



Kingdom
Lifestyle!

FOR BRAND NEW
BELIEVERS

Vessels.Church





Kingdom

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For 'Brand' New Believers

Consecrating & Committing to a New Life in Christ.

Kingdom Lifestyle! For ‘Brand’ New Believers

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Compiled by **Dr. Dennis Odiaka**.

Vessels Church

Our **vision** is to see people that Jesus died and rose for live well and flourish by the gospel of the Kingdom of God, which Jesus the Christ commanded us to preach in the Name of God and power of the Holy Spirit.

Our **mission** is to make disciples for Jesus, nourishing them with pure unadulterated knowledge of God according to the nature of Jesus Christ, so they can live and flourish for His glory (1Cor 4:6-7). Our **values** include God’s love and mercy for ALL people expressed in grace, truth, faith, holiness, wisdom, power, and glory. And being full of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit, our **goal** is to live, and help all who come to live the kingdom lifestyle of Jesus by God’s grace, goodness, governance, and glory.

Discipleship and Training for ‘Brand’ New Believers

In the **making** of new **disciples** for Jesus according to Matthew 28:19, effectively **training** them in His way of life and instructing them in the **practice** of what he **commanded** us to do, the best place to begin is at the beginning. For excellent pedagogy, we begin with learning from the first four books or epistles to be written in the New Testament Bible by three authors—Brothers James, Mark, and Paul—to different audiences of the start-up General Church, Gentile Church, and the world of new Believers. These books articulate and introduce the **life** of Jesus and **lifestyle** for new Christians. They are easy to read and comprehend and are suitable for developing the solid **foundation** needed for living a true Christian life as a disciple of Jesus.

We recommend that you learn in groups, guided by a minister or teacher in Christ, using the annotated subheadings as learning and coaching themes, discussing and cross-fertilizing with Godly ideas you receive as you move along. Learning can be completed in five to twelve days, back-to-back or over a period. **Reference Notes** are included for additional insights. Use the **Progress Markers** to evaluate current versus desirable lifestyle, and answer the **Reflection Questions** at the end of each section to help with reflecting, learning, and development. We pray that God, our Father accomplishes His purpose in your discipleship in Christ, Amen.



Use the table of contents, topics, or page numbers to plan your Discipleship training and learning sessions.

| Weeks | 1 | | | | | 2 | | | | | 3 | | | | | 4 | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Days | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Morning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Afternoon | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Evening | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Night | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Lifestyle! For New Believers

Hello Dear,


You have just been born-again into the family and Kingdom of God, our Father. Congratulations! Or you have been born-again and baptized sometime now, but need to be refreshed with the fundamentals of true Christianity. Or maybe you desire a structured but systematic development of your new life in Christ; this is the place to begin and the book to read. If you are not born-again, please do so before reading this book—see next page— because your healing and salvation was paid for in the Atonement: *“Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness: by whose stripes you were healed”* (1Pet 2:24).

I am Brother Dennis, and I am all about nourishment and living because “a life well-nourished is a life well lived.” It is what our Brother, Savior and Lord Jesus told us to do exactly when we started this ministry. It is to nourish you with pure and unadulterated knowledge of God for your life successes and the glory of God Almighty. To make you a true disciple of His, so you can do more good than He did while on earth and also disciple many for His Kingdom.

For a new or older believer, the true Christian lifestyle is a blessed one. It is a lifestyle fueled by God’s grace, goodness, governance, and glory. It is a lifestyle largely overflowing with *love, prayer, benevolence, healing, salvation, knowledge, inspiration, and advocacy*. That is why He gave you (all of us), specific church ministries (1Cor 12:28)¹, ministers (Eph 4:11-13)², and ministering gifts (1Cor 12:7-10)³ to prepare you for His purpose so you can live for Him fruitfully. *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me”* (Php 1:21; Gal 2:20).

Therefore, I welcome you to *Life in His Word and Lifestyle in His World*. As true Christians we are here to love, pray, give, heal, save & deliver, teach, prophesy, and advocate & encourage. I expect that you will not only *learn* because you have come to *love* God, but that you will *live* in Him enjoying the many blessings (Eph 1:3)⁴ that come with such glorious *lifestyle* for believers.

Furthermore, I challenge you not only to *Hear the Word* of Christ as a baby still feeding on milk but to *Do the Work* of Christ as a matured son of God eating meat. Accordingly, *“...be doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving yourselves* (Jas 1:22). *“Jesus said to them, ‘My meat is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work* (Jn 4:34). Doing the work proves your Christianity and demonstrates the Spirit and power (1Cor 2:4)⁵ in the life you have come to receive from God, our Father. Enjoy!


Dr. Dennis Odiaka
(Pastor, Vessels Church).

It is in the Atonement: Be Healed and or Be Born-Again!

1. Are you sick? Call for the elders of the church, to pray over you the prayer of faith, to be healed (Jas 5:14).
2. To be saved, first, believe in your heart that because Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sins (Rom 6:23, 1Pet 2:24)⁶; that God has forgiven all your sins (Col 2:13; 1Joh 2:12)⁷ and that He is at peace with you and wants you reconciled to Him (Col 1:20-21)⁸. As a result, you can be born-again by believing and receiving God's right to become His Child (Jn 1:12)⁹. If you are ready, then say (Rom 10:9-10)¹⁰ this prayer out loud:

"Heavenly Father and God, I come in the name of Jesus Christ. I believe in my heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe he died on the Cross to save me. I believe you raised him up from the dead. I confess Jesus Christ as Lord and receive him today into my heart as my Lord and Savior. I give you all the glory in the name of your Son, Jesus. I denounce Satan the devil, and his evil ways forever. God is my Father, and I am now His child. I am now born-again, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

Great! Congratulations, for taking this bold step and becoming who God had longed for you to be since you were born naturally. Welcome to the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Col 1:13)¹¹. **One more thing; desire to and immediately get baptized in the Holy Spirit** with evidence of speaking in tongues (Act 2:4;)¹².

¹ **1Cor 12:28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

² **Eph 4:11-13** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

³ **1Co 12:7-10** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

⁴ **Eph 1:3** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

⁵ **1Co 2:4** And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

⁶ **Rom 6:23** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. **1Pe 2:24** who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

⁷ **Col 2:13** And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; **1Joh 2:12** I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

⁸ **Col 1:20-22** And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:

⁹ **Joh 1:12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

¹⁰ **Rom 10:9-10** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

¹¹ **Col 1:13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

¹² **Act 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

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Welcome to an
Overflowing
Lifestyle!

...of love, prayer, benevolence, healings, salvation, knowledge, inspiration, & advocacy.

Your New Life in Christ

God purchased your new life in Christ in the ATONEMENT. Jesus paid the price by his STRIPES—wounds and bruises they inflicted on him—to set you free from sickness and infirmity. And on the CROSS, he offered himself for your sins (Isa 53:5, Mat 8:17, 1Pet 2:24)¹³ to save you from eternal death in hell. He did all this so you can have his sinless, sickless and deathless life forever (Jn 11:26)¹⁴. God has shone mercy to you; by forgiving all your sins, because of Jesus. God therefore purposefully JUSTIFIED, that is, declared you innocent from sin, and has GLORIFIED you; that is made you special, elevated, and overvalued in His Son, Jesus (Rom 8:30)¹⁵.

You must never be sick or live sinfully. If sickness oppresses you or any believer you know, let them *“...call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven”* (Jas 5:14-15).

If you are truly born-again, you cannot practice sin because *“Whoever commits or makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this reason, the Son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God sins deliberately or makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed remains and abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this, it is evident [apparent] who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother”* (1John 3:8-10).

Your new life in Christ is not evolutionary, just as candle lights don't evolve into electric lights. You have been created anew, hot off the press of the Holy Spirit's baptism of fire (Mat 3:11, Luk 3:16)¹⁶. You are comparable to the new owner of a pre-owned car. Same old body, same old engine, but a new owner; new title, new license plates, and of course new destinations. Component parts of the car or its engine might need to be repaired, replaced, or renewed to keep it running well for you. Often car dealers advise you to do this, or they perform the renewals and then certify the car. This is why healing is available for your body and new Godly knowledge for your soul.

