are *living* this before teaching it. These basic disciplines are common knowledge among most Christians. Knowing we should read the Bible, pray, trust and obey will not draw us closer to God. Only when we practice these truths will we know Christ in this way.

Some may object to this usage of Revelation 3:20 since many evangelical Christians have learned this as an invitation to eternal life rather than intimacy with Christ. We can be sure that this is an invitation to Christians since the Lord is speaking to the church (3:14, 22), specifically to those that He loves who need rebuking so that they will be zealous and repent (3:19).

The comparison with an admired person at the top of page 28 will help most put this invitation in context. How excited would we be if Lincoln, Churchill, or a current world leader knocked at our door with this invitation to intimacy! Take your student through the thinking process to help them picture the Lord standing at the door to their lives.

Caution: Your student might get 1 John confused with John. This is a good learning opportunity! Take them through the passage in 1 John 1:1-4 pointing out that John shared his account of the life of Christ so that the reader could have fellowship with Christ and His people and that our joy may be full. Fellowship is a “Christianese” term, so pay careful attention to the “Something you should know” paragraph at the top of page 28.

Page 29 introduces the student to the structure of the Old Testament. Try to help them see that the Bible really is not that difficult to understand. Once we begin to see the “big picture” we become more comfortable in the Scriptures.

Notice that the **Talking to God** ending (29) is far more personal than before. Pay special attention to your student’s ability to express themselves to God.

God invites you to a life of intimacy with His Son: Explain to your student that we will be studying the basic disciplines of the Christian faith—Bible reading, prayer and trusting obedience. The Bible teaches these as our avenues to relate to God.

God Talks to You through His Word, the Bible—God’s words to you (pp 30-31). This study takes your student through the basics having to do with the doctrine of the Bible. A true appreciation of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God is essential to a growing relationship with Christ. The biblical evidence shows that the Bible is inspired by God—all the words, every word—to change our lives. Do not leave this section until you are sure your student is settled on their confidence in the Bible as God’s Word.

Your Words to God, Prayer—How you talk to God (pp 32-33). How tragic that so few believers dedicate their time to prayer. One reason, I believe, is that so few understand the Bible’s promises concerning prayer.

The Privilege of Prayer (p 32) takes the student to Hebrews 4:14-16, a passage that puts prayer in the context of the Person of Christ. He is God; He is man. Therefore He can identify with our pain and do something about it! I always turn my student to these verses and have him write in the margin of his Bible, *God (powerful)* next to verse 14, *Man (compassionate)* next to verse 15, and *Therefore I come* next to verse 16.

The Passion of Prayer (p 32) focuses on the story of Hannah who cried out to God during a time of intense turmoil in her soul. Try to pause here to see if your student feels safe pouring their heart out to God. The connection back to Hebrews 4:14-16 should help them draw close to their compassionate High Priest, even with a broken heart.

The Power of Prayer (p 33) introduces what many consider the most encouraging sentences on prayer in the New Testament. I have my students underline the words nothing, everything and peace. Then I ask them, “How can you find peace when your heart is anxious?” The answer of course is to worry about nothing but take everything to the Lord in prayer. Spend time on the last question, “What do you need to take to God’s throne of grace right now?” These materials intentionally apply the truths as they are learned. You must cooperate with that process. This question

forces the student to do more than talk about prayer and real life. Here he or she must pause and pray about real life.

Intimacy with God—Trust and Obey if you want to be close to God (pp 34-35). This section will be new to most believers, even the most seasoned. Intuitively we know we should do what God says, but many have never made the connection between obedience and intimacy. Trust and obedience are flip sides of the same coin. The reason we obey is because we trust Him not to mislead us, feeling secure in His love.

These pages emphasize relationship from beginning to end. They move from earthly relationships to the heavenly relationship. Everyone understands how tension strains a relationship. The same dynamic applies to our relationship with God, except that He is never wrong! So, help your student work through the progression—from earthly relationships to our heavenly relationship with God.

