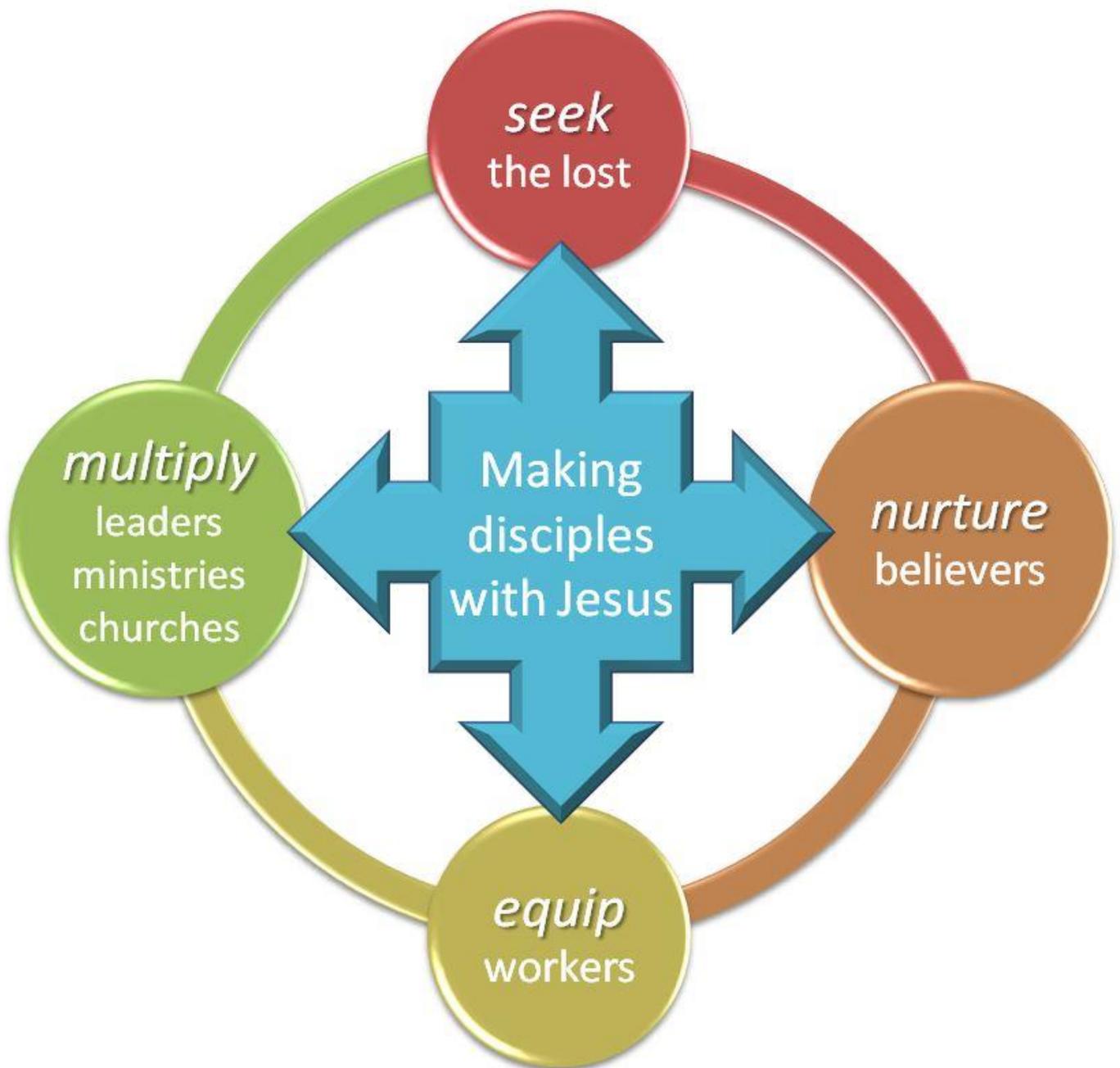




MAKING DISCIPLES

Book ONE



Making Disciples - Contents

Introduction to Making Disciples

God & His Creation

- MD.1.1. God almighty
- MD.1.2. God the Son – divinity
- MD.1.3. God the Son – humanity
- MD.1.4. God the Holy Spirit
- MD.1.5. Origins
- MD.1.6. Humanity

New Beginnings

- MD.2.1. Grace
- MD.2.2. The Saving work of Christ
- MD.2.3. Repentance and faith
- MD.2.4. Lordship of Christ everyday
- MD.2.5. Members of God’s family
- MD.2.6. Our inheritance

Transformation

- MD.3.1. Renewing the mind
- MD.3.2. Growing in grace
- MD.3.3. Biblical law and the new covenant
- MD.3.4. Conversing with God
- MD.3.5. Christian meditation
- MD.3.6. Guidance



Filled with the Holy Spirit

- MD.4.1. Powered by the Holy Spirit
- MD.4.2. Motivation gifts
- MD.4.3. Manifestation gifts
- MD.4.4. Ministry gifts
- MD.4.5. God's power through praise
- MD.4.6. Spiritual warfare

Church Alive

- MD.5.1. Worshipping God together
- MD.5.2. Baptism
- MD.5.3. Holy Communion
- MD.5.4. Evangelism
- MD.5.5. Pastoral Care
- MD.5.6. Generosity

Christians in Society

- MD.6.1. Celebrating being Single
- MD.6.2. Marriage
- MD.6.3. Work
- MD.6.4. Christianity and Government
- MD.6.5. God and the Nations
- MD.6.6. Praying for the Nations

Peace, Justice & the Hereafter

- MD.7.1. Peace
- MD.7.2. Justice
- MD.7.3. Living through times of Persecution (Rev'n)
- MD.7.4. Destiny of Believers
- MD.7.5. Judgement
- MD.7.6. Second coming of Christ



Introduction**What was there, back in the beginning?**

If we could go back in time many billions of years, to the beginning of all things, what would we find?

Only three possible explanations present themselves.

1. Nothing

Right back in the beginning there was nothing. No energy, no matter, no person. Nothing (absolutely nothing).

If this were so then there still would be nothing. Nothing cannot expand, or reproduce, or divide and multiply, or explode, or plan and bring into being.

Nothing is nothing. It cannot incorporate something.

No philosopher or scientist has ever been able to sustain an argument that there ever was a time when there was absolutely nothing.

This means that there always has been something in existence. There never was a time when there was nothing

If something has always existed then this something must basically be one of two alternatives. Either that which has existed always is impersonal or it is personal.

2. Impersonal something

The something which existed, back in the beginning (eternally) was impersonal.

By impersonal we mean that it is incapable of thinking, or making decisions and acting upon those decisions, or having feelings. (Intellect, will & emotions are the basic attributes of being personal)

If right back in the beginning there was only that which was impersonal then the universe as we have it now, and life in this universe, is all the product of chance. It could not be planned or organised because there would not have existed any intelligent being capable of such activity.

The impersonal, by chance actions and reactions over time producing the complex universe of today.

As we gather more information about the universe it leads people working from this assumption of an impersonal beginning to speculate that the universe is older than previously thought. Thus, over the last 60 years, the estimated age of the universe has increased from 50 million years to 16 billion years and it is still rising.

Impersonal + Time + Chance

However, this denies all that we know by observation and scientific analysis

- Disorder never produces order by random actions.
- There is no explanation of the beautiful order and complexity of the universe and of life within it down to the tremendous detail of the D.N.A.
- Nor is there any basis for the assumption that personalness arose out of impersonal (call it energy or matter or whatever)

In such a universe personal beings are freaks – we are misfits thrown up by chance; aliens in an impersonal universe, with no future hope except for what chance may produce.

No wonder people who hold this view of the beginning are frantically searching for meaning and are willing to try anything, ie. drugs, sexual deviations, occult, jihad, materialism, alcoholism etc; either in an irrational attempt to find meaning or as an escape from the consequences of their own life view.



3. Personal Being

That which has existed always (eternally) and therefore was there in the beginning, is personal.

The four key attributes of personality:

- (i) Intellect: Capacity to think, to formulate ideas. Able to plan. Analytical and creative
- (ii) Will: Able to make decisions. And to act on those decisions. Having a moral awareness
- (iii) Emotions: Able to express feelings. To love, to experience empathy, to grieve, to be joyous.
- (iv) Communication: Speak. Listen

This fits with what we observe. There is order and structure in the universe because it was planned that way. It didn't happen by chance, it was designed.

Modern science is predicated upon this order.

Our personal existence is not a product of chance, but was planned by this personal being who has existed always. We are not freaks or aliens, we are personal beings made in the image of the all powerful personal being who has existed always.

This fits the biblical revelation.

In the beginning God. Personal, infinite God.

Study

The beginning of all existence and all knowledge is God.

1. Various names for God in the Bible reveal aspects of His character. Note these in the following verses.

- a) Genesis 14:18-24
- b) Genesis 17:1, Genesis 49:25, Psalm 91:1
- c) Exodus 3:14
- d) Genesis 22:13-14
- e) Exodus 15:26
- f) Judges 6:24
- g) Jeremiah 33:16

2. Record an incident or event in your life when one or more of these aspects of God's character became very real.

3. What aspects have not been your experience of him?

4. God is unlimited. What are the descriptions of his capabilities in these references?

- a) Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; John 1:5
- b) Psalm 139:1-6; Revelation 20:12
- c) Psalm 139:7-10; Jeremiah 23:24
- d) Proverbs 15:3; Matthew 10:30; Job 34:21
- e) 2 Chronicles 6:18; Psalm 9:7; Psalm 47:7-8; Isaiah 66:1
- f) Psalm 102:27; James 1:17



5. Can you confidently say that you can trust God with every aspect of your life? (i.e. who you are to marry; or how to restore a broken relationship; or to take you through a major crisis or disaster?)
6. Personal beings are different from impersonal objects in four fundamental ways. Personal beings have the attributes of emotions, intellect, will, and ability to communicate; impersonal objects do not have them. With these in mind, note the attributes of the personalness of God as revealed in these verses.
- 1 John 4:8; John 3:16
 - 1 Peter 2:4; Galatians 4:9
 - Genesis 2:4; 2 Chronicles 20:22; Luke 1:26
 - Genesis 1:3; Hebrews 1:1-2; Psalm 50:1
7. How do you go about developing a close relationship with another human being? Do you follow these same steps with God?
8. God is worthy of praise and worship as these references make clear. 1 Peter 1:16; John 17:11; Rev 15:3; Deuteronomy 4:31; Luke 6:36; 1 John 1:8-10
9. God is one being in three persons.
- How is he described in these verses? Mark 12:29; John 10:30; James 2:19
 - Which persons of the trinity are referred to in these verses? 1 Cor 1:3; Titus 2:13; Romans 8:9, 11 & 14; 2 Cor 13:14
10. What else can we learn about God? John 4:24; 1 John 1:5; Colossians 1:13

Notes: **God Almighty**

GOD is the beginning of all existence and all knowledge.