However, you get to drive the car to its new home and parking spot, not the old one. The car follows you wherever you go; to new destinations, new journeys, and new environments. You do not follow the car (body and soul) or let it drive you because you are the new man or new spirit. Though you are still living in the old body and soul, you are in charge. The old spirit born of Adam and into sin is dead (Job 14:1, 15:14, 25:4; Gal 4:23; Rom 3:23, 6:23)¹⁷, but a new spirit born of

Christ and into righteousness is alive (Eph 2:4-6)¹⁸. *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive”* (1Cor 15:22).

According to scripture, you are a [brand new] spirit, who has a [renewable]¹⁹ soul, who lives in [a used or old] body but now dead to sin, since the sin belonged to the former owner. *“So, you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus”* (Rom 6:11). You will not grow out of sin or progressively evolve into a sinless life, simply because candle lights do not progressively transform into electric lights.

Like candle light the old man draws its fuel and sustenance from itself; that is, its spirit which was dead or separated from God. The old man *“Is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue. ...because ‘All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers and its flower falls away’”* (Job 14:1-2, 1Pet 1:24). But the new man, your recreated spirit in Christ, is like the electric light which cannot evolve from candlelight because it depends on a generator separate from itself for life and sustenance.

Electricity is unique and distinctly different from other sources of light and power. No one knows or can adequately explain what it is. But it is generated by some contraption that pulls (invisible) electron power and charges from the environment. Usually, this power is transmitted over long distances through conducting materials to reach places where it is converted to give life and light to things and people. Electricity is merely a type and shadow of the supercharged Spirit life and power of Jesus transmitted to us from Heaven where it is generated, through His Word. Scripture says that in Jesus Christ *“was life, and the life was the light of men”* (Jn 1:4).

Jesus, the Son of God, came from Heaven to light you up with his life, and so he said *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life”* (Jn 8:12). At the onset of his ministry, when he then stated the principles on which God’s Kingdom will be established on earth, he declared that *“you are the light of the world”* (Mat 5:14). Being born-again means that you are not like a self-powering candlelight that soon burns out. Rather, you draw your life and light from a more powerful self-sustaining heavenly source that endures forever. *“As it is written: ‘He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever’”* (2Cor 9:9).

You are an entirely new person in Christ, currently sinless (Heb 10:16-17)²⁰. You are not the same sinful contraption that you were before receiving salvation. *“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has passed away; behold, the new has come”* (2Cor 5:17)²¹. Being born-again is an eternal lifetime opportunity to start again, fresh and new in Christ. So, TAKE IT!

There is a purpose to your new life. None to your old life because it is gone; dead and useless to God. You died when you came into Christ; when you believed and were baptized into Him. *"...if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness"* (Rom 8:10). God has called you according to His righteous purpose, and so He knits everything together for your intrinsic benefit, seeing that you love Him, to conform or make you exactly like Jesus His Son, sharing the same profile and resemblance as Christ (Rom 8:28-29)²².

Your new life in Christ is about God revealing you as a Son of God because creation which has been in the bondage of corruption has been longing and eagerly waiting for you to manifest the God in you. To set them free into the same glorious liberty you have received with your new life in Christ (Rom 8:19-22)²³. It is God's purpose for you, and it has nothing to do with the self-entitled dreams and corruptible visions of idolatrous fame and hollow prosperity the world has been selling to you since you were born.

Jesus came to this world for one purpose. It was to seek and save the lost (Mat 18:11, Luk 19:10)²⁴. He paid the required price on the cross, so that God, the Father can continue to accomplish this purpose through you. He also gave you His Holy Spirit for virtue and vitality to help you accomplish this glorious purpose (Act 1:8)²⁵. Your new life in Christ is simple and possible if you live it as a Christ-like lifestyle.

¹³ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. **Mat 8:17** that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. **1Pe 2:24** who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

¹⁴ **Joh 11:26** And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?

¹⁵ **Rom 8:30** Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

¹⁶ **Mat 3:11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **Luk 3:16** John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

¹⁷ **Joh 14:1** "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. **Job 15:14** "What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous? **Job 25:4** How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman? **Gal 4:23** But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh..., **Rom 3:23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **Rom 6:23** For the wages of sin is death...

¹⁸ **Eph 2:4-6** But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

¹⁹ **Rom 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. **Eph 4:23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness

²⁰ **Heb 10:16-17** "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds, I will write them," then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

²¹ **2Co 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

²² **Rom 8:28-29** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

²³ **Rom 8:19-22** For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

²⁴ **Mat 18:11** For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. **Luk 19:10** For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

²⁵ **Act 1:8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The Christ-like Lifestyle

After Jesus initiated the Kingdom of God, by sending His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, his disciples and followers started living the Christ-like lifestyle. Scripture says that new believers were added to the Church. *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized... And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ...and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people...”* (Act 2:41-47).

The lifestyle of Christ is conducted with sincerity, simplicity, and graceful supply of God's wisdom and power. Jesus' followers would assert that *“...our boast is this: our conscience testifies that we conducted ourselves and behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you”* (2Cor 1:12). To this end learning to become a disciple of Christ and living like him ought not to be difficult. Although for many people the non-chronological (unmethodical) presentation of scripture has made comprehending the Christ-like lifestyle somewhat difficult.

Considering the simplicity that is in Christ and the non-chronological arrangement of the Bible, especially the New Testament, we present in this book the doctrines of Christ for new or older Christians beginning from the earliest, easiest, and simplest to comprehend. This book will support your development as a new believer and give you a structure for growth and maturity. And like Jesus who went about His Father's business quite early in age, he learned to be subject to the instruction of his earthly parents so to *“...increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men”* (Luk 2:42-52)²⁶.

God, our Father, has graciously provided us with a structure for the Church and discipleship. He also made it simple for us to receive and understand His knowledge and requirements for living as Sons of God. So, let me tell you how God did it. According to scripture, He gave us ONLY ONE MINISTRY, which is the *ministry of reconciliation* to reconcile the world to Christ (2Cor 5:18-21)²⁷. For us to effectively fulfill this ministry, He gave us ministry-departments (like organs in a body).

The eight ministry-departments are Apostolic, Prophetic, Teaching, Miracles/Evangelism, Healings, Helps/Benevolence, Administrations, and Tongues/Prayer (1Cor, 12:28)²⁸. Then God

gave us ministers, such as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers to serve and run these departments in our churches for the gentle but careful preserving and perfecting of the new or older believers' life (Eph 4:11-13)²⁹; that is, you.

When the Church started 2000 years ago, they did not have a Bible, compiled, as we do today. At least not the New Testament Bible. So that there will be simplicity, standard, and structure across the board for all Christians and Churches, the Holy Spirit inspired some of Jesus' disciples and apostles to write collections of letters about Christ-like living and Christian ministering accounts that we now call the New Testament Bible. Apostle Paul, one of the major writers of the New Testament said *"All Scripture is breathed out, given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine or teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training or instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2Tim 3:16-17). To this end, Brother James wrote the first epistle of the New Testament addressing it to the general Church of new believers in Christ.

Beginning with Brothers James, Mark, and Paul

It is important always to begin learning from the place of strength, which in this case is the practical application of truth rather than its intellectual acquisition—the theological posture of the larger Church for many years. We become effective Christians and produce desirable outcomes when we are pragmatic about the Truth. In this way, we get to learn quickly to submit to a daily life-changing experience with God, which guides our conduct. This approach minimizes the confusion many Christians have with just an intellectual concept of, and or powerless experience with, God. In any case, our *"God is not the author of confusion, but of peace"* (1Cor 14:33).

