

The Most Excellent Way

*The Christian Solution to Chemical Dependency:
"Becoming GOD-Dependent"*

"Ten Attitudes of Victorious Living"

**Leader's Guides & Bible Studies
for
Fellowship/Support Meeting
Discussions**

**LEADER’S GUIDES & BIBLE STUDIES FOR
FELLOWSHIP/SUPPORT MEETINGS**

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
1 • Choices	4
2 • The Way.....	9
3 • The Truth.....	14
4 • The Life	18
5 • Humility	23
6 • Penitence	26
7 • Meekness.....	30
8 • Spiritual Hunger	33
9 • Mercy	37
10 • Inward Purity	40
11 • Peacemaker	44
12 • Witness	48
13 • Assurance of Salvation	51
Additional Worksheets (require a Bible for answering questions):	
14 • Prayer	54
15 • God’s Word	57
16 • The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.....	60
17 • The Return of Christ.....	62

Scriptures taken from the New International Version of the Bible, unless otherwise noted.

LEADER’S GUIDES & BIBLE STUDY WORKSHEETS FOR FELLOWSHIP/SUPPORT MEETINGS

INTRODUCTION

There are 12 Leader’s Guides with Bible Study Worksheets. The Leader’s Guide will help you prepare for the topic. You will do your own additional study, including incorporating illustrations or stories related to each topic, etc.

The Bible Study Worksheets should be reproduced and copies given to each meeting attendee. The first 12 Bible Study Worksheets include related Scriptures printed out in case Bibles are not available.

The goal of the Bible Study Worksheets is to guide the meeting dialogue and help keep the focus on the specific idea or topic. Completing the Worksheet is not the goal — conversation and listening to one another are more important than completing the study.

As you move along, discern when to get back to answering the questions on the Bible Study Worksheets. The attendees can take them home to finish them if they wish.

There are five additional Bible Study Worksheets — one with Scriptures, four without — that do not have corresponding Leader’s Guides. These are designed and intended to help attendees get familiar with looking up verses and reading from the Biblical context. As the Leader, go through each of these with the group and lead them in discovering the answers.

Remember, the focus is Jesus. Discussion should point attendees to His love, acceptance and forgiveness which leads to spiritual life and spiritual maturity, where we have the choice and power to follow Him and obey His Word.



May the Lord richly bless you as disciple others in His Word!

LEADER'S GUIDE

1 • CHOICES

The choices we make do have consequences — good and bad.

Some related topics to discuss might be the will or conscience. When we choose to compromise and make wrong choices, we weaken our “will power” to do right. Soon our will power is non-existent and our conscience is silent. Our conscience is that small voice that tells us right from wrong, and brings guilt and shame for disobedience.

Of course the most important choice we can make is for Jesus. Spiritual life and spiritual understanding is not available to us until we first say “yes” to Jesus!

*He who has the Son has life;
he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.
1 John 5:12*

When we say “yes” to Jesus, the Holy Spirit indwells us and illuminates our spiritual understanding.

*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God,
for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them,
because they are spiritually discerned.
I Corinthians 2:14*

Invite those who come to “The Most Excellent Way” to make the choice to become a Christian. The call for this decision should be made as often as possible. Teach the benefits of Christian life and the danger of unbelief.

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

Suggested additional references: Proverbs 3 and 4, Proverbs 8:10, Isaiah 56:4, Romans 8.

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

1 • CHOICES

LIFE IS FILLED WITH CHOICES — everything from what to wear, what to eat, where to go and what to do! Making the right choices is called wisdom. See if you can discover on these pages what the wisest choice a person can make.

1. LUKE 10:38-42

³⁸As Jesus and His disciples were on their way, He came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to Him.

³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what He said.

⁴⁰But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to Him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,

⁴²but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

- Where did Mary choose to sit, and what was she doing? (vs 39) _____

- What distracted Martha from making the same choice as Mary? (vs 40) _____

- What does Jesus tell Martha, and what does He mean? (vs 41, 42) _____

2. John 7:14-17

¹⁴Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach.

¹⁵The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?"

¹⁶Jesus answered, "My teaching is not My own. It comes from Him who sent Me.

¹⁷If any one chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own."

- What did the people think of Jesus' teaching? (vs 15) _____

- What question did they ask? (vs 15) _____
- How did Jesus answer? (vs 16) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What choices can we make to find out if Jesus' teaching comes from God? (vs 17) Explain:

3. PROVERBS 1:20-33

²⁰Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares;

²¹at the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech:

²²"How long will you simple ones love your simple ways?

How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?

²³If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you.

²⁴But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand,

²⁵since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke,

²⁶I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you –

²⁷when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and troubles overwhelm you.

²⁸Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me.

²⁹Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord,

³⁰since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke,

³¹they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

³²For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;

³³but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."

- What unwise choice have some people made? (vs 24, 25) _____

- How does God respond to those who reject Him? (vs 28) _____

- What choices were made to bring God to this decision? (vs 29, 30) _____

- What hope is held out for those who make wise choices? (vs 33) _____

4. HEBREWS 11:24-28

²⁴By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

²⁵He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

²⁶He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

²⁷By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger;

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible.

²⁸By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood,
so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

- In verse 25 what choice did Moses make? _____

- For Moses, what was of greater value than the treasure of Egypt? (vs 26) _____

- How did Moses leave Egypt (the world)? (vs 27) _____

- Why did Moses persevere? (vs 27) _____

5. 1 PETER 2:9-10

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God,
that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.

¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

- What has Jesus caused believers to become? (vs 9) _____

- What were these people once? (vs 10) _____

6. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-31

²⁶Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards;
not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

²⁷But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of
the world to shame the strong.

²⁸He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—
to nullify the things that are,²⁹so that no one may boast before him.

³⁰It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—
that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

³¹Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

- What were believers when they were called? (vs 26) _____

- What did God choose and why? (vs 27, 28, 29) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What has Jesus become for us? (vs 30) _____

- Who should we boast in? Why? _____

7. JOSHUA 24:14, 15

¹⁴*Now fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness.*

Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.