He is the Most High God. He is El Shaddai the all sufficient God. The God who is more than enough. He is the eternal I Am, the beginning and the end. Jehovah-Jireh our provider, and Jehovah-Rapha the Lord our healer. The Lord is peace and He is our righteousness.

His unlimitedness is shown in the fact that nothing is too hard for Him and nothing can overcome Him. He knows everything. He cannot be avoided, there is nowhere to hide from Him. He is ever present and available to help us. He is high over all things and people. He is consistent, unchanging, ever faithful.

He is personal, with emotions, intellect, capacity to communicate and ability to act and carry through what He decides.

God is worthy of praise and worship for He is holy, just and true, merciful and loving.

God is one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God is Spirit, we must worship Him in spirit and in truth. And God is light; He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and has brought us into the kingdom of His Son, if we have faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

The ultimate reality is personal God

He is the infinite reference point for the whole of the universe.



MD.1.2. God The Son – His Divine Nature

God is one being in three persons. God the Father (Almighty), God the Son (our Lord Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity is one person with two natures.

Q.1. Jesus has a divine nature and as such He is truly God. How is His divine self-consciousness expressed here?

- a) Luke 2:41-50 (especially v. 49)
- b) John 8:12-18
- c) Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32
- d) John 14:6-7
- e) Matthew 28:18

Q.2. What can we discover about His existence before the incarnation event at Bethlehem? John 1:1-2 & 14; John 3:13; John 8:23; John 8:58; John 16:28; Revelation 22:12-13

Q.3. How do these verses indicate the activity of God the Son in Old Testament times? Genesis 1:26 (see John 1:3); Joshua 5:13-15 (see Revelation 19:11-16); Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 63:9

Q.4. How is the unique relationship between God the Father and God the Son described?

- a) John 3:16
- b) Matthew 11:27
- c) John 5:17-18
- d) John 5:22-23
- e) John 10:30
- f) John 5:19
- g) John 12:44-45

Q.5. His divinity is revealed in what He allowed people to do when relating to Him.

- a) What two aspects of divinity are revealed in this verse? Matthew 14:33
- b) What did the women do? Matthew 28:9
 - And the disciples? Luke 24:52
 - And the man who had been healed? John 9:38
 - And Thomas the investigator? John 20:28

Q.6. His divinity is revealed in what He requires of us.

- a) What must we do to do the works God requires? John 6:29
- b) What does Jesus require of people if they are not to die in their sins? John 8:24
- c) How can we face death with confidence? John 11:25-26; John 5:24

Q.7. He claimed divine authority.

- a) What caused the teachers of the law to think that Jesus was blaspheming? Mark 2:1-12
- b) In whose name is repentance and forgiveness of sins to be preached? Luke 24:46-47
- c) What follows from faith in Jesus Christ? Colossians 1:14
- d) In the light of Luke 11:4, is there someone you should forgive?

Q.8. What power does he exercise? Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:22; John 5:25-30



Q.9. What other great claim did He make? Matthew 10:37

The divine nature of Christ is denied by many sects but is a central truth of Christianity.

NOTES: God The Son - His Divine Nature

God is one being in three persons.

Jesus Christ is one person with two natures. His divine self-consciousness is revealed in His awareness of being in His Father's house, that He is the light of the world, that He speaks with an authority that transcends the authority of other men and that He is the guide and foundation of all.

He is the eternal word who came from heaven, who has existed from before all humanity and is the first and the last.

He is the Lord Almighty, creator, redeemer and commander in chief referred to in the Old Testament.

Jesus is the only begotten son, the revealer of the Father, equal with God, one with the Father - of one essence and being as well as purpose.

He allowed people to worship Him, an act that would be blasphemous if He were not divine. He required faith in Him. He forgave sins. He claimed priority in devotion and He has been entrusted with judgment.



MD.1.3. God the Son – His Humanity

God the Son, the second person of the trinity has always existed. At a particular moment in time He came and took human form, being born of a woman and dwelt among us.

- Q.1.** How does Paul describe this mighty event in Philippians 2:6-7?
- Q.2.** Who is the Word? John 1:1 & 1:14
- Q.3.** The coming of Christ was predicted in the Old Testament. What aspects of His incarnation are referred to in these verses?
- a) Genesis 12:3; 2 Samuel 7:16
 - b) Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7
 - c) Micah 5:2
 - d) Jeremiah 31:15
 - e) Psalm 41:9; Isaiah 53:3-12; Psalm 22
- Q.4.** How did God the Son take the nature of a man? Luke 1:30-35
- Q.5.** Jesus experienced normal growth through childhood into adult life. Note what we are told of his physical life. Luke 2:6-7; Luke 2:40; Luke 24:39-43; Matt 4:2; John 4:6; Matt 8:24; John 19:28; Mark 6:3
- Q.6.** Note how as a man he experienced the full range of human feelings as well as mental development. Luke 2:52; Luke 8:45; Mark 13:32 (see notes); Matthew 9:36; John 11:33-35; John 11:36; Luke 22:44; Mark 3:5
- Q.7.** Note how he never neglected his relationship with His father. Luke 2:49; Luke 4:16; Mark 1:35; Matthew 26:36; Matthew 4:4, 7 & 10; Luke 24:45; Matthew 3:13-17 (esp. verse 15); Galatians 4:4
- Q.8.** Jesus came to redeem us from sin, Satan, sickness and death, therefore the quality of his life is of utmost importance.
- a) What did he claim? John 8:29; John 8:46; John 15:10
 - b) Who is he? John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7
 - c) What quality of life is required of the Passover Lamb? Exodus 12:5; 1 Peter 1:19
- Q.9.** How did others see Him? 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5; Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 27:4
- Q.10.** By contrast, what is the experience of others? Name the persons.
- a) Psalm 51
 - b) Isaiah 6:5
 - c) Romans 7:24
 - d) 1 John 1:8
- Q.11.** Note how in His humanity He was tempted as we are tempted. Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 22:28
- Q.12.** Why is the sinlessness of Jesus so important?
- a) To Him?
 - b) To us?



Q.13. Why is the virgin birth so critical for our salvation?

Notes: God the Son - His Humanity

God the Son took on an additional nature, a human nature was added to His divine nature.

The coming of Christ was predicted in detail. Descended from Abraham and David, born of a virgin at Bethlehem. He experienced betrayal and was crucified, bringing healing and forgiveness to a lost and broken world. He is the one who reveals God to us and redeems us.

Jesus, born of Mary, conceived by the Holy Spirit, experienced a normal, healthy physical development. Born as we are born, He grew and became strong. He experienced hunger, weariness, sleep, thirstiness and death and He enjoyed family life.

He grew in wisdom, seeking information. In His humanity He did not know everything because of His self-limitation, however, whatever He needed to know was revealed to Him by the Father so that He was without error. He knew what it was like to love, to weep and to experience deep anguish. A compassionate, sensitive man capable, of expressing anger and indignation when that was necessary.

As a boy He was aware of the special significance of being in His Father's house. He regularly attended the Synagogue. Prayer was vital to Him. He knew the Scriptures and lived an obedient life.

He claimed to be sinless, He was called the Lamb of God without blemish or defect, others testify that He was without sin, even His enemies. By contrast the lives of all other men and women show sinfulness. Nevertheless He experienced real and severe temptation so that He knows the struggles we go through.

He didn't sin and therefore didn't break his connection with God Almighty. Consequently he did not need to die for his own sin because there was none. Only thus could he substitute for us.

The miracle of the virgin birth enabled the sin line from Adam to be broken.



MD.1.4.

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is more than some cosmic force. He is the third person of the trinity, the personal God who has existed always.

- Q.1.** Note how his personalness is revealed in these references.
- a) John 14:26
 - b) 1 Corinthians 12:11
 - c) John 15:26
 - d) Matthew 12:31-32
 - e) Ephesians 4:30
 - f) John 14:16-17
 - g) Philippians 2:1
- Q.2.** He is GOD the Holy Spirit, equal with the Father and the Son.
- a) How is he described here? Matthew 10:20; Galatians 4:6; Philippians 1:19
 - b) Note the equal status in these verses. Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14
 - c) What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Mark 3:20-30
- Q.3.** The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. What are some of His activities?
- a) Genesis 1:2; Psalm 33:6; Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4
 - b) Numbers 11:16-17 & 24-25, Numbers 27:15-19
 - c) Exodus 35:30-35
 - d) Isaiah 63:11-14; 2 Samuel 23:1-2
- Q.4.** What events are foretold in these prophecies of the work of the Spirit? Isaiah 61:1-2; Joel 2:28
Ezekiel 36:25-27
- Q.5.** The Holy Spirit in the life of Christ.
- a) How was He conceived? Matthew 1:18 & Luke 1:35
 - b) What was the measure of the Spirit given to Him? John 3:34
 - c) What were the results of the Spirit dwelling in Him this way? Luke 2:40 & 52; 1 Peter 2:22;
- Q.6.** List the activities of the Spirit recorded in these references.
- a) Luke 3:21-22
 - b) Luke 4:1
 - c) Luke 4:14
 - d) Luke 4:18-19
 - e) Acts 10:38
 - f) Luke 10:21
 - g) Hebrews 9:14
 - h) Romans 8:11
- Q.7.** What is the work of the Spirit?
- a) In the world? John 16:8; Acts 2:37-41
 - b) In the Church? John 16:13-15; Ephesians 4:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:1-13
 - c) In the Christian? Romans 8:12-14
- Q.8.** Are you walking with the Spirit in His work in the Church and the world?



Notes:

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a person. He is a teacher able to think and communicate. He is a decision maker able to give gifts to those He chooses. He is called a counsellor and He is able to testify of what He knows. Only personal beings can be blasphemed. He also has feelings - He may be grieved and we can fellowship with Him.

He is God the Holy Spirit: The Spirit of our Father; the Spirit of God's Son; the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

To blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is more than merely uttering a few slanderous words. It refers to a whole attitude of life. In Mark 3:20-30 the enemies of Jesus were calling good evil, they deliberately ascribed acts done by Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, to evil spirits. It is an attitude of life that rebels against what the Holy Spirit reveals. It is extremely dangerous to say that some manifestations of the Spirit are the work of the enemy simply because we are not familiar with them nor informed about them.

Blaspheming against the Holy Spirit generally progresses through several stages

- Resisting the Spirit (Acts 7:51) which can lead to
- Putting out the Spirit's fire (1 Thess 5:19) which in turn leads to a
- Hardening of the heart (Heb 3:8-13) which can result in being given over to a
- Depraved mind (Rom 1:28)
- A time may come when the Holy Spirit will no longer strive to bring that person to repentance (Prov 29:1)

In the Old Testament we are told of the activity of the Spirit in creation, granting authority and wisdom to leaders and skills to craftsmen. He guided His people and spoke through His chosen servants. The Old Testament prophetically speaks of the anointing of Christ with the Spirit, of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost and of the work of regeneration.