This peace which implies prosperity and rests in God comes to us through Jesus' instruction in righteousness, correction, teaching, and training for every good work. Through the atonement, we obtained this peace. According to Isaiah 53:5 *"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement that brought us peace was upon Him..."* But if we refuse or reject His peace by being without chastening; that is tutorage, education, training, nurture, or correction, then *"...we are bastards not sons of God"* (Heb 12:8).

The first letter or book to be written in the New Testament was the General Epistle of James, the half-brother of Jesus (Mat 13:55)³⁰. Although Brother James was not one of the initial twelve apostles of Jesus, he became a disciple after Jesus resurrected. He grew to become one of the pre-eminent leaders or elders of the formative early Church. Historians spoke of him as the first Pastor

or Bishop (overseer, administrator) of the church that started in Jerusalem. (Gal. 1:18-19; 2:9-12; Acts 12:16-17, 15:3, 21:18-19)³¹.

Going by the ministerial formation, functions, and favors (i.e., the spiritual gifts) of the Church, James played the role of an overseer or administrator (see Act 15:13, 21:18, Gal 1:19, 2:9). He was responsible for coordinating or administrating the operations of the Body of Christ at that time. This is the office of a pastor. And so, he wrote the first letter to the new and growing body of believers about Christ-like living; introducing, standardizing, and orientating them and us into Christianity.

We present the General Epistle of James annotated with sub-headings to make for thematic learning and quick grasp of the subject matter. The Gospel of Mark and two of Paul's letters to the Church at Thessalonica follow on pages 27 and 65. The two books concisely narrate the story, ministry, and return of Jesus, which are essential to the spiritual positioning and wellbeing of every believer, as well as for living a holy Christ-like lifestyle. Also annotated with sub-headings, the two books introduce us to the nature, operations, teachings, and lifestyle in the Kingdom of God. Read, learn, grow, and welcome to Christianity—the divine life of the Sons of God.

Reflect on Your Current Lifestyle and Mark Your Progress → ①⑤⑩

Scripture exhorts you to “...*work out your salvation*” (Php 2:12)³², which means to show or manifest outwardly what you became inwardly in Christ. So, we placed indicators with numbers “0”, “5”, and “10” in circles beside some subheadings in the Epistles in the following pages. Use the numbers as a measuring scale to indicate where you are at, regarding current behavior versus where you want to be regarding the Christ-like lifestyle you seek (Mat 6:33)³³. Marking a zero (0) indicates a desire and promise to begin working on modifying your current conflicting lifestyle. Mark a ten (10) to indicate that you manifest that lifestyle already. And marking a five (5) indicates work-in-progress; that you are not quite there but will get to where Jesus wants you to be. To mark, you can shade, cross out, or check the circles as you wish.

²⁶ **Luk 2:42-52** And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So, when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So, when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You

anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

²⁷ **2Co 5:18-21** Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

²⁸ **1Co 12:28** And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

²⁹ **Eph 4:11-13** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

³⁰ **Mat 13:55** Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?

³¹ **Gal 1:18-19** Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. **Gal 2:9-12** and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. **Act 12:16-17** Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place. **Act 15:13** And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: **Act 21:18-19** On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

³² **Php 2:12-13** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

³³ **Mat 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

The Epistle of James

Brother James kicked off the venture of systematic discipleship by documenting for us the place to begin our nurture and practical development as Sons of God. The first letter or book to be written in the New Testament was the General Epistle of James. Apart from being the first book to be written, it is also the easiest to begin with; learning and living the Christian lifestyle of Jesus. It is the appropriate introductory book to practical and behavioral Christianity. It delivers the exact lifestyle and hands-on orientation that sets the proper expectations for growth and development as a disciple of Jesus. This letter was written to the new and growing body of believers about Christ-like living. It familiarizes, standardizes, and places us into Christianity. As you read or study, let the Holy Spirit our Teacher, help you work out or manifest the salvation that is already inside you as a new creation in Christ by God the Father. Remember to use the “0”, “5”, and “10” markers to indicate areas of opportunity for change or development.

Chapters 1-5: Pursue Joy, Peace, and Righteousness

Jas 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

[**ref notes:** This greeting is to ALL who belong to God, the Father by the covenant in the Blood of Jesus, whose number by spiritually numerology is twelve.]

Be Steadfast, Be Joyful when Your New Faith in Christ is Tested ① ⑤ ⑩

Jas 1:2-4 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Ask God, our Generous Father for Wisdom at all Times

0 5 10

Jas 1:5-8 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Seek and Live by Humility; it is a Virtue, it is a Need

0 5 10

Jas 1:9-11 Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also, will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

Check Your Desire or Lust, they Entice You to Sin, Not God

0 5 10

Jas 1:12-15 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death.

Be Fruitful Always, Every Good and Perfect Gift is from God

0 5 10

Jas 1:16-18 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will, he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Listen Much More than You Speak; it will keep Anger and Sin Away 0 5 10

Jas 1:19-21 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires. Therefore, put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Do what You Hear in the Word; it is Your Profile and Blessing ①⑤⑩

Jas 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Keep Yourself Sterilized from Religious Acts, but be Caring ①⑤⑩

Jas 1:26-27 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Demonstrate Faith Not Partiality

Treat Everyone Equally, Respectfully, and Honorably ①⑤⑩

Jas 2:1-7 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

Love Everyone the Way You Want to be Loved, and be Merciful ①⑤⑩

Jas 2:8-13 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also

said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So, speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Demonstrate Your Faith by What and How You do it

0 5 10

Jas 2:14-20 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

Jas 2:21-23 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of God.

[**ref notes:** Genesis 22:1-12— "After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So, Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him, ...When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac, his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now, I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."

Take time to read the entire story of Abraham beginning from Genesis 11:26 to 25:8, to acquaint yourself with Abraham, the patriarch of our Faith in Christ Jesus (Rom 4:16). Scripture calls him "the father of all them that believe, ...the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised" (Rom 4:11-12).]

Jas 2:24-26 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

[**ref notes:** Joshua 2:1-625—*Take time to read the story of Rahab the prostitute and how she demonstrated faith in the God of Israel and assisted His people, even when she was not an Israelite*]

Conduct Yourself with Restraint and Wisdom

Be Responsible, Avoid Blunders and Offending in Speech

① ⑤ ⑩

Jas 3:1-2 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble [offend] in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle [control] his whole body.

Tame Your Tongue, keep it from Setting You or People Ablaze

① ⑤ ⑩

Jas 3:3-8 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also, the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Bless with Your Mouth, Not Curse or Speak Profanity with it

① ⑤ ⑩

Jas 3:9-12 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it, we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water?

Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Yield to Reason and Wisdom, Not Envy and Selfish Ambition ①⑤⑩

Jas 3:13-18 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy [envy] and selfish ambition [rivalry, contention] in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Abhor Pride but Willfully seek Humility

Be a Humble Friend of God, Not a Proud Friend of the World ①⑤⑩

Jas 4:1-6 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Submit to God and Resist the Devil ①⑤⑩

Jas 4:7-10 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Pass No Judgement on a Brethren, or Accuse or Speak Evil of Them ①⑤⑩

Jas 4:11-12 Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Commit Everything to God's Hand, not Boast in Arrogance ①⑤⑩

Jas 4:13-17 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So, whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Be Established in Patience Not Self-Indulgence

Cheat No One; Loathe Self-gratification or Fraudulent Virtue ①⑤⑩

Jas 5:1-6 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned; you have murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.

Be Resolute; Keep your Word, wait Patiently for God's Blessings ①⑤⑩

Jas 5:7-12 Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord, is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is

standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

Save a Soul; Let No Brethren Suffer, Be Sick, or Stray from Truth ① ⑤ ⑩

Jas 5:13-20 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit. My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering [error of his ways] will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sin.