¹⁵*But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for Me and my household, we will serve the Lord."*

- In what way should we serve the Lord? (vs 14) _____

- What choice needed to be made? (vs 15) _____

- What was Joshua's choice for himself and his household? (vs 15)

- What choice will you make and why? Explain: _____

ROMANS 10:9-11

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰*For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

¹¹*As the Scripture says, "Everyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame."*



May the Lord richly bless you as you seek to make the right choices!

LEADER’S GUIDE

2 • THE WAY

*Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”
John 14:6*

“What is the right way?” is the question we all face. There are so many ways a person can choose to go. The most important choice we will ever make is whether or not to live God’s way — to choose the way of a believer or to remain a non-believer. Even this choice can be confusing when we consider the many “religions” practiced in the world today.

The world offers many ways or paths to God and personal salvation. Some of the ways endorse multiple gods (polytheism) and reject the philosophy of one God (monotheism). Some of the ways suggest that we are, in fact, our own gods. How can a person know how to confidently choose the right way?

Talk about the authority of Scripture, its infallibility and inerrancy with your group. Explain that Jesus is the only person in the history of the world to make the claim of resurrection, and to have been seen alive again by the witnesses testifying in the Bible. Be sure to explain that *HIS way* is a gift that cannot be earned, only received by faith (Ephesians 2:8).

Reinforce the idea that **He** is the way! His way is a choice we make toward a Christian lifestyle of obedience to His Word. Even those who choose to say “no” to Jesus are, in fact, choosing a way that has consequences and leads to continued spiritual death.

Share *your* testimony about how and why you chose His way, then invite your group to do likewise!



BIBLE STUDY

2 • THE WAY

*Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."
John 14:6*

1. PSALM 119:9-16

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your Word.

¹⁰*I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.*

¹¹*I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

¹²*Praise be to You, O Lord; teach me Your decrees.*

¹³*With my lips I recount all the laws that come from Your mouth.*

¹⁴*I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.*

¹⁵*I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.*

¹⁶*I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect Your Word.*

- How can someone keep his or her way pure? (vs 9) _____

- Why did David hide the word in his heart? (vs 11)

- What did David meditate on and consider? (vs 15) _____

2. PROVERBS 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

- What does man's way eventually lead to? _____

3. JOB 23:10-12

¹⁰*But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold.*

¹¹*My feet have closely followed His steps; I have kept to His way without turning aside.*

¹²*I have not departed from the commands of His lips;*

I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my daily bread.

- How did Job say his way would come forth after testing from God? (vs 10) _____

- What did Job treasure more than his daily bread? (vs 12) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

4. PSALM 37:5-6

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

- What will the Lord do if we commit our way to Him? (vs 5,6) _____

- What does this fact mean to you? Explain: _____

5. PSALM 32:8-10

⁸I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.

⁹Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

¹⁰Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in Him.

- What does God promise to instruct and teach us? (vs 8) _____

- How do we get horses and mules to do what we want? (vs 9) _____

- What surrounds the man whose way is to trust in the Lord? (vs 10) _____

6. 1 SAMUEL 12:20-24

²⁰"Do not be afraid," Samuel replied. "You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart.

²¹Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless.

²²For the sake of His great name the Lord will not reject His people, because the Lord was pleased to make you His own.

²³As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.

²⁴But be sure to fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things He has done for you.

- Why were the people afraid? (vs 20) _____

- What way did Samuel warn the people not to go? (vs 21) _____



The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What was the Lord pleased to do? (vs 22) _____

- What did Samuel want to do? (vs 23)

7. ISAIAH 30:19-21

¹⁹O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more.

How gracious He will be when you cry for help! As soon as He hears, He will answer you.

²⁰Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them.

²¹Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

- How soon will God answer His people when they cry for help? (vs 19) _____

- What would the people see with their own eyes? (vs 20) _____

- Who is saying "This is the way, walk in it"? (vs 21)

8. ISAIAH 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

- Who has gone astray? _____

- What way have each of us turned to? _____

- Whose iniquity was laid on Him (Jesus)? _____

9. ACTS 9:1-6

¹Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples.

He went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

³As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

⁵"Who are You, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," He replied.

⁶"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

- Who was Saul threatening? (vs 1) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What did Saul ask the high priest for? (vs 2) _____

- What did Saul want to do with anybody who belonged to the Way? (vs 2) _____

- What flashed around Saul as he came close to Damascus? (vs 3) _____

- What was Saul's response? (vs 4) _____

- Who was speaking to Saul? (vs 5) _____

11. ACTS 24:14-16

¹⁴However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers, as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets,

¹⁵and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

¹⁶So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

- As a follower of the Way, what did Paul admit to? (vs 14) _____

- What was Paul's hope in God? (vs 15) _____

- What did Paul strive to do? (vs 16) _____

- What will you strive to do? _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you seek His Way!

LEADER’S GUIDE

3 • THE TRUTH

*Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life!”
John 14:6*

There are many “truths” being taught in today’s world. How can we know if something is really true? God’s Word is the authority and standard that we test everything by. **“Truth is that which is in harmony with God’s reality.”** If God says it, then we know it’s true — it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18).

The Ten Commandments instruct us not to bear false witness, which includes exaggeration and little white lies. Adding to, or keeping back a portion of, the truth is not telling the “whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help me God!” — which is required in court testimonies today and is required by the divine judge, God.

Sometimes the truth can hurt, therefore, we should be sensitive about speaking the truth in love. The Bible says that the wounds of a friend are faithful, but we are also taught to do unto others as we would have them do unto us! (See Matthew 7:12.)

Why is it that we sometimes lie to ourselves or refuse to accept the truth? Knowing that something is true makes us accountable to it, doesn’t it? Explain to your group that they are accountable to the truth of God, whether or not they accept it as the truth. Explain why God’s truth is the “Good News” and always offer the opportunity to receive the truth.

Truth is a person — Jesus!



BIBLE STUDY

3 • THE TRUTH

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life!"
John 14:6

1. JOHN 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

- What is the only way for a person to come to God the Father? _____

2. JOHN 18:37

"You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to Me."