The Holy Spirit was active in the conception of Jesus. He dwelt without measure in the life of Jesus from the moment of conception (Jesus did not need to be born again).

The Spirit also came upon Jesus, providing the power through the anointing to minister forgiveness, healing and deliverance. In the Spirit He rejoiced, He gave Himself up for us and He was raised to life.

In addition to the work of the Spirit in **sustaining** the universe, the work of the Spirit in the world is **evangelisation**, in the Church is **edification**, in the Christian is **sanctification**, and in Christ is **glorification**.



MD.1.5.

Origins

The Importance of Genesis Chapters One to Eleven

1. It is true knowledge but it is not exhaustive knowledge.

- Where these chapters refer to the Cosmos, they give us truth.
- It is a record of historical events.
- The rest of the bible, and life itself, would be incomprehensible without the information contained in these chapters.
- Adam was a real person, and at the same time, a representative person.
- There is much information that is not included. It is not an exhaustive record.

2. These eleven chapters contain vital information about the origin of all things. It is only as we understand our origins that we rightly discern our purpose and destiny.

Origin of the universe	Origin of order & complexity
Origin of the solar system	Origin of the atmosphere & hydrosphere
Origin of life	Origin of humanity
Origin of marriage	Origin of evil
Origin of language	Origin of government
Origin of culture	Origin of nations
Origin of religion	Origin of redemption

3. The New Testament contains over 100 quotations or direct references to Genesis 1-11 and assumes throughout that they are historically factual. In no instance does the bible itself, nor our Lord Jesus Christ, regard any of the events or personages referred to in these 11 chapters as myths or allegories (hidden meanings or codes).

- If the first Adam is only an allegory, then logically, so is the second Adam.
- If humanity did not really fall into sin from their state of created innocence, there is no reason for them to need a Saviour.
- If all things can be accounted for by natural processes of evolution, there is no reason to look forward to a future supernatural consummation of all things. (Death is the finish).
- If Genesis is not true, then neither are the testimonies of the prophets, apostles and Christ.

4. Principles of interpretation of Old Testament narratives apply here as elsewhere. People often reject these narratives by reading into them things that are not there.

Each narrative is part of a larger story which is GOD'S story. The purpose is to show GOD at work. The stories are told on several levels, often starting with individual stories and always pointing on to God's universal plan of salvation

They record what actually happened, not what should have happened. The people in the narratives are far from perfect and so are their actions. Some are bad examples of how to live.

It's the reader's job to evaluate whether what happened was good or bad on the basis of what is taught elsewhere in the bible



Read each question carefully and answer that question. The bible references often give much more information, but your task is to discover what is being said in relation to the specific question.

- Q.1.** How is the relationship between God the Father and Son, before the creation of the world, described in John 17:24?
- Q.2.** Who was active in the creation of the universe?
- a) Genesis 1:1-2
 - b) John 1:1-3
 - c) Colossians 1:16
 - d) Hebrews 1:1-2
- Q.3.** How was the universe created?
- a) Revelation 4:11
 - b) Hebrews 11:3; Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26
 - c) Psalm 33:6 & 9; Genesis 2:7
- Q.4.** How do we know? Hebrews 11:3; Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10
- Q.5.** What did God create?
- a) Isaiah 40:26-28; Colossians 1:16; Nehemiah 9:6
 - b) Genesis 1:27
- Q.6.** The Hebrew word translated as "created" is "bara" and is used three times in Genesis Chapter 1 to denote three specific stages in creation. How would you describe those stages?
- a) Genesis 1:1-2
 - b) Genesis 1:21
 - c) Genesis 1:27
- Q.7.** How does God describe the quality of what He created? Genesis 1:31
- Q.8.** God is ever mindful of His creation. What is His continuing work amongst what He has made? Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; Isaiah 40:28-31
- Q.9.** Yet something terrible has happened. What is it and what are its results?
- a) Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 3:1-8; Romans 1:21-23
 - b) Genesis 3:17-19; Genesis 3:23
 - c) Romans 8:20-22
- Q.10.** What is the future hope for the universe?
- a) Romans 8:21
 - b) Colossians 1:20
 - c) Revelation 21:1 & 5
- Q.11.** May we invite you to take a walk through a garden or through the bush or across an open paddock observing what God has created and give Him thanks and praise.



Notes:

Origins

In the beginning GOD. The PERSONAL, infinite, all knowing, all powerful, loving God, revealed to us in the Bible and in the person of Jesus Christ. God is one God in three persons bonded in love.

All three persons of the trinity were active in creation.

The universe was created as an act of God's will. He wanted to create, so he did. At his command, as he spoke, the universe came into being. The Word and the Spirit were active.

We know this because God has spoken to humanity and revealed things which otherwise would be unknown.

God created the heavens and the earth (the whole universe) He created humanity and angels. He created all things.

The Hebrew word translated as created is "bara" and is used three times in Genesis chapter 1 to denote three specific stages in creation.

- Genesis 1:1-2 the creation of bare being.
- Genesis 1:21 the creation of conscious life.
- Genesis 1:27 the creation of humanity.

Within these three stages we observe God DIFFERENTIATING one aspect of what He has created from another and each of these differentiations are denoted by the word "let".

In the very first act of creation - of bare being and its differentiation, we hear God saying "Let there be light" (v.3). Yet it's not until the fifth differentiation that we have mention of the sun, moon and stars. In fact, with the splitting of the atom, it has been shown that light and energy are inter-related. Thus the very first creative act was to bring into being ENERGY.

What God had made was very good, no blemish or fault existed

He is active in sustaining the universe. He is never neglectful of us. Yet humanity rebelled and the whole universe is suffering as a result. However, God is redeeming His creation and in the fullness of time He will make all things new.

There is much archaeological evidence supporting the Genesis record.

The fossil record shows, in rocks dated back some 570million years, that there is the sudden appearance of nearly all the animal phyla, and they appear fully formed without a trace of evolutionary ancestors. (Strobel – The Case for Faith p128)

Hard scientific evidence supports the Genesis record.

Genesis does conflict with a number of theories that have been put forward in the last 150 years. These include theories on the origin of life that assume that God does not exist and that there was no intelligent designer. None of these theories have stood up to rigorous scientific analysis. (Strobel - The Case For Faith p140–p150)

No one is able to show how non-living chemicals, if given the right amount of time and circumstances, could develop by themselves into living matter.

Sir Fred Hoyle likened the theory of random chance (Impersonal + time + chance) to a tornado whirling through a junk yard and accidentally assembling a fully functional Boeing 747 airliner. (Strobel p142)

For more reading: L. Strobel - The Case For Faith



A **summary of origins** goes something like this.

- I. Humanity by comparison is very young (measured in thousands of years)
- II. Six days referred to in Genesis chapter 1 are six periods of time (2 Peter 3:8)
- III. When completed, the creation was very good
- IV. Supernatural beings (angels) were created during those extended periods
- V. The fall corrupted all things bringing about fourfold disharmony
 - Disharmony between God and humanity
 - Disharmony within each human being
 - Disharmony in human relationships
 - Disharmony with the environment
- VI. The flood (Genesis chapters 6, 7, & 8) disrupted the geological and climatological make-up of the earth
- VII. The ability to adapt to changes in the environment and to develop new varieties **within** species is because of the dynamic dimension of creation
- VIII. Even in its fallen state the universe, planet earth, and life within it is sustained by God. This is a sheer act of grace, allowing time for reconciliation and eventually re-creation.



MD.1.6.

Humanity

"What is man that the Lord is mindful of him" asks the Psalmist.

Q.1. What do these verses tell us about how we were made?

- a) Genesis 1:26; Psalm 139:13 & 16; Jeremiah 1:5; Job 33:4; Genesis 2:7
- b) Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24. Contrast this with Romans 1:26-27

Q.2. God made us in his image as spiritual and personal beings. Note the aspects of God's image in these references. (God is spirit & he is personal – he thinks, makes decisions and has feelings.)

- a) Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9
- b) Proverbs 2:1-6; Philippians 4:8
- c) Deuteronomy 30:19; Matthew 16:24
- d) John 21:15; Matthew 22:37-40

Q.3. God made us tripartite. What are these three aspects, as noted by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23?

The Greek words are – pneuma psyche soma

It is important for us to know we are tripartite when we come to study how God works in and through us by His Spirit.

Q.4. God saw that what he had made was good.

- a) What responsibility did he give to humanity? Genesis 1:28-30; Psalm 8:6-8
- b) However, this dominion was never to be exercised independent of God. Genesis 3:8

Q.5. People are meant to have fellowship with God. Note what Psalm 100:1-5 has to say about this.

Q.6. All authority except that exercised by God is delegated authority. Submission and obedience are entwined with authority. When this principle was broken what happened? Genesis 2:16-17 & 3:6; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:23; Psalm 51:5; Matthew 5:27-28

Q.7. Write down your definition of sin. What is your measuring line?

Q.8. What resulted from disobeying God?

- a) Genesis 3:15-16 - for Eve
- b) Genesis 3:17 - for Adam
- c) For all humanity: Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:19; John 5:28-29

Q.9. What has God provided as the solution to humanity's predicament? Genesis 3:21; Exodus 12:21-23; John 1:29; Romans 5:9, 12, & 15; Hebrews 9:27-28

Q. 10. What do the following passages say about (i) the Christian and (ii) the non-Christian?

- a) Ephesians 2:1-5
- b) Colossians 1:21-22
- c) I John 1:9-10
- d) John 3:18



Notes:

Humanity

God made humanity in his image.

He knows about us before we are formed and He knows us from the moment of conception. By God's Spirit was humanity created.

He made us distinctly male and female to complement each other.

He formed our spirit within us and He made us with the capacity to think, make decisions, express feelings and to communicate. Humanity is tripartite, with a spirit, a soul and a body.

God gave humanity rulership over the Earth and everything on it and this responsibility was to be exercised through our fellowship with God. When humanity rebelled against God, fellowship with Him was broken and sin took hold of the human race with the result that all of us are born with a sinful nature.

Sin is any thought, word or action, which is contrary to the revealed, will of God. The measuring line for evaluating our life is Jesus Christ.

Disobedience resulted in pain in childbirth and submission to her husband for Eve. Adam experienced pain and toil in work because the ground came under a curse. Spiritual and physical death became the experience of all humanity, to be followed by judgment.

However, God did not leave humanity desolate. God provided animals for sacrifice - to clothe humanity and point toward salvation through the Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, who shed His blood for the sins of many.