Notice that the body of this lesson ends by taking the student back to the Upper Room. If you have not realized it yet, these materials emphasize these intimate words between the Savior and His friends. Obedience, they will see again, is absolutely necessary if we desire intimacy with Christ.

How you can have a deeper relationship with God (pp 36-38) The conclusion to *Lesson Three* is more extensive than the other chapters. Be sure to manage your time carefully so that you can not only review the lesson, but also teach them the two disciplines which successful Christians practice—confession of sin and the Quiet Time.

Confession of Sin. I know of no other provision for believers who have strained the relationship with God through sin. Carefully and accurately define confession using the margin note on page 36: *Confess means to say the same thing about sin that God does.* This must be clear or your student will fail and flounder. We all fail, but confession restores the full blessings of fellowship.

Quiet Time. First a question, “Are you having consistent time with the Savior?” Be careful not to “traffic in unlived truth.” This is one of the most crucial practical disciplines you can equip your student with. So, be prepared!

Review. By now you should know how to do this. Review the memory verse, the central truth, the bullet truths, and look carefully at the applicational questions on page 38.

Following Lesson 3

- Fill out the “Next Time” box on page 25.
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Intimacy*.
- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. Review prior requests and write down the new requests. By now your student should be sharing some more personal type requests. If not, probe to determine why he or she still feels the need to be self-protective with you.
- Pray together. Ask them to begin the prayer letting them know that they cannot say the wrong words. There are no “proper” prayer terms. Prayer is simply talking to God.
- Affirm your student and begin to exponentially raise their expectations from life. “Now that you are becoming familiar with these Christian disciplines—Bible study, prayer, trusting obedience, confession of sin and your Quiet Time—you will find that God will begin to work deeply in your heart to make you more like Christ. You will begin experiencing the type of life most believers only dream of. You will know the

joy of intimacy with Christ!”

Relating to Others in Christ

Lesson 4

RELATING TO GOD WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU RELATE TO OTHERS

OVERVIEW

- Give up your rights
- Let God guide our relationships
- Open your life to others

Preparing to teach Lesson 4

Purpose of Lesson 4: For the sake of the Gospel, the student will begin to glorify Christ in their relationships.

The memory verses in this lesson are long, but so perfectly suited to the content. So, be sure to encourage your student to do the memory work and be absolutely sure to memorize the passage yourself.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus
(Philippians 2:3-5)

These verses teach the most demanding and daunting truth of the Christian life—relate to others the way Christ relates to you. None of us have mastered this concept, but we should all be committed to it or leave this lesson to others.

Central Truth of Lesson Four:

You should put others first by giving up your rights, following God’s guidance in relationships and developing the courage to speak the truth in love.

Devote some preparation time to the big picture of *Lesson Four*. Look through the lesson remembering the sequence of the bullets and trying to relate them to the purpose, memory verse and central truth.

- Give up your rights
- Let God guide your relationships
- Give your life to others

Review the CD, “How to teach Lesson 4.”

Pray for your student. This lesson is intimidating to many Christians because it is so personal. Ask God to give them the grace to feel safe with you and for personal wisdom in your guidance and advice.

Teaching Lesson 4

Relating to God will change the way you relate to others (pp 39-41). The opening

section has a very special purpose—to sell the concept that our relationships are important to God. Many Christians have tried to live their spiritual life in isolation, rejecting the hard work of building Christ-centered relationships. In our self-centered world most of us will initially resist messages calling for other-centered priorities. So, be gentle but firm.

Carefully work through the questions and answers on page 39 constantly reminding them that these are commands. Just like we are to follow Christ's commands concerning our personal life, we should obey His directions in the area of personal relationships. He has earned the right to tell us how to relate to others since He reached out to us while we were still His enemies. (See the last two questions of reconciliation at the bottom of page 39.)

The feeling question and the evaluations on page 40 should help you determine where your student is in all this. Honest evaluations will always convict us, especially in the context of relationships. Take some time reviewing the evaluations with your student and be sure to share your personal struggle with one of these categories.