REFLECTION #1:

Total Markers ____/220

1. So far, what change(s) have you noticed in your lifestyle? What would you say about exchanging self-indulgence for patience, pride for humility, ignorance for wisdom, or speaking less to listening more?
2. If you were to summarize your learning or progress in 100 words, what would it be?
3. Which five of these actionable lifestyle themes are you already planning to work out?
4. How would you describe your new commitment to Jesus as a disciple?

***You may write down and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4: _____

The Lifestyle of Christ

People of the world regard Jesus as a religious leader; a central figure in Christianity. Jesus is not a religious leader because Christianity is not a religion, but a divine content based on people having a covenant relationship with God, the Father. It is about God's Spirit indwelling humans, so they can live, move, and exist (Act 17:28)³⁴ as His children on earth, exercising dominion over the natures of sin, sickness, and death. Living the lifestyle of Christ is about possessing the Spirit of God as the divine content of man's spirit—the residence and abode of the Holy Spirit

If you are born-again and baptized into Christ, "*You are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you*" (Jn 14:17, Rom 8:11, 1 Cor 3:16)³⁵. To this end, Christianity is not a mere philosophy; it is not about commandments, obedience, or about accepting its glorious promises else it would be like any other religion. It is a divine content; wholly supernatural and **energized by God's Spirit** appearing as **seven Spirits of Truth**, Holiness, Faith, Wisdom, Power, Grace, and Glory (Rev 3:1, Jn 16:13, Rom, 1:4, 2Cor 4:13, Eph 1:17, 2Tim, 1:7, Heb 10:29, 1Pet 4:14)³⁶.

There is no living progenitor of any religion today. But Jesus is alive and consecrated forever (Heb 10:8, 7:28)³⁷; ministering from heaven through Christians the mercy, grace, life, and divinity of God the Father to all of humanity. Grace and truth came through him (Jn 1:17)³⁸. And what is the point of Jesus' lifestyle—his daily ministry, sacrifice, death, and resurrection? It is that we may apprehend and live the eternal scope of the love and ministry of God towards us. There is no height or depth that Jesus would not reach to deliver us from sin, sickness, or death (Rom 8:38-39)³⁹.

The lifestyle of Jesus Christ, according to scripture was simple, straightforward, and spiritual. Nothing to hide or expose. He was as he continues to be; a Man of compassion, benevolence, courage, and authority. To begin to comprehend the simplicity of the truth of Jesus' ministry which was to reconcile the whole world to God through Christians (2Cor 5:18)⁴⁰, we must brace up with courage and explore, examine, and educate ourselves on the lifestyle of Jesus on earth. It is so that we can demonstrate Christianity as a divine content, full of faith in God, and full of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus came to us from heaven to reveal the Father and His eternal will for all of us (Jn 3:13, 6:38-40)⁴¹. He came to demonstrate life in the Kingdom (Luk 4:43)⁴². To save a lost world (Jn 3:16, Luk 19:10)⁴³, anoint those who believe in him as Sons of God, and pour on them his Holy Spirit for vitality (Luk 24:49, Act 2:17-18, 1Jn 4:17)⁴⁴. And he and will come back to gather his brothers and sisters back to himself (1Th 4:16-17)⁴⁵. Everything Jesus did and said and the way he lived culminated in what we call the Gospel today; the message or good news of the Kingdom of God.

There are four books of the Bible about the life and ministry of Jesus, called the Gospels. Brother Mark wrote one of the earliest concise accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus, based on the memories of Brother Peter, Jesus' top Apostle. The Gospel according to Mark is presented next.

³⁴ **Act 17:28** For in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, "For we are also His offspring."

³⁵ **Joh 14:17** the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. **Rom 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. **1Co 3:16** Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

³⁶ **Rev 3:1** "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God...., **Joh 16:13** However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth...., **Rom 1:4** and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness...., **2Co 4:13** And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke...., **Eph 1:17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. **2Ti 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of [a spirit of] power, and of love and of a sound mind. **Heb 10:29** Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? **1Pe 4:14** If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

³⁷ **Heb 10:8-10** "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. **Heb 7:28** For the law appoints as high priests' men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

³⁸ **Joh 1:17** For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

³⁹ **Rom 8:38-39** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

⁴⁰ **2Co 5:18** Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

⁴¹ **Joh 3:13** No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. **Joh 6:38-40** For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

⁴² **Luk 4:43** but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

⁴³ **Joh 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **Luk 19:10** for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

⁴⁴ **Luk 24:49** Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." **Act 2:17-18** "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. **1Jn 4:17** Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

⁴⁵ **1Th 4:16-17** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

The Gospel According to Mark

The story you are about to read is presented to us by Mark the Evangelist, one of Jesus' many disciples. Beginning from the baptism of Jesus, Mark briefly told of Jesus life and ministry, death, burial, resurrection, and return. He portrayed Jesus as a hero, man of action, healer, miracle worker, Son of God and God-man of power. The book provides insight into the nature and supernatural operations of the Kingdom of God. Everything Jesus did and how he did them showcased his lifestyle and became the example of the true Christian life. As his followers, we ought to mimic his love for and faith in God. That is his reliance on the Holy Spirit; eagerness to do God's will; love for people; the desire to deliver them from sin, sickness, and death; hate for the devilish oppression of humanity; and courage to preach and teach truth even in the face of religious and cultural opposition.

Chapters 1-4: The Beginning of the Ministry of Jesus Christ, Son of God

Mar 1:1-3 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

[ref notes: Isaiah 40:3—The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God." XYZ years ago, Isaiah the prophet prophesied that John the Baptist would come, announce, and prepare the way, just as a woodcutter makes a path in the forest, for the coming of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, which since came 2000 years ago.]

John Baptized and Led People to Repentance

Mar 1:4-8 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild

honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus Humbled Himself; Allowed John to Baptize Him, God Called Him Son

Mar 1:9-11 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he [John] saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove (ref: John 1:32). And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

God's Spirit Forced Jesus into the Wilderness to be Tempted

Mar 1:12-13 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

Jesus Started His Ministry; Preached and Called some Disciples

Mar 1:14-20 Now after John was arrested (ref: Luk 3:19-20, Mat 14:3-4, Mar 6:17-18), Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee and John, his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

Jesus Went About Doing Good; Casting out Devils and Healing Sick People

Mar 1:21-28 And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him

and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Jesus Healed More Sick People, including Peter's Mother-In-law of Fever

Mar 1:29-34 And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Jesus would not be Distracted by Fame; He Focused on God's Business.

Mar 1:35-39 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Jesus, as is God, is Always Willing to Heal Anyone Who Asks

Mar 1:40-45 And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity [compassion, sympathy, inward affection], he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

Jesus Preached the Word to More People, Forgave Sins, and Healed the Sick

Mar 2:1-9 And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Jesus Associated with Sinners to Call Them to Righteousness

Mar 2:13-17 He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Explained His Followers will have Newness of Life; Inside and Outside

Mar 2:18-22 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from

the old, and a worse tear is made. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins--and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

Jesus Clarified God Made People to Rule over Things, Not Subject to Things

Mar 2:23-28 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So, the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

It was Acceptable for Jesus to do Good and Heal any day, anytime

Mar 3:1-6 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

Mar 3:7-12 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him. And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him. And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

Jesus Authorized and Gave Disciples Power to do Good and Heal Sicknes

Mar 3:13-19 And he [Jesus] went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they

might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons. He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

They Accused Jesus of Insanity; He Affirmed Unity as Advantage

Mar 3:20-24 Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

Mar 3: 25-30 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house. "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus' Relatives and Family are Spiritual, Not Soulless or Fleshly

Mar 3:31-35 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

Jesus Taught the Fundamentals and Frustrations of Kingdom Life

Mar 4:1-9 Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching, he said to them:

"Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Mar 4:10-13 And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven." And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

Mar 4:14-17 The sower sows the word. And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

Mar 4:18-19 And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

Mar 4:20-25 But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Jesus Taught More and Demonstrated Parallelisms of the Kingdom of God

Mar 4:26-29 And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The

earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Mar 4:30-32 And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." With many such parables, he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples; he explained everything.