Without faith in Christ each person stands condemned. Only Christ can save us from the wrath to come.



MD.2.1.

Grace

Grace is the free, undeserved gift of God. The practical expression of his favour to humanity.

- Q.1.** What does the prologue of John's gospel (John 1:1-18) say about the relationship between Jesus and grace?
John 1:14; John 1:17; John 1:16
- Q.2.** How are God the Father and God the Holy Spirit described? 1 Peter 5:10 Hebrews 10:29
- Q.3.** Many people think that they can get to heaven on the basis of their good works. What does God tell us through the Bible? Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-5; Romans 4:1-8; Isaiah 64:6
- Q.4.** What did Jesus say in response to a question on what works God requires of us? John 6:29
- Q.5.** There are also many people who think that they can get to heaven on the basis of their good lifestyle and by observing a strict code of law and ethics. However, let us note what the New Testament says about law and grace. Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:10; James 2:10
Acts 13:38-39; Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:11-14; Philippians 3:4-9
- Q.6.** What do we learn about grace in Romans 3:21-28?
- a) In verse 21 what is revealed to us?
 - b) How does this righteousness become ours? Verse 22.
 - c) What is our legal standing before God as a result of faith in Jesus? Verse 24.
 - d) In verse 25 various translations refer to - a sacrifice of atonement by his blood – or an expiation by his blood – or a propitiation by his blood. What is meant by these terms?
- Q.7.** What do Isaiah 53:4-6 and Mark 10:45 tell us about the grace of God?
- Q.8.** How is God's grace described in Romans 6:23? With what is it contrasted in that same verse?
- Q.9.** The writer to the Hebrews issues a solemn warning. What is it? Hebrews 2:1-4
- Q.10.** We are to live by grace and not slip back into legalism or hedonism. Note these exhortations. Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 4:16; Romans 6:1-4, 11 & 14; 1 Peter 5:5; James 4:5-6; 2 Timothy 2:1
- Q.11.** What is grace associated with in these references? John 1:17; 2 Peter 3:18; Acts 20:32; Acts 14:1-3; Hebrews 2:3-4; Colossians 1:6
- Q.12.** Who are the people who experienced God's grace and what happened as a result? Luke 19:1-10; Luke 7:36-50; Luke 23:39-43; John 8:2-11
- Q.13.** What does God's grace mean to you?

Notes:

Grace

Jesus, full of grace and truth, came to us from the Father and from the fullness of His grace we are blessed.

Our God is the God of all grace and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Grace.

We are saved by grace not works, we cannot earn eternal life, no matter what good deeds we have done, for even one sin cancels all the good deeds. Salvation and entry into heaven are free gifts to all who believe in Jesus Christ.



Abraham was justified by faith as were all the Old Testament believers who looked to God for their salvation.

To be made right with God by good living and keeping the commandments we would have to keep the whole law, without one mistake. Only Jesus did that.

What the law could not accomplish has been accomplished by Jesus on our behalf through the shedding of His blood. Faith in Him is our only hope. All else is a proud delusion.

In Romans 3:21-28 we are told that righteousness from God is revealed to us and becomes ours through faith in Jesus Christ. As a result, we are justified before God. This is brought about through Christ's substituting for us and paying the penalty for our sins by His death on the cross. In this act He effectively removed God's wrath from repentant sinners and also removed the sinner's guilt.

We earn death – it is the wages of sin. Grace is not earned – it is a free gift

We are warned not to ignore the message of salvation, but to pay close attention to it. Our life depends on it. This means we must not slip into a new form of legalism but to always remember to come into God's presence, humbly trusting in Him and daily walking with Him.

Grace and truth are linked together. It is through the preaching of the gospel that the grace of God is shared with all people and this is confirmed by signs and wonders.

Addendum

Grace

Ephesians 2:1-22

1. Central to Paul's thesis is the belief that the fundamental human predicament is sin.

He identifies the practice of sin

- Following the ways of this world. (where they diverge from the ways of God)
- Following the ruler of the kingdom of the air
- Following the spirit of disobedience
- Following the desires and thoughts of the sinful nature

He states the universality of sin. All of us lived this way at one time.

Paul takes this position as a result of God's revelation to humanity in Jesus Christ.

- Christ is his transcendent reference point.
- Measured against the perfect standard of Christ our lives are shown to be missing the mark; transgressing the perfect standard; in various ways we humans are perverse, lack integrity, and are rebellious.
- Unchecked, such living breeds restlessness, trouble, sensuality, selfishness, badness and guilt.
- Paul is quite adamant that our best efforts and most disciplined will power will not enable us to permanently overcome this propensity to sin.
- Rick Warren (The Purpose Driven Life - p 181) likens it to being on autopilot with the program written by our sinful nature.



- All people are sinful and unable to do good in their own strength
- We come into life with a corrupted nature which is the result of Adam's sin. We begin life without righteousness and as such we are unable, without special divine help, to fulfil God's spiritual commands.
- We are unable to believe or to meet the conditions of salvation.

Yet God desires all people to be saved

2. The antidote to sin according to this revelation is Christ.

Paul contrasts our situation before and after coming to faith in Christ. He notes the effects of sin

- Death. (spiritual disconnection from the source of power – God)
- Entangled in transgressions and sins
- Gratifying the cravings of the sinful nature
- Separate from Christ
- Excluded from God's covenant
- Without hope
- Objects of God's wrath
- Divided & hostile

In Christ our life direction is totally changed

- Made alive
- Saved
- Raised to eternal life
- Seated with Christ in the heavenly realms
- Receive God's peace
- Brought near to God and have open access to him
- Made a citizen of God's kingdom
- Member of God's household
- Dwelling place of the Holy Spirit
- Reconciled with God's people
- United with other believers to form a holy temple in the Lord
- Discover our true purpose in life

3. The transformation mechanism is grace.

(i) Prevenient grace

Grace is operative even before we come to faith.

- ✚ Prevenient grace is given by God to all humanity indiscriminately.
- ✚ By his powerful word all things are sustained. (Heb 1:3) It is seen in God sending the sunshine and the rain upon us all.
- ✚ It is also the basis of all the goodness found in humanity everywhere.



- ✚ Furthermore, it is the means whereby God graciously restores to all people sufficient ability, to be able to freely choose either to follow Christ or to reject Christ.

(ii) Saving grace.

Grace comes to us in Christ.

- ✚ It is pardon for the condemned sinner.
- ✚ This pardon is made possible because the requirements of justice have been fulfilled in the substitutionary death of the Son of God and his subsequent resurrection.
- ✚ It is mercy in the midst of judgement.
- ✚ By grace you have been saved through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. God’s favour is totally unmerited. It is wholly and totally an undeserved gift.

It is the grace of God in Christ that makes us what we are.

- ✚ We are made alive with Christ (Eph 2:5) (see also 2:22)
- ✚ Power of sin has been broken.

Grace conflicts with ideas of justification by works.

- ✚ Exact opposite of reward for work done.
- ✚ Grace operates in the context of human weakness, not self determination.
- ✚ Jewish desire for control of one’s fate through works of law, and Greek striving for autonomy by means of human wisdom, are both examples of human pride.

(iii) Sanctifying grace

The whole Christian life is to be lived by grace.

It is in relationship with Christ that we have an ongoing experience of God’s grace.

- ✚ Our new life is in Christ (Eph 2:13) (see also 2:18, 2:21)
- ✚ God deals with his people not on the basis of worthiness, what they deserve, but according to their need.
- ✚ By grace God helps us in our daily battle with sin
- ✚ The many blessings of God come to us through his grace.

(iv) Grace gifts

Special endowments or gifts – charismata – for service.

It’s inconceivable that any believer should lack these. They are available to all who eagerly desire them to more effectively serve the Lord.

Grace is what sets Christianity apart from all other religions and philosophies of life. (C S Lewis)



MD.2.2.

The Saving Work of Christ

In Old Testament days the prophet was anointed to that office. Jesus came as THE PROPHET proclaiming God's message to a lost and dying world.

- Q.1.** What is the anointing? I Kings 19:16; Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:18-19
- Q.2.** How is the prophetic work of Jesus described in these references? Mark 1:14; Matthew 7:29; Luke 21:37-38
- Q.3.** What did he claim concerning His ministry? John 8:26; 8:28; 12:49-50; 14:10 & 24; Luke 13:33
- Q.4.** How is God's message brought to us according to John 1:1-2 & 14?
- Q.5.** Since God's message is brought to us in the words and person of Jesus Christ, what are the purposes of God revealed in the "I AM" statements? John 6:35-51; John 8:12; John 10:7-10; John 10:11-18; John 11:25-26; John 14:6; John 15:1-8
- Q.6.** How does Jesus continue His prophetic work today? John 14:26; John 16:5-14
- Q.7.** Jesus is our high PRIEST representing us before God.
- a) The priest was also called and set apart by God for ministry as these references show. Leviticus 8:12; Hebrews 5:4-6; Matthew 3:13-17
 - b) What did Jesus mean by His reply to John the Baptist in Matthew 3:15?
- Q.8.** How is the work of Jesus Christ described in these verses? Heb 5:1; Heb 4:14; 1 Tim 2:5; John 14:6
- Q.9.** What has Jesus done for us? 1 John 2:2 & 4:10; Heb 9:11-15; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 9:25-28; 1 Timothy 2:6
- Read Lev16:1-34 and note how each aspect of the Old Testament type of atonement was fulfilled in Jesus.
- Q.10.** One more event was necessary for our redemption. What was it? Mark 16:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:20
- Q.11.** What three things happened to Jesus according to 1 Corinthians 15:3-4?
- Q.12.** Why is the resurrection of Jesus so crucial? Romans 5:12; 1 Cor 15:22; 1 Cor 15:26; 1 Cor 15:13-19
- Q.13.** Who were eye witnesses of His resurrection? Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:13-35; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8
- Q.14.** What did they ascertain about Him? Acts 2:31-32; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:24-28
- Q.15.** What are the results of the resurrection of Jesus? 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
- Q.16.** What are the benefits for those who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour? Romans 4:5; 4:7-8; 5:1; 5:9; 5:11; Romans 6:4-11



NOTES: The Saving Work of Christ

Anointing signifies the setting apart and equipping by God for ministry. It is the empowering necessary to accomplish his will.

Jesus proclaimed the good news of God, teaching with authority. He claimed to speak on behalf of God and those hearing him recognised his prophetic office.

He is the living Word, God revealed in man. His very person proclaimed the gospel.

We are all dead in sin until we come to faith in Christ. He brings life and in union with him we are made alive.

Jesus continues his prophetic ministry through another the same as himself - the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest who represents us before God the Father. He came to die for us, to be the sin offering that would fulfil all righteousness.