- What is the reason Jesus came into the world? _____

- Who listens to Him? _____

3. JOHN 1:14

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- Where did Jesus come from? _____

- He is full of grace and what? _____

4. PROVERBS 23:23

Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding.

- What should you buy and what will you get with it? _____

- What do you think this Proverb means? Explain: _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

5. **PROVERBS 12:19**

Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

- What endures forever? _____

- What lasts only a moment? _____

6. **ZECHARIAH 8:16**

*These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other,
and render true and sound judgment in your courts; . . .*

- What are the things you are to do? _____

7. **EPHESIANS 6:14**

*Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate
of righteousness in place.*

- What should we buckle around our waist? _____

8. **EPHESIANS 4:25**

*Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor,
for we are all members of one body.*

- What must we do? _____

9. **PSALMS 33:4**

For the Word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all does.

- What is right and true? _____

10. **PHILIPPIANS 4:8**

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy
—think about such things.*

- What kinds of things does Paul encourage us to think about? _____

LEADER'S GUIDE

4 • THE LIFE

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

John 14:6

The benefits that Jesus offers through salvation are two fold: the powerful promise of eternal life with Him in heaven, and the promise of a better and more fulfilling life while we are here on earth.

As the video depicts, the world is full of contrary and competing ideas about the meaning of life. We are challenged to make decisions about religion, politics, ethics, morality and the like. How are we to know which beliefs and groups are right, and which are wrong? Moral relativism is the emerging philosophy most people are embracing today: "What's right for you is right for you, and what's right for me is right for me."

The Bible, however, stands alone as the one authority we must base all of our beliefs and convictions on, because it contains **God's** truth concerning life. The Bible states that "*The fear of the Lord leads to life.*" (*Proverbs 19:23.*) To fear the Lord is to obey Him. We can find answers throughout the Bible to any and all of life's questions about how to live, and how to obey and please God. His promise to those who do so is that He will pour out His blessings in this life, and the one to come!

Talk to your group about the old lifestyles and how they see society at large. How does culture, tradition, ethnic background and education influence the lifestyles we choose? How important is being part of a group, dressing like others or doing what others do? What are the life long dreams or desires of people? What life decisions help to reach these goals?

Remember to always give your group opportunities to choose eternal life.



BIBLE STUDY

4 • THE LIFE

**Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."
John 14:6**

As Christians, we are promised eternal life in heaven with God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The Bible also has very good instruction for those in *this* life that are interested in futures full of happiness and fulfillment.

1. GALATIANS 6:7-10

⁷Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

- What does a man reap? (vs 7) _____

- What does that mean to you? _____

- How can someone reap eternal life? (vs 8) _____

- Why should we not become weary in doing good? (vs 9) _____

2. JAMES 1:12-18

¹²Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.

¹³When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me."

For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone;

¹⁴but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

¹⁵Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

¹⁷Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

¹⁸He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created.

- Who will receive the crown of life? (vs 12) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What does sin eventually give birth to? (vs 15)
-

- Where does every good and perfect gift come from? (vs 17)
-

3. PROVERBS 10:27, 28

²⁷*The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.*

²⁸*The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing.*

- What kinds of people are promised long lives? (vs 27)
-
- What kinds of people are ensured futures full of happiness? (vs 28)
-

4. JOHN 10:7-10

⁷*Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.*

⁸*All who ever came before Me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.*

⁹*I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved.*

He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

¹⁰*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

- What does Jesus say He is for the sheep? (vs 7)
-
- What was the response of the sheep to those who came before Jesus? (vs 8)
-
- What must each sheep do to find life and good pasture? (vs 9)
-
- Why does Jesus say He came? (vs 10)
-

5. DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction.

¹⁶*For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.*

¹⁷*But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them,*

¹⁸*I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed.*

You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

¹⁹*This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live*

²⁰*and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him.*

For the Lord is your life, and He will give you many years in the land He swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What were the two options set before the people? (vs 15) _____

- What things must people do if they want to have lives full of blessings? (vs 16) _____

- What happens to those who turn away from God? (vs 17, 18) _____

- What are the benefits of choosing life? (vs 19, 20) _____

6. 1 PETER 3:10-12

For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.

¹¹He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

¹²For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

- If someone loves life and wants to see good days, what should they do? (vs 10, 11) _____

- Whose prayers is the Lord attentive to? (vs 12) _____

7. 2 PETER 1:3-4

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

⁴Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

- What has given us everything we need for life? (vs 3) _____

- How can we escape the corruption of the world and participate in the divine nature? (vs 4)

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

8. ROMANS 6:20-23

When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

²¹*What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? ▶*

Those things result in death!

²²*But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.*

²³*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- When believers are set free from sin, what do they become? (vs 22) _____

- As a believer, what do the benefits you reap lead to? (vs 22) _____

- What is God's gift? (vs 23) _____

- Have you accepted His gift of life? Explain: _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to live His life!

LEADER’S GUIDE

5 • HUMILITY

*Jesus said: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
Matthew 5:3*

This Study and the next six are inspired by the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-10). Verses 3 and 10 use the term “the kingdom of heaven” — this is a literary style called an inclusive. An inclusive is like a set of brackets — everything between the inclusive is relative to the topic “the kingdom of heaven.”

In this case, all the Beatitudes are a description of those who live in God’s Kingdom. We see the character and attitudes of Christian life portrayed. We also see a blessing given in response to living out these attitudes in everyday life. Explain to your group how these attitudes are a natural outcome of being filled with and led by the Holy Spirit. These attitudes are available to us by free-will choice, just as the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22.

Just as every seed has its genetic code within itself (it knows whether it’s a tomato, pumpkin, or apple!), so the incorruptible seed given (1 Peter 1:23) to Christians knows what kind of fruit (attitudes) to bear. It only needs to be watered with the Word and faith.

Teach that these Beatitudes are already possessed by born again Christians, and that each Christian is responsible for expressing these attitudes in their reactions to everyday circumstances.

The first Beatitude or principle is humility (Matthew 5:3). Humility is the opposite of pride, and an attitude every person must possess to enter the kingdom of heaven. We all must humble ourselves before God, ask His forgiveness for our sin, and accept Jesus as our Lord.