Jesus Proved Nature is Subject to the Word and Command of the Sons of God

Mar 4:35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

REFLECTION #2:

1. They accused Jesus of casting out devils with devils. Is that possible? If it were you, what would you do?
2. Jesus went everywhere doing good, healing people, and casting out devils. What's your take on that?
3. Did Jesus heal everyone? Was he willing to heal everyone who came to him?
4. Jesus explained his followers have newness of life, can you explain this life?

***You may write down key points of your answers and discuss them with your discipleship or learning team.*

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4: _____

Chapters 5-8: Jesus Builds on His Ministry, Healing More People

Jesus Delivered a Man Possessed by a Legion of Devils

Mar 5:1-10 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains, he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

Mar 5:11-20 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." So, he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea. The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

A Woman Sick for 12 Years Touched Jesus' Garment to be Healed

Mar 5:21-24 And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little

daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.

Mar 5:25-34 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, 26 and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

Jesus Raised a Dead Girl; the Daughter of a Religious Leader

Mar 5:35-43 While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John, the brother of James. They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. Taking her by the hand, he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Jesus' Hometown folks Dishonored His Ministry, Received Minute Miracles

Mar 6:1-6 He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. And on the Sabbath, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him?"

How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

Jesus Gave His Disciples Power to Cast out Devils and to Heal Sickness

Mar 6:7-13 And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. And he said to them, "Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So, they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

Jesus Was Popular; Leaders Alleged He was John the Baptist Resurrected

Mar 6:14-20 King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

Mar 6:21-29 But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." And she went out and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." And she came in immediately with

haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests, he did not want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Created Food to Feed More Than Five Thousand Hungry People

Mar 6:30-35 The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late.

Mar 6:36-44 Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So, they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Jesus Walked on Water Defying Nature, and Healed the Sick Brought to Him

Mar 6:45-50 Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was

a ghost, and cried out, for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

Mar 6:51-56 And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

Jesus Cautioned Against Traditions that Annuls God's Will and Word

Mar 7:1-7 Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, holding to the tradition of the elders, and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

Mar 7:8-13 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men." And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, whatever you would have gained from me is Corban' (that is, given to God)—then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

Jesus Exposed What Defiles a Person and What Makes Them Clean

Mar 7:14-23 And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the

things that come out of a person are what defile him. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus, he declared all foods clean.) And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

Jesus Ceded; Honored a Gentile Woman's Faith for Her Daughter's Healing

Mar 7:24-30 And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. But immediately a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." And he said to her, "For this statement, you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

Jesus Restored Hearing and Speaking to a Deaf and Dumb Person

Mar 7:31-37 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear, and the mute speak."

Jesus Showed Compassion; Created Food to Feed 4000 Hungry People

Mar 8:1-9 In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, "I have compassion on the crowd because they

have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.

John Cautioned His Disciples Against Religiosity and How It Puffs Up

Mar 8:10-14 And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." 13 And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side. Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat.

Mar 8:15-21 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

Jesus Ministered and Created New Eyes to Restore Sight to a Blind Man

Mar 8:22-26 And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see men, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus

laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

Jesus Inquired if His Disciples Had a Revelation of Who He Is

Mar 8:27-33 And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Jesus Called People to Follow Him by Denying Themselves

Mar 8:34-38 And he called to him the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

REFLECTION #3:

- 1 How soon are you looking forward to start healing sick people or casting devils out from them?
- 2 What traditions or customs of your culture make the word of God ineffective in your life?
- 3 How has religious teachings rubbed off on you? What would you say if you are asked: "Who is Jesus"?
- 4 As a new believer in Christ, what does it mean to deny yourself to follow Jesus?

***You may write down keywords of what impressed you most about Jesus in this section and discuss them with your discipleship or learning team.*

Chapters 9-12: Jesus Reveals His Divinity and Enters Jerusalem as King

Jesus Showed How the Sons of God Really Look Like; Inside and Outside

Mar 9:1-6 And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." [ref: Act 1:3-9; 2:1-4]. And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

Mar 9:7-13 And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So, they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."

Jesus Delivered a Boy from an Oppressive Mute and Deaf Spirit

Mar 9:14-19 And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them. And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him, were greatly amazed and ran up to him and greeted him. And he asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" And someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So, I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me."

Mar 9:20-24 And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!"

Mark 9:25-29 And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

Jesus Prophesied His Death and Resurrection in Three Days

Mar 9:30-32 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Jesus Taught on the Principles of Service and Benefits of Togetherness

Mar 9:33-40 And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms; he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me." John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us."

Jesus Explained the Gains of Serving vs. the Consequence of Sinning

Mar 9:41-44 For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire where 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'

Mar 9:45-50 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell where 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Jesus Established that Divorce is Not of the Kingdom of God

Mar 10:1-6 And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his custom, he taught them. And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.

Mar 10: 7-12 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.' So, they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." And in the house, the disciples asked him again about this matter. And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Jesus Desired We Receive the Kingdom as Children; Innocent and Trusting

Mar 10:13-16 And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children

come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

Jesus Showed God is Good; for Making It Easy for Us to Enter the Kingdom

Mar 10:17-23 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'" And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

Jesus Disclosed it is Possible for Anyone to Enter the Kingdom for His Sake

Mar 10:24-27 And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

Mar 10:28-31 Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Again, Jesus Foretold He Will Suffer, Be Killed, and Will Rise in Three Days

Mar 10:32 And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve

again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."

Jesus Taught His Disciples Kingdom Principles of Leadership and Service

Mar 10:35-40 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

Mar 10:41-45 And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus Healed a Blind Man, who Insisted on Receiving His Healing

Mar 10:46-52 And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Jesus Entered Jerusalem as King of His Coming Kingdom

Mar 11:1-6 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go.

Mar 11:7-12 And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father, David! Hosanna in the highest!" And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Jesus Cursed the Fruitless Fig Tree, Chased Enterprisers Out of the Temple

Mar 11:12-14 On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

Mar 11:15-18 And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching.

Mar 11:19-26 And when evening came they went out of the city. As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." And Jesus answered them, "Have faith

in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

[**ref notes:** He said this to old testaments saints, before the atonement. Now, that he has paid the price for your sin and salvation, your Father in Heaven has forgiven all, so we ought to forgive all. "*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you*" (Eph 4:32). "*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do*" (Col 3:12).]

Religious Leaders Questioned Jesus' Authority to Heal and Do Good

Mar 11:27-33 And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me." And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'From man?'"--they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So, they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Jesus Narrated How Mean Religious Folks are to God's True Servants and Son

Mar 12:1-5 And he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again, he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. And so, with many others: some they beat, and some they killed.

Mar 12:6-11 He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally, he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this Scripture: "'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Jesus Exposed the Hypocrisy and Plan of Religious Leaders to Trap Him

Mar 12:12-17 And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So, they left him and went away. And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

Jesus Cleared Religious Confusion about Resurrection and the Kingdom

Mar 12:18-27 And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife." Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong."

Jesus Disclosed the Greatest Commandment is To Love with All of You

Mar 12:28-31 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mar 12:32-34 And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Jesus Taught/Warned about the Lifestyles and Carriage of Religious Leaders

Mar 12:35-40 And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, "'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.' David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?" And the great throng heard him gladly. And in his teaching, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

Jesus Pointed Out the Way to Give the Most Offering

Mar 12:41-44 And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

REFLECTION #4:

1. Many times, Jesus foretold his crucifixion, death, and resurrection. If you knew God's will for your future would you insistently or repeatedly speak out about it?
2. Blind Bartimaeus was rather insistent about getting his healing. People tried hard to shush him but he wouldn't budge. What do you think of him? Would you have kept quiet or insisted on receiving the promises of God for your wellbeing?

***You may write down your answers.*

1: _____

2: _____

3. When Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on the back of a Colt, he went to the temple to chase those money changers out. Was Jesus right to have done that? Would you do it, if you find people messing with God's Temple [believers] today?
4. What is the greatest commandment?