He is our high priest and mediator who pioneers the way for us into the throne of grace. He is the atoning sacrifice, his blood was shed as atonement for our sins, he became sin for us, the Passover lamb and the scapegoat. His offering is once and for all; the penalty has been paid in full.

Jesus Christ was crucified; he died and was buried; then on the third day he was raised to life.

Since death came through sin, not only must sin be fully dealt with on the cross but death must be defeated otherwise Christ would still be in the grave. Without the resurrection we would have no hope.

The many eye witnesses of the risen Lord Jesus Christ spoke with him, ate with him and touched him. They ascertained that it was really Jesus in his full person, body, soul and spirit, risen from the grave.

He is the first fruits of those who have died. By him comes the resurrection of the dead. He reversed what Adam started and he is the guarantee that the believers will be raised at his second coming.

The benefits of the saving work of Christ for the believer are:

- All our sins are covered
- We are justified and have peace with God
- We are saved from God's wrath
- Reconciled with God
- Declared righteous. In right standing before God
- United with Christ in His resurrection life.



MD.2.3. Repentance and Faith

- Q.1.** What must take place for this sinful world to enter into the great salvation that is available through Christ?
Romans 10:14-17; Mark 13:10
- Q.2.** Why is it necessary to preach the gospel to everyone? Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Romans 10:13
- Q.3.** What must people do in response to the gospel? Acts 20:21
- Q.4.** What is repentance? Psalm 32:3-5; Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 51:17; 2 Chronicles 7:14
- Q.5.** Who is the initiator of repentance and what does he do? John 16:7-11; Acts 2:37; Isaiah 6:1-8
- Q.6.** There must be a radical change of attitude and direction in life. What does this involve?
- a) 1 John 2:15-17; Luke 15:11-24
 - b) 2 John 1:9; Psalm 32:5
 - c) Ezekiel 33:15; Luke 19:8
- Q.7.** If there is no repentance what is the result? Luke 13:3; 1 John 1:8
- Q.8.** What can we learn about repentance from the experience of David?
2 Samuel Chapters 11 & 12; Psalm 51
- Q.9.** What is faith? Hebrews 11:1
- Q.10.** What two things must we believe when we come to God if faith is to be operative? Hebrews 11:6
- Q.11.** How does faith come to us? Romans 10:14-17; Acts 11:14; Acts 14:6-10; Proverbs 4:20-22
- Q.12.** What faith principles are outlined for us by Jesus in Mark 11:22-25? and by John in 1 John 5:14-15?
- Q.13.** Why is faith so important? Mark 16:16; Ephesians 2:8; Romans 14:23; Hebrews 11:6
- Q.14.** Faith in Christ is not a private matter. It is important for us and for others that we confess our faith in Christ. Note what these references say about speaking and faith. Rom 10:8-10; Matt 10:32-33; Rev 12:11; Acts 1:8
- Q.15.** What must each person do to be saved? Acts 16:30-34; John 3:36; Ephesians 2:8-9
- Q.16.** Who must be the focus of our faith at all times? Hebrews 12:2
- Q.17.** Have you through repentance and faith accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour and invited Him to be Lord of your life? If not, you can do it right now by bowing before God in prayer. Confess your sins to Him. Admit that you need Christ as your Saviour. Thank Him for forgiving your sins through Christ's death at Calvary. Invite Him to come and take over the running of your life and thank Him for the gift of eternal life.



Notes: Repentance and Faith

Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ therefore the gospel must be preached to all people everywhere. Jesus is the only way to God for he alone has atoned for humanity's sin.

The response to the gospel that brings people into eternal life includes turning to God in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Repentance involves a radical change of attitude toward God and away from sin, with corresponding action. Indifference or opposition to God and condoning of sin are replaced with a desire for God and rejection of sin. A breaking of sins hold and humbling before God.

It is God who initiates repentance by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

There is a turning away from the ways and temptations of a sinful world, confessing sin for what it is and making restitution where it is appropriate.

If we do not repent and confess our sin we are liars and remain under judgment.

David was accepted by God, not because he was perfect but because he knew the true meaning of repentance.

"Seeing is believing" is not faith.

For faith to be operative we must believe that **God exists** and that **he rewards** those who earnestly seek him.

Faith comes through hearing or reading the gospel. The crippled man at Lystra heard the gospel preached by Paul and the result was faith welled up within him to believe he would be healed and he was healed.

Faith principles include

- speaking forth what we believe,
- ask God to supply our needs,
- believe that he will reward us,
- receive the answers to our requests,
- having a humble and forgiving attitude toward everyone. In making our requests known to God we should firstly ascertain what his will is for us and then pray in agreement with him.

Without faith in Jesus Christ we remain in our sin, there is no experience of salvation and we cannot please God.

Through confession of our faith in Jesus Christ salvation becomes real in our experience of life, it is rewarded with intercession before the throne of God, it is a powerful weapon in spiritual warfare and it is the means whereby others hear the gospel.

We are saved from sin and judgment only by grace through faith, not by any good works of ours. The focus of our faith being Jesus.



MD.2.4.

Lordship of Christ Everyday

Jesus Christ is King. He shares in the universal reign of God.

- Q.1.** What was foretold of the coming Christ? Psalm 132:11; Luke 1:32-33; Isaiah 11:1-2; Isaiah 9:6-7
- Q.2.** What is the title of Jesus in these references? Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 2:2 & 11; Luke 19:37-38; John 18:37
- Q.3.** What did Jesus preach about? Matt 4:17; Matt 13:24, 31, 44, 45, 47; Matt 18:23; Luke 4:43; John 3:3
- Q.4.** What are some of the signs of the reign of Christ? Matt 11:2-6; Matt 10:7-8
- Q.5.** What is the extent of his sovereignty? Matt 28:18; 1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:20-22
- Q.6.** What event completed the cycle of our Lord's movement from heaven to earth and back to heaven again?
John 6:62; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:6-11
- Q.7.** Where did he go? Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 7:26; Ephesians 4:10
- Q.8.** Where is Christ now? Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Mark 14:61-62
- Q.9.** What are three aspects of the work of Christ now that he is seated at the right hand of God?
a) Romans 8:34
b) Psalm 110:1-5
c) Zechariah 3:1 & Revelation 12:10-11
- Q.10.** What is the purpose of the ascension of Jesus Christ?
a) Hebrews 6:19-20
b) Hebrews 9:24; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1
c) John 17:5; Philippians 2:6-11; Hebrews 2:9
- Q.11.** What are the results of the ascension for believers?
a) Hebrews 4:14-16
b) Ephesians 1:22 Ephesians 4:8-12
c) Colossians 1:15-18 Romans 8:28
- Q.12.** What are some of the implications of the reign of Christ in the life of believers? Col 1:13; Rom 5:17; Matt 18:18; Matt 18:19; Matt 28:19-20; John 20:21; Mark 16:19-20; Acts 14:3; Matt 25:
- Q.13.** What are the implications for believers and unbelievers from this parable? Luke 19:11-27
- Q.14.** Who is Jesus? Revelation 19:11-16



Notes: Lordship of Christ Everyday

The prophets foretold of the coming Christ of the line of King David who would rule under the anointing of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ the King came proclaiming the Kingdom of God and confirming his ministry with signs and wonders.

His authority is over all things.

He ascended to heaven as he had foretold he would. A real physical and historical event. He passed through the heavens to be exalted above them filling the whole universe. He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father which is a place of intercession and authority and where Satan is utterly defeated.

Jesus has gone as a fore-runner, pioneering the way into heaven for us where he is appearing on our behalf having assumed the glory that was his before the incarnation.

The results for us are that we can now boldly enter into God's presence through Jesus. As head of the Church he now gives gifts to the body for its building, strengthening and maturing.

He is also working all things together through his Church.

Some of the implications of the reign of Christ for the believer now are that we are transferred from the kingdom of darkness into his Kingdom where we are reigning with him in life. We are given authority to minister in his name, as he ministered here on Earth, being faithful to him in all that we do.

Because he is King we must submit to his reign in our lives.

He is called Faithful and True, the Word of God. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.



MD.2.5. Members of God's Family

Through faith in Jesus Christ we become new creations.

- Q.1.** Who do we belong to now that we believe in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord? Romans 8:15-16; John 1:12; 2 Cor 6:18; 1 John 3:1
- Q.2.** Why are we God's children? Ephesians 1:3-5
- Q.3.** What do these references tell us about the love of our heavenly Father? Heb 12:5-11; Matt 6:25-34
- Q.4.** Write down an instance of God disciplining you and another instance of His provision.
- Q.5.** How is our relationship with Jesus Christ described in these verses?
- a) Galatians 2:20; Romans 7:4
 - b) 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:31-32
 - c) 1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 12:5; Ephesians 1:22-23
 - d) John 15:1-5

What do these four descriptions of our relationship with Christ tell us about how a man and woman should relate together in marriage?

- Q.6.** What does Hebrews 2:10-11 tell us about our relationship within God's family?
- Q.7.** What is our position in life through our union with Jesus Christ? Romans 5:17
- Q.8.** How is our relationship with the Holy Spirit described by Paul?
- 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
- Q.9.** What did Jesus say about how the Spirit relates to us?
- a) John 3:1-8
 - b) John 14:16-17; John 16:7
 - c) John 16:13
 - d) Acts 1:8
- Q.10.** What is to be our response to the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:38
- Q.11.** Where does the Spirit reside? Galatians 4:6; Romans 5:5
- Q.12.** What is our relationship with other believers?
- 1 Peter 2:17; Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19
- Q.13.** How are we to relate to each other in this great family?
- a) John 13:34; John 17:21; Ephesians 4:2-3
 - b) Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:25
 - c) Romans 12:13; 1 John 3:17-18; James 2:15-17
 - d) 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Ephesians 6:18
- Q.14.** Does the church you attend exhibit these qualities? Make a short list of things you will do this week to further develop and enrich your church life to the glory of God.

Notes: Members of Gods Family

Through faith in Christ we are made sons and daughters of the living **God, adopted** into his family. He has chosen us to be his own. As our heavenly Father he is concerned for our well-being, He disciplines us when necessary and he sees that our needs are adequately met.

We belong to **Christ**; we are **united** with him like a bride and bridegroom. We are members of one body with Christ as our head, and as we abide in him life flows through us like a vine and its branches. He identifies with us to make us holy as he is holy calling us his brothers and sisters. In union with him we are reigning in life.

We are the temple of the **Holy Spirit**, God's **dwelling place**. He comes to us in regenerating power, dwells with and in us, teaching and empowering us. We must receive him so that he can dwell in our hearts eternally. His presence produces fruit of righteousness as we yield to his guidance.

As members of God's family we have many **brothers and sisters**, all who have been adopted by the Father. Our life together should reflect the unity of God in love where we share together in fellowship in caring for one another and pray for one another.