Be sure to offer an opportunity for those in your group to humble themselves and become followers of Jesus and citizens of His kingdom.



The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

5 • HUMILITY

*Jesus said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
Matthew 5:3*

The meaning of the Greek word for "poor in spirit," *ptochus*, implies a beggar, someone who is poor in class or caste system; empty of all pride or boasting.

1. **ISAIAH 57:15**

*For this is what the high and lofty One says – He who lives forever, whose name is holy:
"I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to
revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."*

- Who does God dwell with, and what does He do? _____

2. **PROVERBS 16:19**

Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud.

- Which attitude is better? _____

3. **PROVERBS 22:4**

Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.

- What brings wealth and honor? _____

4. **PROVERBS 29:23**

A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.

- In the above Proverb, what is the promise concerning humility? _____

5. **MATTHEW 18:4**

Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

- Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

6. PHILIPPIANS 2:3-8

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

⁴*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also the interests of others.*

⁵*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*

⁶*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,*

⁷*but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

⁸*And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!*

- How should we think about others? (vs 3) _____

- Whose interests should we look out for? (vs 4)

- What attitude should we have? (vs 5)

- What examples of Jesus' humility are given in verses 6-8?

7. JAMES 4:6

Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

- Who does God resist? _____

8. LUKE 14:11

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

- Who shall be exalted? _____

- What does being humble mean to you? Explain: _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to follow Him!

LEADER’S GUIDE

6 • PENITENCE

*Jesus said: “Blessed are those who mourn . . .”
Matthew 5:4*

The principle or attitude of this Beatitude is *penitence*. Penitence is personal grief over personal sin, a mourning or sorrow we feel when we recognize the sinfulness of our own state as we are exposed to the purity of God and His Word. Penitence always precedes repentance.

Paul said in Romans 7:24, “*What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?*” Likewise, Isaiah cried, “*Woe to me . . . I am a man of unclean lips . . .*” (6:5). These words express the deep realization and heartfelt grief they felt about their sinfulness. Conviction must precede conversion. We must experience a true sense of our sinful state before we can experience the true joy of salvation.

Penitence works to bring us to true repentance — the choice of turning away from sin and ungodliness, and choosing obedience to God’s will and God’s commands.

Penitence is the grief we might feel over the conditions of life or the consequences brought about by sin. Divorce and broken homes, lives ruined by drug and alcohol abuse, wars and violence, sexual immorality, and sickness of every kind, are all results of the fall of man and of sin. Jesus wept over the condition of man. Sin should likewise break our hearts before God.

Ask your group to share experiences they know about that typify the devastation of sin.

Be sure to give them the opportunity to repent of their sin and follow Jesus.



BIBLE STUDY

6 • PENITENCE

Jesus said: "Blessed are those who mourn . . ." Matthew 5:4

1. LUKE 23:39-43

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at Him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him.

"Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence?"

⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve.

But this man has done nothing wrong."

⁴²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into Your kingdom."

⁴³Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with Me in paradise."

This story about the "penitent thief" who died on the cross with Jesus is a model of God's grace.

- How did the thief feel about his companion? (vs 40) _____

- How did he feel about himself? About Jesus? (vs 41) _____

- What was his prayer? Did he have faith? (vs 42) _____

- What was Jesus' answer? (vs 43) _____

2. ACTS 3:19

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

- What happens to your sins if you repent? _____

- Have you repented for your sins? _____

3. Acts 8:22

Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.

- Why should we repent and pray? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

4. **ACTS 17:30**

In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent.

- What is God's command all people? _____

5. **2 CHRONICLES 7:14**

... if My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

- What promise is there for Christians if we turn from ungodliness and seek God? _____

6. **EZEKIEL 18:21**

But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.

- What promise is here for each person who will turn from sin to God? _____

7. **REVELATION 2:4-5**

⁴*Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.*

⁵*Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.*

- What does Jesus have against the church of Ephesus? (vs 4)

- What are they to do? (vs 5)

8. **Mark 6:12-13**

They went out and preached that people should repent.

They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

- What did these guys preach? (vs 12) _____

- What else did they do? (vs 13) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

9. **MATTHEW 3:8**

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

- What kind of fruit is John the Baptist saying to produce? _____

- What does he mean? _____

10. **ACTS 2:38**

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

- What free gift does God offer?

- How can we receive it?

- Have you received God's gift? Explain:



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to please Him!

LEADER'S GUIDE

7 • MEEKNESS

Jesus said: “Blessed are the meek . . .” Matthew 5:5

Meekness is a lack of self-centeredness, being others-centered, or Christ-centered. Doing His will, and being like Him is priority number one for the person who is meek.

The idea of meekness directly opposes the world's philosophy. The world thinks in terms of strength, power, ability, self-assurance, aggressiveness, competitiveness, self-reliance and the like. The values of the world are contradictory and opposite of the kingdom's spiritual values and principles.

Meekness is the ability to forfeit all of our personal rights for the benefits of others. As servants of the Lord, we are to deny self-will or self-assertiveness. An inward awareness of who we are in Jesus allows an outward expression of gentleness and constraint. Meekness is the controlled desire to see another's interest advance ahead of our own.

When we are without selfish ambition and exemplify Biblical meekness, God can then trust us with everything. We inherit the earth, or the use of all God has at His disposal to accomplish His will. We give Him all the glory, *not self*.

Discuss with your group how deeply the roots of SELF penetrate each of our lives. How much do we talk about ourselves? How often do we use the pronoun “I”? This beatitude follows penitence because we cannot be truly meek until we first repent and finish with our self-centeredness.

Maybe someone in the group is ready to make that decision today!



BIBLE STUDY

7 • MEEKNESS

Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek . . ." Matthew 5:5

1. MATTHEW 11:29 KJV

Jesus said: Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

- What does Jesus say about Himself? _____

- What will His yoke bring? _____

2. TITUS 3:2 KJV

To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

- What are we to do and not do in this verse? _____

3. 1 PETER 2:23

When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.