The Bible Will Be Your Guide section this week looks more closely at the epistles. The practical and supernatural value of the epistles is emphasized with this overview.

The **Talking to God** paragraphs (p 41) lead your student to the only real hope for healthy relationships in this life—the throne of grace. Be careful not to skip this vital beginning to fuller, Christ-honoring relationships.

God invites you to a life of maximum relationships: This sentence should speak to every honest heart. We all desire deep friendship and intimacy with those we love. Raise your student's expectations and desire to follow God's directions because the payoff is so wonderful.

A Radical Requirement—Give up your rights (pp 42-45). Until believers own the responsibility to relate to others in Christ-honoring relationships, the Gospel will be compromised. Philippians 1:27-30 tells us to *walk worthy of the Gospel of Christ*. Then, the letter addresses Christ's willingness to give up His rights for the sake of others. Show your student the progression and connection between the three sections: Take care of the Gospel (pp 42-23). Follow Christ's humble example (pp 43-44). Finally, adding the two together: Take care of the Gospel by putting others first.

God Will Show You the Way to Maximum Relationships—Let God guide your relationships (pp 46-49). Simply giving up our rights is only the beginning. Once we have given our relationships to the Lord we need to leave them with Him. The way we do this is to follow His instructions.

The first step, *give your life to God* (p 46), connects Romans 12:1-2, the classic passage on commitment in the New Testament, to its context—relationships in the local church (pp 47-48), Next, relate with Christlike humility. Be sure to spend time on the table at the top of page 48, the “do's and don'ts” of biblical relating.

Finally, start with one person (p 48). It is critical to apply these difficult truths immediately. Try to help your student see the one person the Holy Spirit is prompting him or her to reach out to with Christlike humility. Imagine how this could bring revival to the culture of your local church as the disciple-making process moves through redemptive relationships!

The Only Way to Maximum Relationships is Christlike Sacrifice—Give your life to others (pp 50-52). The word *sacrifice* occurs many times in this section. Why? Because relational health and fulfillment costs. Our models—Christ and Paul—should convince us of the absolute necessity of sacrificing our own rights and agendas for the sake of the relationship. As you help your student see the necessity of sacrifice always emphasize the goal—intimacy with someone we love. Most people never enjoy relationships in the way the Lord intended because few are willing to pay the price.

Speaking the truth in love is risky (pp51-52) but there is no other way to develop intimacy. Help your student through these pages checking their paraphrase of the Proverbs. The concept here is to “overload” the heart with truth that will cause us to actually risk truth-telling, biblically defined.

Relating to God Will Change the Way You Relate to Others (pp 53-54). Literally, for the sake of the Gospel, be sure your student is beginning to deal with the biblical demands to relate to others as Christ relates to us.

Notice that this review asks your student to once again evaluate his or her relationships. Go through this exercise with them. If these pages have not made a difference in the way the disciple relates to others, you have failed.

Following Lesson 4

- Fill out the “Next Time” box on page 54.
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Relationships*.
- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. Review prior requests and write down the new requests. By now your student should be sharing some more personal type requests. If not, probe to determine why he or she still feels the need to be self-protective with you. Are there any answers to prayer? Begin teaching your student the importance of praise.
- Pray together. Let them begin the prayer time together and let them know that they will always begin your time of prayer. Remember, you are making a disciple-maker! If they do not become comfortable praying with you they will never feel comfortable praying with others.
- Now is the time to strongly reinforce the fact that you expect them to become a disciple-maker. If you wait until the last lesson to introduce this critical next step it is usually too late. “Who do you feel the Lord is leading you to take through these materials? I know you may not feel like you are ready now, but I want to begin praying for these people right now. Some day you will be ready if I’m doing my job effectively. So, who do you know who needs these truths?” Then, write these names down and begin praying for these people.