MD.2.6. Our Inheritance

- Q.1.** We are members of God's family, adopted by Him, by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. As children of the living God what are we according to these verses? Romans 8:17; Titus 3:7; Galatians 4:7
- Q.2.** With whom are we co-heirs? Romans 8:17
- Q.3.** How do we enter into this inheritance? Galatians 3:26-29; Galatians 4:4-7; John 3:5; Ephesians 1:18-19
- Q.4.** It is both a FUTURE inheritance based upon God's saving acts in history and an inheritance entered into NOW by faith. What is the present deposit guaranteeing our inheritance? Ephesians 1:13-14
- Q.5.** We have this inheritance only in relationship with Christ. What are three practical aspects of our relationship with Him that directly influence our experience of this inheritance now?
- a) Hebrews 11:8
 - b) Hebrews 6:12
 - c) Matthew 25:31-40
- Q.6.** With whom are we joint heirs? 1 Peter 3:7; James 2:5
- Q.7.** What will we inherit according to Hebrews 1:14?
- a) Note the present reality of this. Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 1:18
 - b) What does this inheritance through Christ's death and resurrection encompass? 1 Peter 2:24; Philippians 4:19
- Q.8.** What are the blessings promised to those who leave everything to follow Jesus?
- a) Mark 10:23-30; Matthew 19:29; Luke 18:29-30
 - b) When are these to be received?
- Q.9.** There is more that we inherit according to these references: Heb 6:12; Heb 10:36; Galatians 3:13, 14 & 29
- List some of the promises of God that you know are recorded in the Bible. Start by listing all God's promises in the 4 gospels, noting any contextual implications.
- Q.10.** What is the inheritance referred to here? Matthew 25:34; Colossians 1:12-13; James 2:5
- Q.11.** Who do not receive this inheritance? 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:5
- Q.12.** What else do we inherit? 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; Matthew 5:5; Romans 8:17-18
- Q.12.** What is the point of application for you arising out of this study? Is it a challenge to leave what you have, to serve the Lord in a new way or place, or is it to receive what is rightfully yours but has not yet been claimed?

Notes: Our Inheritance

As adopted children of God we are heirs of the Father, co-heirs with Christ through faith in Him and joint heirs with all who love the Lord Jesus and follow Him.

The guarantee of our inheritance is the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. In our relationship with Christ we are called to a life of obedience and patient endurance serving one another in love.

We inherit salvation which is both our future hope and present experience. This salvation encompasses redemption from sin and death, sickness and poverty. One hundred fold blessings in this life (including persecution) plus eternal life in the age to come is the inheritance of those who leave everything to follow Jesus.

We inherit the promises of God. We also inherit the Kingdom of God when we repent of our sin and believe in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord. Our inheritance also includes the imperishable, the Earth and glory.



MD.3.1. Renewing the Mind

Everything we have ever seen, heard or experienced from the time of our conception is stored away in our memory. However most of it is below the conscious level and is not readily recalled, yet it still influences our behaviour.

In this sinful broken world each one of us experiences hurts and injustices as we journey through life that result in damaged emotions and repressed drives. These need to be healed. We are not automatically healed when we are born again nor when we are filled with the Spirit.

Q.1. Note what these references tell us about the renewing of our mind.

- a) In relation to our intellect. Proverbs 2:1-6; Philippians 4:8
- b) In relation to our will. Luke 22:42; Matthew 16:24; Psalm 37:5; Proverbs 3:5-7
- c) In relation to our emotions. Matthew 22:37-40; Galatians 5:23; 1 Cor 13:4-7; Prov 5:18-19

Essentially this is a learning process through the study of the Bible using a systematic course of study and expanding our reading with Christ as our focus.

However, as we study the Bible and apply what we learn we will come under conviction by the Holy Spirit of hidden sins and of actions and ideas which we did not previously see to be sinful. These need to be confessed and forsaken so that the renewing process can continue.

In addition we may need healing of damaged emotions or even deliverance.

Q.2. What is the promise of healing of inner hurts in this much loved Psalm? Psalm 23:3

Our soul is the seat of our personality encompassing our intellect our will and our emotions. It is the mental and emotional realm of our being. Thus, when Paul writes about the renewing of our mind he is referring to the restoring of our soul.

Q.3. How does Paul describe our life before we become followers of Christ? Ephesians 2:1-3

- a) What lifestyles develop amongst people who continue to rebel against God? Romans 1:18-32
- b) What does the Lord say about such lifestyles? Deuteronomy 27:9-26

Q.4. What problems can result from these rebellious ways of living?

- a) Romans 1:21; Romans 1:28; Romans 1:31; Deuteronomy 28:28
- b) Deuteronomy 28:65-67
- c) Deuteronomy 28:30
- d) Deuteronomy 23:2

Q.5. What happens to such people in the natural course of events?

- a) Galatians 6:7-8; Hosea 8:7
- b) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelations 22:15

Q.6. What does this brief event reveal to us about the effectiveness of our Lord's ministry in relation to the storms of life? Luke 8:22-25

Q.7. What were the needs of some people Jesus met and how did He respond to them? Luke 13:10-17; John 4:1-42; Luke 7:11-17; John 8:1-11



- Q.8.** What are we told concerning Jesus' ministry of forgiveness, healing of inner hurts and release from bondage?
- a) Isaiah 53:5-6; Mark 2:1-12
 - b) Isaiah 53:3-4; Isaiah 61:1-3 & Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 57:14-19
 - c) Galatians 3:13-14
- Q.9.** In whose name do we minister healing? James 5:14; Hebrews 13:8; Matthew 18:19-20
- Q.10.** What manifestations of the Spirit are particularly helpful in this ministry? 1 Corinthians 12:8; Daniel 2:22-23
John 4:16-18
- Q.11.** What must the person seeking healing do to receive it?
- a) James 5:16; Isaiah 55:6-7; Even the person greatly wronged needs to do this if there is any resentment or bitterness in his/her heart. Ephesians 4:31
 - b) Ephesians 4:32; Luke 11:4; James 5:15-16
 - c) Colossians 3:15; Luke, 17:15-16; Acts 3:9
- Q.12.** What are the results that flow to us and our descendants from this ministry? Isaiah 61:9-10; Galatians 3:14
Galatians 5:22-25

We are not to be involved in any introspective fishing expedition for problems. However, if there is some troublesome habit or attitude in your life it may be wise to speak about it with your pastor.

Notes: Renewing the Mind

We are the products of our ancestry and our environment. Emotional hurts leave real scars on the mind. Some of them are open festering wounds. We reap what we sow.

Jesus ministered deliverance to the oppressed, forgiveness to the guilty, compassion and joy to the mourning and hope to the alienated. He calms the storms of life for those who put their trust in him.

He restores our soul. our intellect is enlightened, our will brought into submission to his will and our emotions brought under control and given positive direction when we embark upon the process of transformation into the likeness of Christ.

Jesus identifies with us in our sorrows and grief's and carries them away. He brings hope, healing, liberty, deliverance, comfort, victory, gladness, praise, establishment and peace to those in need.

The manifestations of the Spirit with words of knowledge and wisdom are particularly helpful in revealing hidden hurts. Often it is only by revelation that they are revealed.

We minister healing in the name of Jesus who is the same yesterday, today and forever. He was present and aware of that hurtful event and he was available to help us if we had known to call on Him. Now we can call on Him and go back in prayer and claim healing and release for that event.

In seeking healing we must be willing to admit our fault in the situation even if it was only in response, and we must confess that fault.

We must also forgive those who have hurt us and finally we need to receive our healing and thank the Lord for it.



MD.3.2. Growing in Grace

- Q.1.** The Christian life is a pilgrimage. We are constantly on the move. How is this pilgrimage described in these references? Philippians 3:12-14; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 Timothy 6:11
- Q.2.** What is the quality of life to which we are called? 1 Peter 1:15-16; Matthew 5:48; Colossians 4:12
- Q.3.** Who is involved with us as we press on in the Christian life? Romans 8:26; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Thess 5:23
- Q.4.** What is to be our attitude in all that we do? Philippians 2:5; Psalm 139:23-24; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Matthew 6:33
- Q.5.** Our whole being is to be yielded to the Lord. There is no such thing as a Sunday Christian. Jesus Christ is either Lord of all or He is not Lord at all. 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- a) Romans 6:12-13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 12:1
 - b) Romans 12:2; 1 Peter 1:13-14; Philippians 4:8
 - c) Romans 8:5-6; Galatians 5:16 & 25; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:18
- Q.6.** We are not yet perfect. We do sin from time to time. What must we do about it and what does God do?
- a) James 3:2, 1 John 1:9
 - b) Psalm 37:23-24, Isaiah 43:25, Micah 7:19
 - c) A warning we must heed. Hebrews 10:26-29
- Q.7.** God has provided us with a variety of means whereby we are enabled to grow and mature and become more Christ like. What are they?
- a) Romans 6:3-4; Acts 10:47-48; Matthew 28:19
 - b) Joshua 1:7-8; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Psalm 119:9; Psalm 119:105
 - c) Philippians 4:6; Mark 1:35; Psalm 141:2; Ephesians 6:18; Acts 20:36
 - d) Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 10:25
 - e) Acts 2:44-45; Philippians 4:14-19
 - f) Ephesians 5:19-20; Revelation 5:11-14; Psalm 100:1-5; Psalm 150:1-6
 - g) Acts 2:43; Luke 9:1-2
 - h) Mark 14:22-26; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 28
 - i) Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 1:8; Matthew 10:32
- Q.8.** What can we expect to happen as we follow Christ's instructions?
- a) John 15:7-8
 - b) Galatians 5:22-23
 - c) Ephesians 4:12-13
- Q.9.** On what basis can we press on with confident assurance?
- a) 1 John 5:3-5
 - b) Hebrews 13:6-8
 - c) Romans 8:31-39



Notes:

Growing In Grace

The Christian can never say in this life "I have arrived, I need go no further". We are to press on toward the heavenly goal set before us. We are to grow up into maturity in Christ pursuing godliness. On this journey we are called to live a life of holiness reflecting more and more the perfection of God. We are helped on this journey by God in his three persons.

Our attitude is to be the same as Christ's, to be humble and pure seeking above all the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Our whole being, body, soul and spirit, is to be yielded to the Lord so that he can fill us to overflowing with His presence and power.

We do sin, though it should not be a habitual situation of committing the same sin time after time. We need to see sin for what it is and turn from it in repentance, confessing our wrong and seeking forgiveness. Then we will be forgiven and the sin will be completely removed. We can expect that over time even the most entrenched sinful habit will be broken, if not through confession then with the help of another through inner healing where needed or even deliverance.

Be assured God can set us free once the root cause is found.

We are enabled to grow in grace as God ministers to us through baptism when we come to Him in faith, through study and meditation of his word, prayer, sharing and giving, praise and worship, ministry in power, Holy Communion and witnessing. We should not neglect any of these means of grace.