***You may write down and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

3: _____

4: _____

5. What is the way to give the most offering?

***You may write down and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

Chapters 13-16: Jesus Wrapped up His Ministry to Begin His Kingdom

Jesus Began to Reveal the Signs of the End of Age

Mar 13:1-4 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"

Mar 13:5-9 And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains. "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them.

Jesus Urged His Disciples to Show Courage, in the Days of Tribulation

Mar 13:10-13 And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Mar 13:14 "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that it may not happen in winter. For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation

that God created until now, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days.

Jesus Warned Against False Prophets Who Lead People Astray

Mar 13:21-29 And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. False christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

Jesus Assured His Word would Not Pass Away, so We Should Keep Awake

Mar 13:30-37 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore, stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning—he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

Religious Leaders Sought to Kill Jesus, while Being Anointed for Burial

Mar 14:1-4 It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people." And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon, the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it

over his head. There were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted like that?"

Mar 14:5-9 For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas, a Disciple of Jesus Conspired with Religious Leaders to Betray Him

Mar 14:10 Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

Jesus' Disciples Prepared for the Passover Feast

Mar 14:12-16 And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Jesus Revealed Who Would Betray Him

Mar 14:17-21 And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

Jesus Declared a New Covenant in His Blood for Many Who Would Believe

Mar 14:22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing, it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you; I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Foretold of Peter and the Other Disciples' Denial

Mar 14:27-31 And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Even though they all fall away, I will not." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." But he said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." And they all said the same.

Jesus Took His Disciples to Pray and Prepare for His Arrest and Crucifixion

Mar 14:32-36 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Mar 14:37-42 And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again, he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again, he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

Jesus is Betrayed with a Kiss and Arrested, Yet Healed one of His Arresters

Mar 14:43-49 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. And they laid hands on him and seized him. But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled."

Jesus' Disciples Fled from Him as He was Taken by Reps of Religious Leaders

Mar 14:50-55 And they all left him and fled. And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked. And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none.

People Bore False Witness Against Jesus, At the Council of Religious Leaders

Mar 14:56-60 For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"

Jesus Declared He is The Christ and They Condemned Him to Death

Mar 14:61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again, the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his

blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" And the guards received him with blows.

Peter Denied Jesus Three Times Just as Jesus Said He Would

Mar 14:66-72 And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus." But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you mean." And he went out into the gateway, and the rooster crowed. And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." But again, he denied it. And after a little while, the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak." And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

They Delivered Jesus to Pilate and Falsely Accused Him of Many Things

Mar 15:1-5 And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Pilate Gave in to the Crowd; Released a Murderer Instead to Crucify Jesus

Mar 15:6-15 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they

shouted all the more, "Crucify him." So, Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Soldiers Scorned Jesus, Led Him Like a Criminal to Golgotha to Be Crucified

Mar 15:16-20 And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

Mar 15:21-28 And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him. the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him, they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. So, the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

People Mocked Jesus while He Atoned for Their Sin and Sickness on the Cross

Mar 15:29 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" So also, the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him. And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

Jesus Called out to God and Gave up the Spirit

Mar 15:34-37 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last.

Mar 15:38-43 And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

Joseph of Arimathea, One of Jesus' Followers Buried Him in a Tomb

Mar 15:42-47 And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the Council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joses, saw where he was laid.

Jesus Rose from Death on the Third Day, Just as He said He Would

Mar 16:1-4 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large.

Mar 16: 5-7 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."

The Risen Jesus Sent Mary Magdalene to Proclaim His Resurrection

Mar 16:8-11 And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. And when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

The Risen Jesus Appeared to His Disciples, Sent them to Make More Disciples

Mar 16:12-14 After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. Afterward, he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

Mar 16:15-20 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." So, then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

[**ref notes:** The risen Jesus said "Whoever believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mar 16:16). To 'believe' is to be born-again; be born of God, be born from Above (Jn 3:3). "*But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name*" (Jn 20:31). *To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name*" (Act 10:43). "*Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not ...has made [God] a liar, because he has not believed... Whoever has the Son has life;* (1Jn 5:10-12). So, by believing one is **justified** (Rom 10:10) to receive the Son of God as God's Gift (Jn 3:16). This prepares them to receive the Holy Spirit as God's follow-up Gift for **sanctification** through spiritual baptism (followed by a demo in water baptism) to complete the salvation process of Mark 16:16. According to 1Pet 3:21 "*Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*" Finally, 2The 2:13 says "*...God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*"]

REFLECTION #5:

1. One thing Jesus had and exhibited was courage. He encouraged his disciples to have courage in the days of tribulation. Why do you think courage is needful or necessary for a disciple?
2. What is one sign of the end of the age that Jesus revealed?
3. What is the reason Jesus said we should be on guard and stay awake? Is it because “heaven and earth will pass away” or because “no one knows the time or hour,” or because “his word will not pass away”?

***For all questions, you may write down and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

4. Who betrayed Jesus? Why was he betrayed and how? Where was he betrayed and when?
5. Even when they arrested Jesus, he still healed. Who did he heal, why did he heal that man, and would you have done as Jesus did?

6. Peter denied Jesus. Why did he do it, and was he the only disciple to deny Jesus? If you were with Jesus during his arrest, would you have stayed with him, flee from him, or denied him like peter did?
7. After Jesus rose from death he appeared to his disciples. Which of them was the first evangelist?

8. What are the four signs of a real Christian; a true disciple of Jesus? Which of the four signs do you currently manifest or plan to manifest?

Stabilize Your Christian Lifestyle

Now that you have examined the courageous lifestyle of Jesus; his baptism, preaching, teaching, and healing ministry, crucifixion, death, and resurrection you would agree that he was focused on his goal, consistent, and stable. No matter what was thrown at him, he was unshaken and completely reliant on the Father, who sent him (Jn 5:30)⁴⁶. Jesus said in John 6:57 *“As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.”* To feed on Jesus is to feed on the Word (Jn 1:1 &14)⁴⁷, and have him dwell in you to make you fruitful. Hence he said *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me”* (Jn 15:4).

To abide in Jesus and to have him in you is to have his mind; united in one purpose and goal of the Father, to do and accomplish His will (Jn 4:34, Heb 10:7)⁴⁸. So *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... [because] we have the mind of Christ”* (Php 2:5, 1Cor 2:16). You cannot possess the mind of Christ and be wavering, because *“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”* (Jam 1:8). Double-mindedness will make you unfruitful and unproductive in God (Jam 1:7)⁴⁹.

Stability in Christianity is an important foundation. One of the reasons we have weak and fake Christians everywhere today is because they vacillate too much. They are not sure if God is real or able to do what He says could or would do, or if He cared enough about them to respond to their desires—lustful or not. They are faithless, doubtful, and continue to practice their unfruitful traditions (Mat 13:58, 17:20; Mar 7:7-9)⁵⁰. Christianity is simply a confession of Faith—saying what God says about anything or person while agreeing that God would do what He said He would do because you have the mind and Spirit of Christ.

Jesus met a young man who wanted to become a follower, but the man was double minded and *“Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God’”* (Luk 9:57-62)⁵¹. We do not chicken out in the Kingdom of God, because God our Father who sent His Son to atone for and purge us of our sins and called us out of the darkness and into His marvelous light (1Pet 2:9)⁵², is able to keep us if we remain faithful and steadfast. Anyone who vacillates lacks the quality of a true believer. *“For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins”* (2Pet 1:9).

Brother Paul encourages us to be stable, saying *“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil*

deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister" (Col 1:19-23).

However, Paul continues to encourage us to stabilize our Christianity. He said *"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have" (Php 1:27-30).*

The next Epistles we will read was written by brother Paul, to the church at Thessalonica. They were the first of Paul's letter to any church and were written to encourage them to be steadfast in persecution and to reject worldliness while looking forward to the second coming of Christ.