Telling Others How to Have a Relationship with Christ

Lesson 5 GOOD NEWS WAS MADE TO SHARE

OVERVIEW

- God wants you to tell others about the free gift of eternal life
- You begin by building relationships with non-Christians
- You must know how to share the Good News accurately

Preparing to teach Lesson 5

Purpose of Lesson 5: Loving those who are lost and without hope, the student will share the Gospel effectively as a lifestyle.

The memory verse for *Lesson 5* is strategic because John 5:24 so clearly states the Gospel, the Good News. “Amen, amen” is Jesus way of saying to His hearers, “You can be sure of this!” Jesus promises eternal life and escape from judgment to all who will trust God’s word about Him..

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life .
(John 5:24)

Central Truth of Lesson Five:

You should be telling others how to have a relationship with Christ by making friends with non-Christians and sharing the true Gospel.

You should be able to follow the development of the three truths that divide this lesson and understand how they fit in to its purpose.

- God wants you to tell others about the free gift of eternal life.
- You begin by building relationships with non-Christians
- You must know how to share the Good News accurately

Review the audio tape, “How to teach Lesson 5.”

Pray for your student. So few believers actually share their faith. Ask God to help you guide your disciple to truly become a disciple-maker.

Note: During the teaching of these last two lessons you should repeatedly reinforce the need to reproduce. If not, disciple-

making is a dead end. You are equipping your student to disciple others...not to sit, soak, and sour with all this knowledge!

Teaching Lesson 5

Good News was made to share (pp 55-57). Of all the lessons, this introduction is the most convicting. Every time I take someone through these materials I have to confess my own neglect of sharing the Gospel. We all tend to forget the lost in our world. Especially when we are busy with church and other Christian activities. But...it is true...Good News was made to share!

Carefully take your student through these pages. The story from 2 Kings about the repentance of the self-centered beggars sets up the lesson. Do not shame your student for not sharing the Gospel. Most men I have taken through have never shared their faith. Most of us know we should, but many just do not know how. Be positive. The rest of the lesson will equip them to share the Good News.

The Bible survey for this lesson gives them an overview of the book of Acts. This reinforces the need to share our faith as we consider the Gospel's explosion across the New Testament world. Remind them that these people of the First Century were just like us.

The *Talking to God* segment (p 57) helps your student with the prerequisite to any evangelistic success—making the lost a priority in our lives!

God invites you to share His life with others: Pause here to review the three main sections and to demonstrate the logical sequence of the main body of the lesson (pp 58-65).

God Wants You to Tell Others About the Free Gift of Eternal Life (pp 58-59). Building off the introduction, the privilege and the responsibility we have to share the Gospel is reinforced. Before you teach this ask yourself, "Do I view the Gospel as a matter of life and death?" Most of us drive by our neighbor's homes and pass through our busy days forgetting that everyone who has not received eternal life will spend eternity in hell. Oh that we would grasp the truth that sharing the Gospel is not for super-Christians. Every believer is commanded to tell others the Good News!

You Must Earn the Right to Share the Good News—You must begin by building relationships with non-Christians (pp 60-62). This entire portion of the lesson hangs on a proper understanding of Colossians 4:2-6. This is the only place in Scripture I know of that gives such specific insight into how Paul "did evangelism." So, listen to the tape over and over again to make sure you can master this paragraph to teach others.

The three positive steps we surface from this paragraph (pp 61-62) should encourage every follower of the Lord Jesus that we can actually begin to share the Good News with others. Be sure to point out that the order is extremely important. Most people begin sharing their faith by talking. For Paul, that was the last step. First he prayed, and prayed, and prayed. Then he related, and related, and related. Then...and only then, did he speak!

Share the Good News Accurately—You must know how to share the Gospel accurately (pp 63-65). Sometimes Christians feel that "any message will do" when telling others about our faith. As this lesson makes perfectly clear, that is simply not true. The crisp and accurate proclamation of the Gospel is vital to successful evangelism. Make sure your student understands the significance of a clear Gospel, the need for belief and the content of the Gospel—*Christ died for our sins and arose*.