We press on with confident assurance trusting in Christ our helper who is the unchanging eternal one who loves us with an everlasting love.



MD.3.3. Biblical Law and the New Covenant

Do Old Testament Laws Apply To Us Today? Matthew 5:17-20

1. The Old Testament (O.T.) law was never just a set of rules for living.
 - a) Its function was, and is, to show how high God's standards of righteousness are and how impossible it is for anyone to meet these standards apart from Divine aid.
 - b) Paul tells us "... the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith." (Gal 3:24)
2. The O.T. law was a Covenant between God and Israel. It is not our covenant, so its laws don't apply unless they are renewed in the New Covenant
 - a) Israel's **civil laws** don't apply to us. We are not citizens of ancient Israel
 - b) Israel's **ritual laws** don't apply to us.
 - Worship is no longer centred around ritual sacrifices
 - Jesus' once for all sacrifice has accomplished it all.
 - c) **Laws about the shedding of blood** are a vivid background for Christ's death on the cross for our sin. They reveal:
 - Sin is so bad it deserves death
 - Escape for the sinner is provided through substitution of a sacrifice
 - d) Israel's **food laws** were time and space specific.
 - They were to stay clear of foods that carried diseases common to the region.
 - Don't try to grow produce unsuited to the region.
 - Food items commonly used in pagan worship prohibited.
 - e) **Laws prohibiting activity associated with pagan religious practices** in the region were for the protection of Israel from demonic oppression.
 - Canaanites were caught up in magic and superstition
 - God would not bless his people if they were led astray through these practices
3. Whilst the O.T. law is not God's direct command to us, it is **God's fully inspired word for us**. Principles of justice, mercy, generosity, healthy thinking and eating, sustainable environmental management and purity of worship are all embodied in the law.
4. Some O.T. ethical laws are restated in the New Testament (N.T.) as applicable to Christians; ie
Love the Lord your God ... (Deut 6:5 & Matt 22:37)
Love your neighbour ... (Lev 19:18 & Matt 22:39)
Do not steal (Deut 5:19 & Rom 13:9)
5. Some O.T. laws are redefined in the N.T. to include more than the original scope; ie

Observing the Sabbath. (Deut 5:12-15 & Heb 4:1-13)
Jesus revealed that to even think adulterous thoughts is to commit adultery. He also demonstrated grace and forgiveness for the repentant sinner instead of stoning. (Deut 5:18 & Matt 5:27-29 & John 8:1-11)
6. When an O.T. law is reiterated in the N.T. it cannot be put aside on the grounds that it only applied to a particular time and situation in Israel's history; ie
Homosexuality is condemned in Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18 & 19 and in the law in Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13. This judgement of homosexual behaviour is then reiterated in the N.T. in Romans 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:9-10; & 1 Tim 1:9-10. Furthermore in 1 Peter 2:6 & Jude 7 the judgement upon Sodom and Gomorrah's immorality is used as an example of how God will deal with such ungodliness in latter times. (Including the twenty first century)



How do the commands of the New Testament apply to us today?

Matthew 22:36-40

1. The commands are not a set of rules to give to people telling them how to live if they want to be accepted by God.
 - a) This would be living by law, not by grace.
 - b) Many church people have brought up their children this way. And when the children get to an age to make up their own mind they toss it all away.
 - c) Keeping the commands of God will not bring a person into a relationship with God, unless the person is perfect all of his or her life.
 - d) Acceptance by God comes through faith in Jesus, not by keeping to a set of rules.
2. They reveal what is Godly and constitutes life, contrasted with what is ungodly and constitutes death.
 - a) They starkly show sin to be a violation of God's will.
 - b) Listen to these explanations of loving our neighbour. (Romans 13:8-14; 1 Cor' 13:4-7)
 - c) Every sin is equally bad by God's standards
3. The commands awaken awareness of need for mercy and salvation. (Gal 3:22; John 3:16; John 3:3-6)
4. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to live the commands.
 - a) It is extremely foolish for us to begin this new life in the Spirit and then try to walk the rest of the journey in our own wisdom and strength. (Gal 3:3)
 - b) Live by the Spirit. (Gal 5:13-14 & 16-25)
5. The commands help us to align our thinking and actions with the promptings of the Spirit.

"The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." (1 Tim 1:5)

(For further reading see *How to read the bible for all its worth* by Fee & Stuart)



MD.3.4. Conversing With God

A definition of Prayer

“Prayer is a personal experience of meaningful and loving friendship with God using all the methods of communication, fellowship, mutual respect, and the desire to be in each other’s presence that are typical of good human friendships”.

Throughout the bible we are introduced to various forms of prayer.

Adoration (Daniel 2:20-23)	Prophetic (Luke 1:68-79)
Confession (Psalm 51:1-19)	Overcoming (Acts 7:59-60)
Thanksgiving (Luke 1:46-55)	Praise (Psalm 148:1-14)
Petition (Acts 4:24-30)	Relinquishment (Matthew 26:39)
Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)	Dedication (1 Kings 8:22-53; Acts 13:1-3)
Intercession (John 17:1-26; Ephesians 3:14-21; Psalm 67:1-7)	

Jesus taught about prayer by example. He taught those who wanted to learn. Christians learn to pray by praying. It is your responsibility as a Christian to seek understanding in how to pray. If you can talk then you can pray. Sincerity rather than eloquence is what is required.

With what we now call the Lord’s prayer we are given direction on how to pray

- **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.** Praise God for who he is and what he has done. Honour and praise him using the Hebrew names of God which declare the blessings of the new covenant.
- **Your kingdom come, your will be done.** Submit to Christ’s reign and authority in every area of your life. Spend time listening to the Lord. Write down ideas that come. Declare God’s will to be done in the lives of your family. Pray for the church, three non-believers you know, the nation, and missionaries you support. Declare God’s kingdom to be established.
- **Give us today our daily bread.** Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Be specific when praying for your needs. Believe it is God’s will to free you from the curse of poverty.
- **Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.** Ask God to forgive you and receive your forgiveness. Forgive others. Hand over any judgement or punishment to God. Bless others.
- **Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.** Put on the whole armour of God. Put a hedge of protection around your family and church. Resist wrong thoughts – fill your mind with God’s word.
- **The kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.** Praise and glorify God for his greatness, love and mercy.

We are taught the importance of attitude when praying. Do not be anxious. Pray with boldness, persistence, and believing. (Luke 11:5-10; Phil 4:6; Luke 18:1; Matt 26:41)

The Holy Spirit is another the same as Jesus. He is the Christians constant companion. We can talk with him any time of day, about anything. Paul urges us to pray continuously (1 Thess 5:17)

James identified several situations where prayer makes a difference- when experiencing trouble, happy times, sickness, sin and backsliding. (James 5:13-20)

Intercession is one of the principal ministries of the Christian church. It is a ministry which can involve every member through the operations of the Holy Spirit. Without this ministry the church fumbles around as though in a fog.

Q.1. How important is prayer? Luke 18:1; Phil 4:6

Q.2. Who is ready to help us pray? Romans 8:26



- Q.3.** Is praying in the Spirit an optional extra or a vital necessity? Eph 6:18
- Q.4.** Can we be sure that God is listening? Jeremiah 33:3; 1 John 5:14-15; 1 John 3:21-22
- Q.5.** How is God's relationship with his people described in Ps 121:1-8?
- Q.6.** Note the importance of open communication lines with God. 2 Kings 6:8-23
- Q.7.** Why is listening to the Lord so valuable? Amos 3:7
- Q.8.** Twelve steps in **learning to listen to God** and then praying through what he has revealed to you. (adapted from material used by YWAM)
- a) Make sure your heart is **clean before God** by having given the Holy Spirit time to convict of any unconfessed sin. (Ps 68:18; 139:23-24)
 - b) **Acknowledge** you can't really pray without the direction and energy of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 8:26)
 - c) **Die** to your own plans, desires and imaginations concerning what you should pray about. (Prov 3:5-6; 28:26; Isaiah 55:8)
 - d) **Be filled** with the Holy Spirit. (Eph 5:18)
 - e) **Praise** God in faith for the remarkable prayer time you are about to have. There is power in praise. (Ps 145)
 - f) Consciously **clothe yourself** with spiritual armour and take your stand for Christ and against evil. (Eph 6:10-18; James 4:7)
 - g) Wait silently for God to lead. **Expect him to answer:** (Mark 11:24) Stay alert. Look for answers to your prayers. God may astonish you: (Isaiah 65:24; Acts 12:11) Tune in to the Holy Spirit.
 - h) Keep your **bible** handy, God may want to give you direction or confirmation from it. (Ps 119:105) Expect him to give you wisdom: (James 1:5-6)
 - i) **Record** the visions and ideas given to you. (Jere 30:1-2) Keep a note pad handy. Take note when you get a prompt from the Spirit. The Lord may highlight a passage of Scripture, or communicate through a dream or vision or bring an idea to mind either from a previous conversation with someone or through the still small voice of the Spirit.
 - j) Then as he reveals things to you, pray about them. (John 10:27) Pray in accordance with **God's will:** (1 John 5:14-15)
 - k) **Persevere** in prayer in the things God brings to mind. Don't move on to the next subject until you have given God time to discharge all he wants to say to you. (Mk 14:32-42)
 - l) **Give glory to God.** Finish off your prayer time with praise and thanksgiving. (Eph 3:20-21; Rom 11:36)



Notes: **Conversing with God**

Jesus stressed the importance of persisting in prayer. Paul also made it a priority.

The Holy Spirit is available at all times to help us to pray. (Romans 8:26)

- The English word **help** is a very long word in Greek – ***sunantilambanetai***
 - ✚ sun = together with
 - ✚ anti = over on the other side
 - ✚ lambanetai = take hold
- Ask the Holy Spirit to take hold of the present situation together with you. Allow him to guide you, encourage you, and empower you.

We are encouraged to pray in the Spirit.

Praying in the Spirit is not confined to praying in tongues but it does include the exercise of that gift.

- We need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to pray in accordance with God's will.
- His word is illuminated by his Spirit and applied to our everyday situations.
- We need the enabling of the Spirit to sustain our prayer life.
- "Pray without ceasing" is only possible if we are baptised in the Holy Spirit and use the prayer language he gives us. (Rom 8:26-27; Eph 6:18; 1 Thess 5:17)
- Ask God to baptize you with the Spirit. He gives good gifts. He is the best father of all.

God always has time for us, he is never too busy. In fact he eagerly waits to hear from us and to commune with us.