ISAIAH 53:7

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open his mouth.

- In these two passages, how does Jesus demonstrate His meekness? _____

4. ZEPHANIAH 2:3 KJV

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be His in the day of the Lord's anger.

- Why should we seek meekness? _____

- What else should we seek after? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

5. **GALATIANS 5:22-23 KJV**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

- Meekness is the fruit of what? _____
- What is the attitude of each fruit? _____

6. **JAMES 1:21 KJV**

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

- How are we to receive the Word of God? _____

7. **1 Peter 3:4 KJV**

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

- What is of great value in the sight of God? _____



PERSONAL NOTES:

May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to follow His example!

LEADER'S GUIDE

8 • SPIRITUAL HUNGER

*Jesus said: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . .”
Matthew 5:6*

Notice we are not told to hunger and thirst after happiness. Happiness is the pursuit of the world. Only in pursuing righteousness can we truly find happiness. Everlasting and eternal happiness is what God offers.

Hunger and thirst? What does this mean? It's a conscience awareness of our need for right standing with God. The feelings of thirst and hunger are not relieved until they are satisfied. It's not just a passion, need, or desire, but a craving that persists until it is satisfied. Only God can satisfy our spiritual thirst and hunger. It is the doctrine of grace, a free gift of God.

Jesus said:

*“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me,
and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away”
John 6:37*

Ask your group to share times when they may have been really hungry or thirsty. How did it feel? When did the feelings stop and how? Relate the answers to spiritual hunger and fan their desire to be righteous in God's sight.

Explain how our spiritual hunger can be satisfied through reading and studying the Bible, through worship, and even through service and ministry work. Explain Ephesians 2:10: all Christians are created to do good works in Christ Jesus and how this service is part of satisfying our hunger and thirst. Jesus said that by first seeking after righteousness, everything we desire to be whole is added unto us:

*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well.
Matthew 6:33*



BIBLE STUDY

8 • SPIRITUAL HUNGER

*Jesus said: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."
Matthew 5:6*

1. II CORINTHIANS 5:21

God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

- What did God make Jesus become and why?

2. ROMANS 5:17-19

¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One Man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the One Man the many will be made righteous.

- By whom do we receive the abundance of grace? (vs 17)

- How do we receive righteousness? (vs 17)

3. PSALM 107:9

... for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

- What does God fill the hungry soul with?

- How have you *filled* yourself in the past? Explain: _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

4. **JOHN 4:14**

[Jesus said:] . . . but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

- What does Jesus say is the result of His water? _____

- How thirsty will we be after we drink His water? _____

5. **JOHN 7:37**

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If a man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."

- What should we do if we thirst? _____

- Are you "thirsty" now? Explain: _____

6. **REVELATION 7:16**

Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.

- What does this verse say about people who are in heaven? _____

7. **REVELATION 22:17**

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

- This is the last invitation in the Bible. Who is it given to? _____

- What can they do? _____

8. **PSALMS 73:25**

Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

- What does the psalmist say he desired from the earth? _____

- Is God your desire? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

9. **ISAIAH 26:9**

*My soul yearns for You in the night; in the morning my spirit longs for You.
When Your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.*

- How does Isaiah describe his hunger and thirst? _____

10. **I PETER 2:2**

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

- What should we crave? _____
- Why? _____

11. **PSALMS 63:1**

*O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirst for you, my body longs for you,
in a dry and weary land where there is no water.*

- What does the psalmist earnestly seek? _____

- What does he long for? _____

12. **PSALMS 36:7-8**

*How priceless is your unfailing love!
Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.
⁸They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights.*

- Who finds rivers of delight and where? _____

13. Describe spiritual hunger and thirst in your own words:



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose His spiritual provisions!

LEADER'S GUIDE

9 • MERCY

*Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."
Matthew 5:7*

Before we can examine this Beatitude, we must realize the principle: a Christian person *is* something before he *does* something. We must *be* a Christian before we can *act* like one. "Being" is *always more important* than "doing." Taking it a step further, we are not meant to control our Christianity, rather our Christianity is meant to control us.

The question is: *are we merciful?*

Mercy is a descriptive adjective that is applied especially and specifically to God, an attribute of Himself. What is mercy? Grace is associated with people in their sins. Mercy is associated with people in their misery, the result of their sin. While grace looks at sin as a whole, mercy deals with its consequences. Mercy is a sense of pity with a desire to relieve suffering. The supreme example is God sending Jesus into the world. Because we have been shown such great mercy, we should now in turn show mercy to others. Grace is getting what we don't deserve, while mercy is *not getting* what we do deserve.

Mercy is what people plead for in the face of justice. Though they know they may legally or rightly deserve the consequence (just punishment) for their behavior, the plea for mercy comes forth. Ask your group to share times when they hoped for mercy when they faced justice or punishment.

Be sure to explain that the Gospel is the "good news" of God's mercy and grace. Perhaps some in your group need to make the choice to accept God's mercy.



BIBLE STUDY

9 • MERCY

*Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."
Matthew 5:7*

1. EPHESIANS 2:4-5

But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

- What is God rich in? (vs 4) _____

- How has He shown us His mercy? (vs 5) _____

2. LAMENTATIONS 3:22

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail.

- Why are we not consumed? _____

3. MICAH 7:18

Who is a God like You, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

- What does God delight in? _____

- What does God pardon? _____

4. TITUS 3:5

... He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

- How has God saved us according to His mercy? _____

- How has God saved *you* according to His mercy? _____

5. PSALMS 103:17

But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children.

- How long does the mercy of God last? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

6. **MICAH 6:8**

*He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

- What does the Lord require of us? _____

- What does the Lord require of *you*? Explain: _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you seek His mercy!

LEADER’S GUIDE

10 • INWARD PURITY

*Jesus said: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”
Matthew 5:8*

This Beatitude is what being a Christian is all about. Holiness!

The Lord puts the emphasis upon the heart, not the head. The Pharisees and religious leaders were always ready to reduce the way of life and righteousness to a matter of outward conduct and behavior.