Sharing the Good News confidently (p 65) is possible for even the newest believers if they use the tract, *Life's Most Important Question*. We wrote this booklet to give a clear and simple presentation of the Gospel. Do not skip the exercise on page 65. Go over the booklet several times with your student role-playing so they will become confident in their ability to share the Good News using this aid.

Good News was made to share (pp 66-67). The focus of this conclusion to the section on sharing the

Gospel is to get them going in the process. Write down the names they have on their prayer list on a 3x5 card so you too can pray for their lost friends and relatives. Hold them accountable to schedule some event with a non-Christian this week.

Following Lesson 5

- Fill out the “Next Time” box on page 67.
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Evangelism*.
- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. Review prior requests and write down the new requests. By now your student should be sharing some more personal type requests. If not, probe to determine why he or she still feels the need to be self-protective with you. Are there any answers to prayer? Begin teaching your student the importance of praise.
- Pray together. Let them begin the prayer time. Remember, you are making a disciple-maker! If they do not become comfortable praying with you they will never feel comfortable praying with others.
- Continue to strongly reinforce the fact that you expect them to become a disciple-maker. If you wait until the last lesson to introduce this critical next step it is usually too late. “Of the people you have been thinking about taking through these materials, which two do you feel you are most interested in approaching? How can I help you get in contact with this person?” Then, be very practical. Tell them you will contact them this week to ask them again if they have made contact with their prospective disciples.

Relating to Your New Family in Christ

Lesson 6

OVERVIEW

- Christ wants you to be a part of His church
- The local church is where you grow in Christ
- The local church is where you serve in Christ

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY OF GOD

Preparing to teach Lesson 6

Purpose of Lesson 6: Wanting to grow and serve, the student will obey Christ's command to identify with Him through baptism and by joining a local church.

The memory verse for lesson 6 is a command to elders, but it provides tremendous insight into the heart of God concerning the church. God purchased the church with the blood of His own Son! How can we as His followers neglect our relationship with His church?

*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood .
(Acts 20:28)*

Central Truth of Lesson Six:

You should commit to a local church in order to grow as a Christian and to serve Christ.

The bullets will help you strategize how to teach this lesson so that your student will see the local church as his or her "home" to maximize their potential in Christ.

- Christ wants you to be a part of His church
- The local church is where you grow in Christ
- The local church is where you serve Christ

Review the audio tape, "How to teach Lesson 6."

Pray for your student. This is your last time together in the formal teaching of these materials. If they are not a part of a local church, they will probably not even begin to fulfill their potential in Christ. Ask God specifically for the privilege of baptizing the new believers you take through this workbook.

Note: This is your last, best chance to make this student a disciple-maker. Be sure to read my letter on page 85 that tells them the adventure is just beginning. Multiplication is the goal. Don't settle for addition when the Lord wants you to multiply

your efforts through discipling others to become disciple-makers.

Teaching Lesson 6

Welcome to the family of God (pp 69-71). Biblically speaking, the church should become the spiritual family of all new believers. Be sure to continue speaking of the church as their new family. We have so much wrong information to overcome. Few unbelievers think of the church as a family. To most the church is a structure, an organization, or a denomination. So handle these introductory pages carefully. The goal is to change their minds concerning the desirability of becoming a part of a local church.

The “Where are you now?” questions at the bottom of page 70 and the “Talking to God” paragraph at the top of page 70 go together. Pay close attention to their previous experiences with a church and their reservations. Then, join them in a prayer that God will help them feel safe in a local church.

Notice that this lesson has no Bible overview segment. By now, the student should feel pretty comfortable finding their way around God’s Word.

God invites you to enjoy His family: Read the first paragraphs and the bullets out loud to your student. Most Christians never think of their church as a launching pad to personal eternal significance.