The Lord is always watching over his people (Psalm 121:1-8)

Christians are like soldiers on the battle front. We have our battle plan – given through Word and Spirit and we also have lines of communication with the Commander-in-Chief at headquarters. (2 Kings 6:8-23)

God always reveals his will to his people before he acts. (Amos 3:3-8)

Effective intercession is centred in God: Listening to God; ascertaining his will and his priorities; and aligning our prayers with what he is revealing. Prayer thus becomes an act of God through us.

There is a time to be silent and a time to speak.

- Listen carefully to God. (Luke 8:18)
- Some things revealed to you are not to be spoken about to others.
- However, some things revealed to you by God in intercession must be spoken about, even if this is difficult, even if it costs you your life. (Matt 10:27)
- But seek confirmation first from other mature believers and check that it is consistent with the bible.



MD.3.5.

Christian Meditation

Interest in meditation in our society today is connected with two searches.

The search for a **less stressful lifestyle**.

Here the emphasis is upon **relaxation**

Meditation for relaxation is straight forward and should be part of everyone's routine.

The search for **philosophical peace**.

The emphasis being upon finding some form of spiritual connection **to overcome the nagging sense of alienation and restlessness**. This is where a person can either achieve a significant breakthrough or get entangled in a subtle web of confused ideas and spiritual deception. It is important for people to realize that forms of meditation that include a spiritual element that is not from Christ are based on untruth. They subtly entrap people and blind them.

Forms of meditation that involve emptying the mind fail to understand the influence of spiritual forces of evil that exist. (Matt 12:43-44) The mind is designed for thinking and it is not rejuvenated by emptying but by renewal. "Do not conform any longer 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." (Rom 12:2)

Human centred forms of meditation may provide some short term relief and relaxation; however they fail to address the underlying issue of our fallenness. Consequently their benefits are limited in scope & time.

Christian meditation is the only form of meditation that effectively addresses both searches.

It is humanity's separation from God that is the source of human alienation and restlessness. Christ's words to his followers in the upper room at the Last Supper, just prior to his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection, cut right to the heart of this alienation and restlessness. "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.*" (John 14:27) This peace comes by way of the cross of Christ.

Without Christ there is no infinite reference point. Our thinking will always be shrouded in uncertainty and tossed around on the shifting tide of public opinion. Without Christ there are only our own human resources to draw upon. Whereas with Christ the full resources of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are released within us.

Guidelines for effective meditation

1. Pursue physical wellbeing. Eat the right food, have sufficient physical rest, and get plenty of exercise.

2. Develop right thinking

- Learn to discipline your mind
 - ✚ Think about that which is noble, true, right, pure and lovely. (Phil 4:8)
 - ✚ Choose wisely what you look at (Ps 101:3)
 - ✚ Have times when you concentrate your mind on something other than your daily work, such as pursuing a hobby
- Focus upon revealed truth which is absolute and therefore timeless.
 - ✚ Meditate upon God's word. (Josh 1:8)
 - ✚ Experience the trustworthiness of God and his word. "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. I gain understanding from your precepts. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps 119:103-105)
 - ✚ Meditate upon the works of God. (Ps 143:5) His mighty works and his daily blessings.

3. Maintain healthy relationships (Rom 12:18)

- Every relationship requires regular input. To **be** a friend is the best way to **have** a friend.
 - ✚ Is your relationship better or worse than it was some months ago?
 - ✚ Is it based on Godly principles?
 - ✚ Is it building or stagnating?
- Is there one special person in your life? How is this relationship progressing?
- Are things going well in your family or is there need for some change?



- What about your relationships in the workplace?
- Do you have a mentor? Are there people close to you whom you trust to keep you accountable?

4. Come to Jesus for a time of meditation together (Matt 11:28-30)

- Focus upon the Lord himself (Ps 63:6) “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour”. (Heb 2:9)
- ✚ It’s not difficult connecting up with him wherever you are. He is with you always (Heb 13:5)
- ✚ In him is peace that embraces your whole being – body, soul & spirit (1 Thess’ 5:23)
- ✚ Learn from Jesus. (John 8:31-32)
- ✚ Meeting regularly with Jesus in this way helps you to maintain a healthy relationship with him

5. Be intentional by setting apart regular times for meditation.

- Break away from all other tasks.
- ✚ “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10)
- Regularly come apart – develop a rhythm to your lifestyle
- ✚ Just sitting on a high spot taking in the natural surroundings can have a calming and relaxing effect.
- ✚ A daily walk or jog can be such a time.
- ✚ Or do something like Susanna Wesley, who sat in a particular chair with her apron over her head signifying she was not to be disturbed.
- A bible verse at the start of each day, that you can come back to through the day, can fit into even the busiest schedule.
- Schedule one day in seven to be a day of rest from regular activities (Exod 20:10)

6. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you

- The mind controlled by the Holy Spirit is life and peace (Romans 8:6)
- ✚ The Spirit of the Lord gives you rest (Is 63:14)
- ✚ The Holy Spirit guides you into truth (John 16:13)

Meditation Time

1. Establish a regular time and place with no interruptions. Break away from all other tasks & switch off phones & other devices.
2. Sit quietly, in a comfortable position.
 - a) Close your eyes and relax. Breathe slowly
 - b) Focus your mind on a sound in the room, or outside, for 30 seconds. Then focus on the word PEACE.
 - c) Invite Jesus to be with you in your peaceful place
3. Read a passage from the bible. (the following are some examples)
 - *Be still and know that I am God. (Ps 46:10)*
 - *I am the way and the truth and the life. (John 14:6)*
 - *Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matt 11:28)*
 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. (John 14:27)*
 - *Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this. (Psalm 37:5)*
 - a) Think about what you have read;
 - b) The writer and the context
 - c) What it meant then.
 - d) What it is saying to you today?
4. Centre your mind on one key thought or word in the passage (let other thoughts pass you by). Stay with it for some time and savour the picture that it brings.
5. At your leisure share with Jesus what you think and see, and listen for what he has to say.
6. Invite Jesus to be your companion and co-worker for the day.
7. From time to time through the day reflect some more on that key word or thought you got from the bible.



MD.3.6.

Guidance

Guidance is receiving communication from God. His communication is consistent and it is without fault. All blockages in communication are to be found in us.

Pre-requisites to receiving guidance from God are:

- Our lives cleansed of all known sin.
- Obedience to God's will as far as we know it at the time.
- Regularly worshipping God in company with God's people.
- A commitment to fellowship with other believers in Christ in one place.

Q.1. God guides us by His word.

- a) What do the following verses tell us about knowing the will of God? Psalm 119:105; Deut 6:6-7; John 17:17; 1 Tim 4:6; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Acts 17:11
- b) Elijah was a mighty prophet of God. 1 Kings 17:1 and 18:1, 41-46 and James 5:17-18 describe an incident in his ministry. To discover the basis for his confident prediction see Deuteronomy 11:11-21
- c) King Josiah did what was pleasing to the Lord. 2 Kings 22:2. What was the basis of Josiah's reforms? 2 Kings 23:1-3, 21-23, 24-25.
- d) The church must be established in God's word. Acts 2:42, Eph 5:26

Q.2. God speaks to us by the inner witness of the Spirit.

- a) Note the significance of prayer in guidance. Daniel 6:10; Daniel 2:16-23; Joshua 7:6-12; 2 Chronicles 7:14; James 5:13; Philippians 4:6
- b) If we are to hear then we must listen; Psalm 81:11-13; Mark 9:7; John 16:13; Acts 8:29
- c) We are to actively seek God's guidance, bringing specific requests. John 16:24; James 1:5; Romans 8:26-27
- d) As we listen to God in the place of prayer, having asked for His guidance, what should be our attitude of mind and spirit? Mark 13:11; 1 John 5:15; James 1:6-8; Acts 16:9-10
- e) What gifts of the Holy Spirit could be operative through this avenue of guidance? 1 Cor 12:8-10

Q.3. God guides us through the counsel of mature Christians.

- a) Name the counsellor(s) and counselee(s) and the needs.
2 Samuel 12:1-15
Galatians 2:11-14
Acts 18:24-26
Exodus 18:13-26
Acts 13:1-3
Acts 2:36-41
Acts 6:1-7
Isaiah 37:8-38
- b) Don't go to just any Christian for counsel. List the qualities to be observed in a mature believer. Luke 6:43-45; Galatians 5:22-25; 1 Tim 3:1-7; 1 Cor 2:1-5

Q.4. God guides us through our own best thinking.

- a) He helps us think through situations and problems drawing upon the knowledge we gain through education and experience in living to bring us to an understanding of His will.
- b) Note what the following verses tell us about how we are to think. Prov 4:23; Prov 11:27; Romans 12:2; Romans 12:3



- c) What is to be the range and quality of our thinking? Prov 2:1-5; Philippians 4:8; Psalm 8:1-9
- d) What motives are to control our thinking? Matthew 22:37-40
- e) Who directs your thinking? Luke 22:42; Romans 8:5

Q.5. God sometimes uses circumstances to guide us.

- a) You may have heard people talk about an opportunity as an open door and the blocking of such an opportunity as a closed door and this being interpreted as the guidance of God. However, sometimes the door just needs a good push. Nevertheless circumstances can reinforce our awareness of the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- b) Note how circumstances were influential in guiding God's people in these following passages. Acts 16:6-10; Acts 17:16-34; Acts 28:1-10

Notes:

Guidance

The first step in receiving guidance from God is to be in right standing with Him, which means we must repent of all sin and ask for His forgiveness and to invite Christ to rule our lives.

There are FIVE avenues of guidance.

- The Bible, God's written word,
- The inner witness of the Spirit,
- The counsel of mature Christians,
- Our own best sanctified thinking and
- Circumstances.

In any particular situation one or other of these avenues of guidance may predominate, nevertheless the others will provide a necessary check and test.

God never contradicts His revealed word. Thus, whatever guidance we receive must always be consistent with the principles laid down in the Bible and be consistent with the nature of God Himself.

God has given us the Spirit of truth who will guide us into all truth. It is God the Holy Spirit who speaks to our specific situation, always in line with what the Bible teaches.

Beware of becoming so subjective that you refuse to listen to the counsel of mature Christians. God has placed mature believers in positions of leadership for the building up of the body of Christ, the Church. Look for leaders who exhibit the fruit of Christ likeness and who are filled with the Holy Spirit and respect their counsel as it aligns with God's word.

EVERY Christian needs the fellowship and counsel of fellow believers in Christ. The "lone ranger" type of ministry is very vulnerable. God has given us minds and He expects us to use them. In many situations the guidance of God is plain common sense. Yet we must not presume that our thoughts are God's thoughts. Think the situation through and then test it by the other avenues of guidance.

Finally, circumstances do influence the course of action. Often circumstances reinforce the other lines of guidance. However we must not be looking for the easy way out of every situation.

Paul learnt the secret of contentment in every situation so that he could share with the Philippians how his circumstances in jail had served to advance the gospel.



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