⁴⁶ **Joh 5:30** I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

⁴⁷ **Joh 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **Joh 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

⁴⁸ **Joh 4:34** Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. **Heb 10:7** Then I said, "Behold, I have come--In the volume of the book it is written of Me--To do Your will, O God."

⁴⁹ **Jas 1:7** For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

⁵⁰ **Mat 13:58** Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. **Mat 17:20** So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. **Mar 7:7-9** And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men--the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do. He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

⁵¹ **Luk 9:57-62** As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

⁵² **1Pe 2:9** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The Epistles of Paul

to The Thessalonian Church

Paul the Apostle, or Saul of Tarsus as was his Jewish name, was not one of the original 12 Apostles of Jesus. He was converted after Jesus resurrection while persecuting and killing some of Jesus followers. However, he became an apostle, started many churches outside of Jerusalem and wrote 14 of the 27 books of the New Testament. The 1st and 2nd Thessalonians were his first letters, written to the brethren at Thessalonica while they struggled with some misconceptions regarding the second coming of Christ. He helped ease their minds, encouraging their belief in the imminent return of Jesus as essential to their spiritual wellbeing and focus on a true but holy lifestyle. He encouraged the relatively new Church to be steadfast in persecution, stable in living a Christ-like lifestyle and reject worldliness by living in the principles and commands of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapters 1-5, First Thessalonians Comforting Essentials of Spirituality and Holy Lifestyle

Always Pray for Brethren, 'Cos God Chose You to Demo His Power (0) (5) (10)

1Th 1:1-5 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Live Like Jesus Would Return Tomorrow, continue to be Exemplary (0) (5) (10)

1Th 1:6-10 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not

say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Declare the Gospel, Without Fear or Favor Even in the Middle of Conflict

1Th 2:1-4 For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

Give no Flattery or Seek Glory, Be Gentle, Share Your Labor of Love ①⑤⑩

1Th 2:5-9 For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.

Walk Worthy of Your Calling, Be Blameless, Accepting God's Word ①⑤⑩

1Th 2:10-13 You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Imitate the Brethren in Christ, Because You are their Glory and Joy ①⑤⑩

1Th 2:14-20 For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the

Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But God's wrath has come upon them at last! But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.

Exhort and Establish the Brethren, so Affliction does Not Deter them

1Th 3:1-5 Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.

Comfort the Brethren in Faith, Love Them, to be Established in Holiness

1Th 3:6-13 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. For now, we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Do More of God's Commands, Abstain from Sexual Immorality

①⑤⑩

1Th 4:1-8 Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to live and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and

more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Love One Another, Live Peacefully, Be Employed and Independent ①⑤⑩

1Th 4:9-12 Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may live properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

Live with Hope as Those the Lord is Coming for, to be with Him Forever

1Th 4:13-18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord, himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Keep Awake, Be Sober, Not Taken Unawares by the Lord's Sudden Return

1Th 5:1-10 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you, yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For

you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.

Encourage, Build up the Brethren, Respect Your Ministers in Love (0) (5) (10)

1Th 5:11-13 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

Help the Weak, Be Patient with them, Do Good to Everyone (0) (5) (10)

1Th 5:14-15 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

Rejoice, Pray, Give Thanks Always; Don't Suppress the Holy Spirit (0) (5) (10)

1Th 5:16-19 Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

Cherish Prophecies, Prove Everything, Abstain from Evil (0) (5) (10)

1Th 5:20-22 Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

Keep Your Spirit, Soul, and Body Sanctified and Blameless (0) (5) (10)

1Th 5:23-28 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

REFLECTION #6:

Total Markers ____/120

1. 'Always pray for the brethren because God chose you to demonstrate His power in this world.' How true do you believe this to be?
2. Being a true Christian means 'living like Jesus would return tomorrow.' What's your take on this?
3. Would you proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God, without fear or favor, where you have a conflict of interest?
4. On a scale of one to ten how accepting are you of God's word, currently? How prepared are you to do more of God's command according to His word?
5. Giving what you now know in Christ, how would you advise a person who currently has a problem abstaining from sexual immorality?
6. Do you know a Christian who is currently unemployed? Giving what you now know in Christ, how would you advise the person?
7. The Lord Jesus will come soon. What would you do to keep awake, sober, and steadfast in your belief?
8. What are your plans to keep your spirit, soul, and body sanctified and blameless?

***You may write down key points of your answers and discuss them with your discipleship or learning team.*

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4: _____

5: _____

6: _____

7: _____

8: _____

Chapters 1-3: Second Thessalonians

Reject Worldliness and Live a Stable Christian Life

Give Thanks for Your Growing Faith and Increasing Love

0 5 10

2Th 1:1-3 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.

Remain Steadfast in Faith as You Endure Affliction or Persecution

0 5 10

2Th 1:4-8 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions, that you are enduring. This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering—since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

2Th 1:9-12 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Stay Unshaken by Fake News About the Coming of The Lord

0 5 10

2Th 2:1-4 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion

comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

2Th 2:5-8 Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

Stand Firm, God Chose to Save You; but Condemnation is for Unbelievers

2Th 2:9-13 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore, God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

[**ref notes:** One is saved or have complete salvation when one has believed by being born-again, and baptized in the Holy Spirit, by His sanctification. Jesus said in Mark 16:16 *“He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* To be born-again is the first step towards salvation, it is to see by believing and assenting or covenanting that God raised Jesus from the dead (Jn 3:3, Rom 10:9). This then leads to the second step which is to enter into the kingdom for salvation or safety (Jn 3:5) by sanctification through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is received after being born-again (Act 19:2, 1 Pet 3:21). When one believes or is born again, they receive a witness in themselves that they have eternal life, that they are children of God (1Jn 5:10, Rom 8:16). And being children of God, He sends His Holy Spirit into their hearts as they cry *“Abba, Father”* (Gal 4:6), speaking the language of the Spiritual Father, God. This is the physical proof of sanctification that comes through baptism in the Holy Spirit (Act 2:4, 19:6).]

2Th 2:14-17 To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

Pray for the Gospel to Spread Rapidly, be Glorified and Triumph ①⑤⑩

2Th 3:1-4 Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command.

Love God, Be Steadfast, Withdraw from Disorderly Brethren ①⑤⑩

2Th 3:5-8 May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ. Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor, we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.

2Th 3:9-12 It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now, such persons, we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

Never, Never Get Tired of Well-Doing or Doing Good ①⑤⑩

2Th 3:13-18 As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

REFLECTION #7:

Total Markers ____/60

1. If you were to summarize your learning in 100 words, what would it be?
2. Which 5 actionable lifestyles are you already planning to work on, or address?
3. How would you describe your new commitment to Jesus as a disciple?

***You may write down and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4. How important do you think giving thanks is to God? Does it have a connection to your faith and love for God, and how often should a believer give thanks?
5. Being steadfast in Christ and being a stable Christian is important. Does a believer have to endure affliction or persecution to prove their stability?
6. Occasionally we hear fake news about the end of the world or the coming of Christ. How should believers deal with such news when they hear it?
7. It is important for a true believer to stand firm on faith because God chose them. It is also important for every believer to pray always for the rapid spread of the gospel. How would you address these? What is your plan to Stand Firm and Pray for the rapid spread of the gospel of Christ, always?
8. It is not always easy to withdraw from other Christians when they are not walking according to the instructions of God. How would you address this issue if someone you know, love or like, or and are very close to find themselves walking not according to the commands of Jesus?