A Place to Belong—Christ wants you to be a part of His church (pp 72-74). Most Christians who remain uninvolved in the local church do not see this as an act of disobedience. Neither do they see any value in connecting to a church. This section is designed to expose both errors. There should be no doubt in your student’s mind after finishing these questions that Jesus commands them to fellowship in a local church and this is to their benefit. Be sure you have achieved this goal before moving on.

A Place to Grow—The local church is where you grow in Christ (pp 75-79). From the description of the activities of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 2:40-47), these pages answer the question, “What should the church be doing? Four distinctives are evident: *teaching, relating, worship* and *prayer*.

As you briefly review each of these distinctives, be sure to point out the value of each to the believer in Christ. Try to avoid getting bogged down in details. You simply want your student to learn how to distinguish a healthy church from others. Remember, the church is an incubator for spiritual life!

A Place to Serve—The local church is where you serve Christ (pp 80-82). Ephesians 4:11-16 is the most important paragraph in the entire Bible prescribing what should happen in a local church. Leaders should equip the saints for the work of the ministry. Review this paragraph over and over. Listen to the portion of the tape teaching this paragraph. You need to be absolutely comfortable in this paragraph before you teach these critical truths.

Leading the body, building the body, and displaying the body. These are the three aspects of effective ministry in the local church. Pay special attention to the evaluations of the church your student gives under the displaying section. Your church leaders should know if new believers or newer members feel there is a shortcoming in their equipping ministry.

As you finish this section, ask your student, “Do you understand that you are in the ministry?” If not, this lesson has failed in its mission. Be ready to answer any questions they may have concerning the radical New Testament truth that all believers are *in the ministry*.

Welcome to the family of God (pp 83-84). These questions are straightforward and must not be neglected. Are they a part of a local church? Are they being equipped for ministry?

Following Lesson 6

- Read through the motivational letter on page 85 with your student. Ask them if they have been baptized yet. If not, offer to baptize them. You can read the biblical data on baptism in the Appendix of these leadership materials..
- Turn to the Review Sheet on page 86. Have your student print out the memory verse and the central truth. The subject is: *Church*. Briefly review all six lessons showing the progression of thought.
- Go to the next page, 87—the Prayer Sheet. This should be an extremely uplifting time for you and your student as you review what God has done over the past weeks as you visited together.
- Pray together. Let them lead the prayer. As a disciple-maker they will soon be praying with those who do not know how to pray.
- Schedule a “graduation dinner” together and ask them when they will begin meeting with their disciple! If they still have not found someone to take through these materials, assign them one you know of! It’s so important that they begin the process of discipling immediately. The longer they wait, the less likely they are to disciple others.

Appendix

THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

Jesus Christ instituted two outward rites which He commanded to be performed by His church. These are water baptism and communion, and they are called ordinances. The word "ordinance" is used rather than "sacrament" because it does not incorporate the idea of conveying grace but only the idea of a symbol. Thus the ordinance itself has no inherent power to change our lives, though God may use it to minister to us.

WATER BAPTISM

I. Water Baptism

A. What is the meaning of baptism?

1. It illustrates Christ's death and resurrection (Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:3-4).
2. It illustrates my new life as a Christian (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:4).
3. It illustrates my desire to be Christ's disciple.
4. It illustrates that God is my new leader (Matthew 28:20).

REMEMBER: Baptism does not make you a believer; it shows that you already are one. Baptism does not "save" you; only Christ saves you when you put your faith in Him. Baptism is like a wedding ring; it is an outward symbol of the new relationship to God that you have by faith.

B. Why be baptized?

1. To follow the example set by Christ (Mark 1:9).
2. Because Christ commanded it (Matthew 28:19).
3. It shows that I am a follower (Acts 18:8).

C. Why be baptized by immersion?

1. Because Christ was baptized that way (Matthew 13:6).
2. Because every baptism in the New Testament was by immersion (Acts 8:38-39).
3. The word "baptize" means to "dip under the water".
baptizo= dip under
4. Immersion best illustrates the spiritual truth of burial and resurrection (Rom. 6).