The heart is the center of our personality, it is the total of our being and character. Jesus said that out of the heart pours evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts and false witnesses. Man thinks his troubles are due to his environment. However, it was in a perfect environment that man first sinned. The trouble is in the heart.

Some people have a problem with pornography or the lust of the eyes. Notice the promise of this Beatitude that the pure in heart will *see* God. If we choose to purify our hearts and allow the Holy Spirit to control our desire to see or do immoral things, then we will see the most incredible and awesome sight imaginable—God Himself!

The Bible does not invite us to transform the heart, but rather Jesus said we must be born again (John 3). This is the only way we can obey the command to love God with our whole heart, mind and soul.

Talk with your group about conscience, and knowing right from wrong in their heart! Take a good look at Romans 10:9-10, and see if any hearts are ready to believe and be born again!

*That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,”
and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified,
and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.
Romans 10:9-10*



BIBLE STUDY

10 • INWARD PURITY

*Jesus said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."
Matthew 5:8*

Having a *pure* heart only results from our willingness to receive a *new* heart from God through faith in Jesus.

1. MARK 7:20-23

He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.'

²¹*For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,*

²²*greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.*

²³*All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'"*

- What makes a person "unclean"? (vs 20, 23) _____

- What comes out of a man's heart? (vs 21, 22) _____

2. PSALM 24:3-4

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.

- Where does a pure heart allow you to stand? _____

- Have you ever lifted up your soul to an idol or sworn by what is false. Explain: _____

3. 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

- What actions are we encouraged to take? Explain: _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

4. **JAMES 4:8, 10**

⁸*Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ...*

¹⁰*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

- What must you do to come near to God? _____

- What must you do to be lifted up? _____

5. **I PETER 1:22**

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.

- How should we love one another? _____

6. **II PETER 3:13-14**

But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

¹⁴*So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with Him.*

- How should we be as we wait for new things? _____

- How should we be found? _____

7. **MATTHEW 5:8**

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

- What is promised to those with pure hearts? _____

8. **EPHESIANS 5:26-27**

... to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word,

²⁷*and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

- How does Jesus make the church holy? (vs 26) _____

- What is the result? (vs 27) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

9. **JOB 11:13-15**

"Yet if you devote your heart to Him and stretch out your hands to Him,

¹⁴*if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent,*

¹⁵*then you will lift up your face without shame; you will stand firm and without fear.*

- What happens if you devote your heart to God?

10. **JAMES 1:27**

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

- Have you been polluted by the world? Explain: _____

- What does God accept as pure religion? _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to be purified by Him!

LEADER'S GUIDE

11 • PEACEMAKER

*Jesus said: “Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called the children of God.”
Matthew 5:9*

Peace is an activity of grace. We, as Christians, are not indifferent to the evils of this world. We're involved! We are to interfere for the betterment of society. Peace is the greatest interest of nations and neighborhoods, even of family units, and individuals. We need our police (peace officers) and our priesthood to maintain peace. Blessed are those who bring peace. Great is their reward, because they are counted as children of God.

The Bible reveals that every man's nature is convulsed. We have sinful imaginations that confuse our passions. Passion will override reason, cause us to be unsettled and without peace. Action takes place and we commit sin. Reason is restored and guilt is revived to again take away peace. This is the cycle of an unregenerate society. This is also humankind at war with itself. A community of convulsed natures opposing themselves can never realize peace.

The Gospel is the ultimate message of peace — peace *with* God and the peace *of* God producing peace with oneself.

Be sure to always explain the peace *of* God and the peace *with* God available to us through Jesus. Chances are someone in your group is looking for real peace.

Peace is an important part of the free gift of God, salvation through Jesus, and one of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22. Blessed are *you* for being a peacemaker!



BIBLE STUDY

11 • PEACEMAKER

*Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called the children of God."
Matthew 5:9*

1. LUKE 1:76-79

*And you, My child [John, the Baptist], will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for Him,
⁷⁷ to give His people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace."*

- Who does Jesus give light to? _____

- Where does He guide our feet? _____

2. LUKE 2:13-14

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."

- What is the message from God sung by the angels at Jesus' birth? _____

3. ROMANS 8:6

The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

- What is the result of being spiritually minded? _____

4. ROMANS 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- What does God's kingdom consist of? _____

5. Psalm 29:11

The Lord gives strength to His people; the Lord blesses His people with peace.

- What does the Lord give his people? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

6. **ISAIAH 26:3**

You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You.

- Who is kept in perfect peace and why? _____

7. **JOHN 14:27**

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

- What did Jesus leave and give to us? _____

- What did He say about our hearts? _____

8. **JOHN 16:33**

[Jesus said:] "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

- Why did Jesus tell us the things He did? _____

- What will we have in the world, and how should we think about it? _____

- What has Jesus done with the world? _____

9. **PHILIPPIANS 4:7**

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- What will guard our hearts and minds? _____

- What does it transcend? _____

10. **PROVERBS 17:14**

Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.

- When should we drop a matter? _____

11. **PROVERBS 20:3**

It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

- Who is quick to quarrel? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

12. **2 TIMOTHY 2:24**

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

- What must the Lord's servant not do? _____

- Who must we be kind to? _____

13. **ROMANS 5:1-2**

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

- How will your peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ affect your attitudes and actions toward others? _____

- Why? Explain: _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose His peace!

LEADER’S GUIDE

12 • WITNESS

*“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?
It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.*

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

*¹⁵Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket,
but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.*

*¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see
your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*

Matthew 5:13-16 NKJV

We know that John the Baptist baptized with water and the issue was repentance. But Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit and the issue is power (Acts 1:5) — Power to be His witness. It is very important that we teach new disciples to be faithful witnesses to the Lord and His work in their lives.

Often peer pressure or family pressure makes us ashamed or afraid to talk about our decision to follow Jesus. These feelings need to be talked about and worked through.

Tell your group stories and antidotes of people you know (personally and historically) who were dramatically used by God because of their faithfulness to be witnesses. The story of Peter’s denial of Christ is a good example of God’s forgiveness and empowering for service.