***You may write down key points and discuss your answers with your discipleship or learning team.*

4: _____
5: _____
6: _____
7: _____
8: _____

Total your **'Progress Markers'** from the Epistle of James and the Letters of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Your score? [James: ____/220], [1st Thes: ____/120], [2nd Thes: ____/60]; **Grand Total** ____/400

Your Lifestyle of True Worship

We have come to the last section of this introduction to a truly Christian lifestyle. Your desire and effort to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, because you truly love God, is commendable. Such love motivates the craving to know God. When we know God correctly, we trust and worship Him correctly (Psa 9:10, 1Jn 2:3-4)⁵³. Jesus said people who do not know God, worship what they do not know, but “...we worship what we know, for salvation is of the Jews [or from Judah—those who live to praise God] (Jn 4:22)⁵⁴.” A lifestyle of praise is a lifestyle of worship because God, our Father, said; “...you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may [show forth] proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1Pet 2:9).

Scripture says that God, our Father is seeking [enquiring, looking, or searching for] true worshippers to worship him. True worshippers are those who “will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23)⁵⁵. They are those whose lives and lifestyles are a constant and consistent show of praise and glory to God, our Father, based on the truth of His word and guidance of His Holy Spirit “who guides you into such truth” (Jn 16:13)⁵⁶.

To worship means to kiss like a dog crouching, fawning over, and licking his master’s hand. A worshipper is an adorer; who reveres or prostrates oneself in homage to anything or person they regard or desire to adore, revere, or idolize. But a true worshipper is a believer; a true Christian who adores God, submissively and wholeheartedly (Deu 6:5, Mar 12:30, Jas 4:7)⁵⁷, and proves it as guided by His Holy Spirit and in His Word of Truth. As true worshipers we crouch and fawn over God reverently, as we “sit together [with Him] in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:6).

On the contrary, there are three other kinds of worship. They are *Prideful Worship*⁵⁸ which borders on the exaltation of self-truth, labor, and reputation for own glory. The next is *Religious Worship*⁵⁹ which is about prostrating to men’s religion, traditions, and doctrines that leads to very external demonstrations of voluntary piety, sanctimonious will worship, and ceremonial observance. The last is *Superstitious Worship*⁶⁰ which is ignorant dutiful reverence and piety towards any created god and other human authorities. But scripture set the proper attitude for worship, that is *True Worship*⁶¹ by saying “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Eph 5:16&25).

While true worship [i.e., adore, revere, prostrate] is internally privately stimulated (Jn 7:38)⁶², the Spirit of God shows us how to demonstrate [walk in] it outwardly publicly. This is because everything Christian is about the outward manifestation of the inward grace, received. It is about

“showing forth the praises of Him,” it is about “working out your salvation” (1Pet 2:9, Php 2:12-13)⁶³. To this end, scripture shows us seven ways to truly ‘act’ our worshipful lifestyle or put our true worship into action; in private or at home, in churches, and in public.

Let’s call them the seven ‘acts of worship’ for the New Testament believer and Church.

Act #1: *Singing* spiritual songs to God’s praise (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16)⁶⁴. May be done with Act #2.

Act #2: *Praising* to extol and admire God (Luk 24:52-53, Act 2:47)⁶⁵.

Act #3: *Praying* always, giving thanks to God. (1The 5:17-18, 1Tim 2:8)⁶⁶.

Act #4: *Giving* to advance God’s work and ministry cheerfully (1Cor 9:6-14, 2Cor 9:6-7)⁶⁷.

Act #5: *Communion* to remember the Lord’s supper in fellowship. (1Cor 11:23-29, Act 20:7)⁶⁸.

Act #6: *Preaching* the Gospel of Jesus to evangelize; heal the sick & save souls. (Act 5:42, 2:42)⁶⁹.

Act #7: *Teaching* the Truth to convince, rebuke, and exhort with sound doctrine (Act 20:7, 2Tim 4:1-4)⁷⁰. You can teach or be taught (1Jn 2:27)⁷¹. Acts #6 & #7 may or may not be done together.

Your lifestyle of true worship consists of what you are inwardly and act outwardly. If you are truly a ‘son of God’, then these acts of true worship are the things you do or at least ought to live by privately and publicly to show forth and proclaim the praises of God, our Father. When we gather in fellowship, as in church services, we perform these acts corporately. Outside of church gatherings, we still get to live by them in principle and action on a daily basis.

Finally, God loves you boundlessly and without pre-conditions. You have come this far indicating your desire to know him and live the new life. He has given to you, in His Son and by His Spirit. As His sons and servants laboring in His vineyard, we can only commend you to His grace and fellowship. Continue therein and let your lifestyle shine in true worship because you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; the child of the eternal King of Glory. Welcome to Christianity!
For the next level of discipleship development read *Kingdom Lifestyle for New Believers*.

⁵³ **Psa 9:10** And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You. **1Jn 2:3-4** Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

⁵⁴ **Joh 4:22** You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

⁵⁵ **Joh 4:23** But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

⁵⁶ **Joh 16:13** However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

⁵⁷ **Deu 6:5** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. **Mar 12:30** And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. **Jas 4:7** Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

⁵⁸ Reference for further study: Jer 44:19, Act 7:42, Luk 14:10. Also see Pride of the Flesh: 1John 2:16 vs. Gen 3:6

⁵⁹ Reference for further study: Dan 3:5, 10, 12; Mat 15:9; Col 2:23; Also see Act 18:13 for example.

⁶⁰ Reference for further study: Act 17:23

⁶¹ Reference for further study: John 4:20-24 sets the proper attitude for true worshippers.

⁶² **Joh 7:38** He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

⁶³ **1Pe 2:9** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **Php 2:12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

⁶⁴ **Eph 5:19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, **Col 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

⁶⁵ **Luk 24:52** And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen. **Act 2:47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

⁶⁶ **1Th 5:17-18** pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1Ti 2:8** I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

⁶⁷ **1Co 9:6-14** Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Whoever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless, we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. **2Co 9:6-7** But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So, let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

⁶⁸ **Act 20:7** Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. **1Co 11:23-29** For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore, whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

⁶⁹ **Act 5:42** And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. **Act 2:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers

⁷⁰ **Act 20:7** Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. **2Ti 4:1-4** I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

⁷¹ **1Jn 2:27** But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

Lifestyle! Flourish Index Scorer

Are you living and flourishing as you should? Discover your Christian lifestyle index. The following may help you gauge how well you are flourishing in the lifestyle by God’s grace, goodness, governance, and glory. Evaluate and score yourself into the boxes, then add up. Your score is an indicator of what is, as well as areas of opportunity to work on for improvement.

| | In the past ten days how many (or much) ... | 0-3 | 4-7 | 8-10 |
|--|---|-----|-----|------|
| Prayer | ...days (or times) did you pray in the Holy Spirit for at least 1 hour? | | | |
| Love | ...people did you affectionately love on, embrace, or not show feelings of hate towards? | | | |
| Benevolence | ...of your worth/income in %age did you give to the church, charity, or someone in need? | | | |
| Healing | ...people did you pray for to be healed or healed, including yourself? | | | |
| Salvation | ...people did you deliver from sin/oppression, lead to accept Christ, or begin to disciple? | | | |
| Knowledge | ...times did you study the Bible, attend Bible study, or teach someone about the Bible? | | | |
| Inspiration | ...times did you make a decision by God’s Word, prophecy, or express counsel? | | | |
| Courage | ...times did you encourage, advocate for, or give up your will for someone’s sake? | | | |
| <i>Add up your scores in the individual column from top to bottom rows (i.e., from prayer to courage)</i> | | + | + | |
| <i>Add up the scores in the three boxes and multiply by 1.25 to get your %age Lifestyle Flourish Index (LFI)</i> | | = | | % |

An **LFI** less than 50% indicates you may need much soul & spiritual nourishment.
To score above 50% is graceful. Above 80%, we commend you to God (Acts 20:32).

Vessels Church

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Media | Publications: **‘WithJesusChrist,’** a YouTube Channel

Ministry Dept. | Programs: Prayer & Intercession | **pray4ME! & praisewithME!**
 Administrations | **loveME!**
 Helps & Benevolence | **helpME!**
 Healings | **healME!**
 Miracles & Evangelism | **saveME!**
 Teaching | **teachME!**
 Prophetic | **inspireME!**
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Notes



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