* The founders of denominations agree that immersion best illustrates the spiritual truth of burial and resurrection:

Martin Luther: "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."

John Calvin: "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

John Wesley: "Buried with Him, alluding to baptism by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

D. Who should be baptized?

1. Every person who has trusted in Christ (Acts 2:41, 8:12-13).
2. Only those who knows what baptism means.

** Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children. This ceremony is seen as a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. By having their child "baptized" the parents are promising to raise their child in the faith until that child is old enough to understand and make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom of baptizing infant children began about 200 years after the Bible was completed.

The baptism of the New Testament is a "baptism of confession". The purpose was to publicly confess a personal commitment to Christ. Every example of baptism in the New Testament was for those who had come to place their faith in Christ.

At COD we feel it is important for every believer to be baptized in the New Testament way as Jesus commanded, even though they might have been "confirmed" as a child. We only baptize those who are old enough to have believed in Christ and to understand the meaning of baptism.

E. When should I be baptized?

1. As soon as you have believed (Acts 2:41, 8:35-39)...
2. ... and want to be Christ's disciple (Matthew 28:19-20).

COMMUNION

II. Communion (The Lord's Supper)

A. What is the meaning of communion?

1. It is a memorial of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:24, Communion recalls His life [the bread], His death [the cup], His resurrection and living presence [the service itself] 1 Corinthians 10:16).
2. It is a remembrance of Christ's work on the cross (I Cor. 11:26).
3. It is an anticipation of Christ's Second Coming (I Cor. 11:26; Matthew 26:29).
4. It is a time of communion with Christ and His people (I Cor. 10:21).

B. Who should participate in communion?

1. Those who believe in Christ (Acts 2:41-42).
2. Those who are comfortable in fellowship with a local church (1 Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:6, 11-15. Unrepentant believers under discipline were excluded from the Supper).
3. Those who confess their sins to God (1 Corinthians 11:26).

C. How often should we observe communion?

The New Testament is silent here. We know the early church celebrated the Lord's Table often (1 Corinthians 11:18,20), on Sundays (Acts 20:7), from house to house (Acts 2:46), and usually with a full meal called a love feast (2 Peter 2:13; Jude 12; 1 Cor. 11:20). These are only descriptions of what happened in the early church; there are no prescriptions of what should happen. Our only command is to *"do this... in remembrance of Me."*

Here at COD, we celebrate communion at least monthly and encourage believers to remember the Lord often through His Supper... at special events, small group, prayer time, men and women's fellowships... whenever the saints are gathered and the Holy Spirit moves His people to remember Him, communion is appropriate.

Beginning in Grace: Review Sheet

Lesson 1	Subject: <i>Salvation</i>	Lesson 4	Subject: <i>Relationships</i>
<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8, 9)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>You can have a relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ His Son.</p>		<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:3-5)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>You should put others first by giving up your rights, following God's guidance in relationships and developing the courage to speak the truth in love.</p>	
Lesson 2	Subject: <i>Purpose</i>	Lesson 5	Subject: <i>Evangelism</i>
<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>The purpose of your relationship with God is to accomplish eternally significant works for Him.</p>		<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes on Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>You should be telling others how to have a relationship with Christ by making friends with non-Christians and sharing the true Gospel.</p>	
Lesson 3	Subject: <i>Intimacy</i>	Lesson 6	Subject: <i>Church</i>
<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (Revelation 3:20)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>You deepen your relationship with God by communicating with Him through studying His Word and praying, and trusting Him enough to do what He says.</p>		<p>Memory Verse:</p> <p><i>Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28)</i></p> <p>Central Truth:</p> <p>You should commit to a local church in order to grow as a Christian and to serve Christ.</p>	

PRAYER SHEET

Prayer Requests/Date	God's Answer/Date

PRAYER SHEET

Prayer Requests/Date	God's Answer/Date

PRAYER SHEET

Prayer Requests/Date	God's Answer/Date

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