Even today, we see examples of Christian martyrs — i.e., Columbine High School — willing to die rather than deny their Lord. Give your testimony or bring someone to your meeting to give a dynamic witness!



BIBLE STUDY

12 • WITNESS

¹³You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?

It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

*¹⁵Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket,
but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.*

*¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see
your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*

Matthew 5:13-16 NKJV

1. ACTS 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

- What will you receive? _____

- What will you be? _____

2. MARK 5:19

Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you."

- What did Jesus tell the man he healed to do? _____

- Has Jesus healed you? If so, who will you tell? _____

3. II TIMOTHY 1:8

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

- What does the apostle Paul say about being a witness? _____

4. I PETER 3:15

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect . . .

- What does Peter say about giving an answer to people who ask about our hope? _____

- How should we do it? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- What is your reason for *hope*? Explain: _____

5. **ISAIAH 43:10**

"You are My witnesses," declares the Lord, "and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, nor will there be one after Me."

- What do the Lord's witnesses and servants know? _____

6. **2 CORINTHIANS 4:13**

*It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken."
With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak . . .*

- What is to be done with "that same spirit of faith"?

7. **ACTS 22:15**

You will be His witnesses to all men of what you have seen and heard.

- What did God choose both Paul and you to be? _____

8. **ROMANS 8:16 NKJV**

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, . . .

- How will the knowledge that you are a child of God affect your willingness to witness for Jesus? _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to be His witness!

BIBLE STUDY

13 • ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Having assurance of salvation means being certain in your mind, "to put beyond all doubt." Satan would love to have you doubt your salvation. It is one of his tricks. *"You don't really believe you're saved and your sins are forgiven, do you? Do you really think all you need to do is believe and you will receive Christ's power and eternal life? Surely that isn't enough!"* How will you respond to the enemy's challenges to your faith? What will your answer be?

Your hope of successfully resisting such attacks is to know the Word of God.

1. Read and memorize **1 JOHN 5:11-12:**

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

- Who gives eternal life? _____

- Where is eternal life found? _____

- Who does not have eternal life? _____

2. **1 JOHN 5:13**

*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know** that you have eternal life .*

JOHN 20:30

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

- Why did John say that he wrote his gospel? _____

3. **ROMANS 5:8**

But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- How has God shown that He loves you? _____

4. **ISAIAH 59:2**

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.

- What results of man's sinfulness are listed? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

5. **EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

- Why do human efforts always fail to reach God? _____

6. **1 PETER 3:18**

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,...

- How did Peter explain what God has done to bring men to Himself? _____

7. **JOHN 1:12**

Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God—

- When you become a Christian, you also become what? _____

8. **1 PETER 2:24-25**

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

COLOSSIANS 2:13-14

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross.

ISAIAH 1:18

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

- List from the above Scriptures what did Christ with our sins? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

9. JOHN 5:24

Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

- What three things are the result of hearing and believing?

Present? _____

Future? _____

Past? _____

10. JOHN 10:27-29

Jesus said: "My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.

²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.

²⁹My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all;

no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand.

³⁰I and the Father are one."

- What did God promise His followers? _____

11. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

- What happens when a person becomes a Christian? _____



*May the Lord richly bless you with the assurance of
your salvation as you choose to follow Jesus!*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

TO COMPLETE YOUR STUDY, FIND THE ANSWERS IN THE BIBLE.

14 • PRAYER

Prayer is one of the most important privileges of Christian life, and yet it is so often neglected and pushed aside. Prayer is the means by which we enter into the presence of God. Through prayer, we have a direct line to the Creator and sustainer of all!

God is not concerned about the position of the body when we pray — He's interested in the condition of the heart. We pray so we can talk to God, but also to allow God to talk back to us. We are able to express our love and needs to Him, and ask for His guidance and leading in our lives.

1. How are we to come to God when we pray?

• **HEBREW 4:16:** _____

• **JAMES 1:6:** _____

2. What do these verses say to you about prayer?

• **PSALM 28:6-7:** _____

• **PSALM 30:4:** _____

• **PSALM 34:1-3:** _____

• **PSALM 118:1:** _____

3. According to the following Scriptures, what does God give us?

• **PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7:** _____

• **PSALM 50:15:** _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

4. In LUKE 18:1 and MATTHEW 26:41, why does Jesus command us to pray?

- _____

- _____

5. In JOHN 16:23-24, why does Jesus tell us to pray? _____

6. What reason did God give Jeremiah to pray?

- JEREMIAH 33:3: _____

7. How does prayer change lives and events in everyday life?

- JAMES 5:17-18: _____

- EXODUS 15:24-25: _____

- 1 SAMUEL 1:27: _____

- JUDGES 6:39-40: _____

- Were these men any different than you? Explain why or why not: _____

- Recall specific things you have prayed for and how God responded? Explain: _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

8. Prayer increases our love for those who are seemingly difficult to love.
- According to **Luke 6:27-28**, why does praying for people cause us to love them more?

9. Prayer glorifies God. Why do we pray in Jesus' name?
- **John 14:13-14**: _____

10. What four things does God say in **Psalms 91:15** about those who call upon Him?
- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
11. How does Jesus instruct us to pray in **Matthew 6:5-8**? _____

12. What is the attitude for each phrase of the Lord's prayer in **Matthew 6:9-13**?
- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
13. Read the prayer of Jesus in **John 17**. Notice in verse 20 that everything Jesus asked for in this prayer was for *you* also. Jesus also prays for all future believers.



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to fellowship with Him through prayer!

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

TO COMPLETE YOUR STUDY, FIND THE ANSWERS IN THE BIBLE.

15 • GOD'S WORD

Today, many people believe the Bible is just another good book full of interesting stories. The Bible is considered just another "classic" — great for "pass-time" reading, but not relevant to or valuable for people living in today's world. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Bible IS the inspired, authoritative, inerrant (free from error), and indisputable Word of God for all people for all times.

1. What importance does God place on His Word?

- **PSALMS 138:2:** _____

2. What did Paul write about the divine authorship of the Scriptures?

- **II TIMOTHY 3:16:** _____

3. In the following passages, how do these other writers attribute their words to God?

- **DEUTERONOMY 28:1-2:** _____

- **II SAMUEL 23:1-3:** _____

- **I THESSALONIANS 2:13:** _____

4. **MATTHEW 4:1-11:**

- How did Jesus reply to the temptations of Satan? _____

- If Jesus placed Himself under the authority of the Scriptures, what meaning does this have for us today? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ *“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

5. How did Jesus use the Word of God in the following situations?

- **MARK 7:6-9:** _____

- **MARK 12:24-27:** _____

- **LUKE 10:25-28:** _____

6. What does Jesus say about the Word of God in these verses?

- **MATTHEW 5:17-18:** _____

- **JOHN 17:17:** _____

7. What do the following passages say about the reliability of God’s Word?

- **JOSHUA 23:14:** _____

- **PSALMS 33:11:** _____

- **PROVERBS 30:5-6:** _____

8. From **Luke 1:1-4**, what conclusion can be drawn about the trustworthiness of God’s Word? _____

9. Read **2 Peter 1:15-21**. What did Peter believe was more reliable than a voice from heaven? _____

Why did he think the Bible was reliable? (vs 20-21) _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

10. What is one main reason the Bible was written?

- JOHN 20:30-31: _____

11. Psalm 119 gives many benefits derived from God's Word. List four benefits:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

12. What disappointed Jesus about the people of His day?

- LUKE 6:46: _____

- LUKE 24:25: _____

13. What happens as we study the Bible?

- PSALM 1:1-3: _____

- JOSHUA 1:7-8: _____

- II KINGS 23:2-4: _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to read, believe and obey His Word!

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

TO COMPLETE YOUR STUDY, FIND THE ANSWERS IN THE BIBLE.

16 • THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST

Christianity stands or falls on the REsurrection. If Jesus was not raised from the dead, then we are still in our sins and our faith is meaningless. But the greatest miracle of all time was the Resurrection of Jesus. He conquered sin and death — sin and death no longer have any hold over us because of Jesus' Resurrection.

1. Read **JOHN 2:18-22**. What did Jesus say would happen to Him after He was killed? _____

2. What were the disciples reminded of three days after Christ's death?
 - **LUKE 24:6:** _____

3. What did Peter proclaim in **ACTS 3:15** and Mary in **JOHN 20:18**?
 - _____
 - _____
4. According to **ROMANS 1:4**, what did the resurrection demonstrate about Christ?

5. For a period of six weeks after His resurrection, Jesus walked and talked to many individuals and groups of people. As recorded in **1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-8**, who saw Jesus?

6. Why is the Jesus' resurrection so important for each of us?
 - **2 CORINTHIANS 15:17:** _____

7. Read **ACTS 1:9-11**. Where did Jesus ascend to? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

8. What reason did Jesus give His disciples for going to heaven in **JOHN 14:1-2**?

9. In **JOHN 14:3**, what else did Jesus promise? _____

10. According to **EPHESIANS 1:18-23**, over what did and does Jesus rule?

11. According to **ROMANS 8:34**, what is Christ doing right now?

12. From Jesus' prayer of **JOHN 17**, list some of the things He asked for His followers?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

13. According to **ROMANS 8:35-39**, what can cut us off from Christ's love? _____



May the Lord richly bless you as you choose to live with an eternal perspective!

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

BIBLE STUDY

TO COMPLETE YOUR STUDY, FIND THE ANSWERS IN THE BIBLE.

17 • THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Since the time of the first Christians, the return of Christ has been the hope of every believer. Every generation has wondered, "Will it be soon?" Every New Testament writer mentions the return of Jesus, and these writers refer to it over 300 times in twenty different books.

1. What did Jesus promise His disciples in **JOHN 14:2-3**?

2. What does Jesus say about His return in the following verses?

• **MATTHEW 16:27:** _____

• **MATTHEW 24:27:** _____

• **LUKE 12:40:** _____

• **MARK 13:26-27:** _____

3. How did the two angels describe Jesus' return after He ascended?

• **ACTS 1:9-11:** _____

4. How does Paul refer to the return of the Lord in **1 THESSALONIANS**?

• **Vss. 1:9-10:** _____

• **Vs. 2:19:** _____

• **Vss. 3:12-13:** _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- Vss. 4:16-18: _____

- Vss. 5:2-6: _____

Can we see these things happening today? Explain: _____

5. According to 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-2, what will characterize people living in the last days?

6. Read MATTHEW 24 and 25 to learn the details and warnings Jesus gives us about His return.

- According to MATTHEW 24:6-7, what events will take place on the earth before He comes again? _____

- What does MATTHEW 24:12-14 say Christians will be doing in spite of widespread evil?

7. According to MATTHEW 24:23-36, how should you respond if someone tells you Christ has returned and is performing great miracles in another city? _____

8. In MATTHEW 24:29, what signs will there be in the sky? _____

9. In MATTHEW 24:36, who knows the exact time of Christ's return? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ *“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

10. According to **MATTHEW 24:37-40** and **GENESIS 6:5, 11-13**, what will people be doing?

Interestingly, Christ’s return will happen in a single period of time — all at once — simultaneously in all the earth’s time zones.

11. Read **2 PETER 3:3-4** and **1 THESSALONIANS 5:3**. What ideas will be popular in the last days?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Have you seen any of these teachings in the world today? Explain: _____

As believers, we eagerly await the time of the Jesus’ second coming, which is nearer than when we first believed. The future is in God’s hands. This means the future is filled with fear and uncertainty for the unbeliever, but with hope and certainty for the believer.

12. Read **HEBREWS 9:26-28**.

- What will Jesus bring with Him when He appears the second time? _____

- What is your attitude about His second coming? _____

13. Read **ROMANS 13:11-14**.

- What does this passage tell us *not* to do? _____

The Most Excellent Way ~ *“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

- What does it tell us *to do*? _____



May the Lord bless you as you abide in Christ and await His return!

*“He who is the faithful witness to all these things says,
‘Yes, I am coming soon!’
Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!
The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.”
Revelation 22:20-21
New Living Translation*