

**30 Key Areas in
Our Christian Walk**

Bible Studies

for

Discipleship Training

Part 3 – Keys 21-30

Prepared To Equip the Saints

By

Lighthouse Missionary Church

East Jordan, Michigan

30 Key Areas in our Christian Walk

From *The Christian Life Profile* by Randy Frazee

Beliefs (transformed mind)

Trinity – I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace – I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible – I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God – I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ – I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church – I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity – I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion – I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity – I believe there is a heaven and a hell, and I believe Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship – I believe everything I am or own belongs to God.

Virtues (transformed heart)

Love – I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy – I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace – I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Patience – I take a long time to overheat, and I endure patiently the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness – I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Faithfulness – I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to that relationship.

Gentleness – I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control – I have power, through Christ, to control myself.

Hope – I can cope with the hardships of life and death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

Humility – I choose to esteem others above myself.

Practices (transformed behavior)

Worship – I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer – I pray to God to know Him, to lay my requests before Him, and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study – I study the Bible to know God, the Truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness – I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Biblical Community – I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Spiritual Gifts – I know and use my spiritual gifts to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Time – I gave away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money – I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith – I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.



WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

¹Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. ²Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. ³For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

⁴In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. ⁵The sea is his, for he made it, and his

hands formed the dry land. ⁶Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; ⁷for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

Psalms 95:1-7 (NIV)

Worship is both a noun and a verb. As a noun, it is the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for God. As a verb, it is showing reverence and adoration for God using religious rites. As Christians, 1 Peter 2:9 tells us that we are a chosen people to declare the praises of God who has called us out of the darkness and into the light. Worshipping God is part of our job description as Christians. Our worship includes speaking, listening, and taking action. It is daily thanking God for who he is, what he has done for us, and what he is currently doing in our lives.

God gave Moses a vision, along with specific instructions, as to what man's worship should involve. The instructions for the tabernacle in the desert, along with the priestly duties, included times of worship and celebration for the people. They were given strict orders to prepare themselves for the Sabbath day so that they were ready for worship. No work was to be done on the Sabbath.

In the New Testament, Jesus summarizes all of the laws in a single command; "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27) This indicated that worship is a matter of the heart. It is interesting that on the night of the last supper, the scriptures say that the disciples sang a hymn before they left the upper room (see Matt. 26:30).

In the early days of the church, Acts 2:42 states: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." That means there was teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer when they met together. They also met in homes as well as in the temple. Singing was also a part of the early church. "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:18-20. Today, some people equate "worship time" with just the singing but worship includes much more than a song.

Many of us also identify worship as only a corporate activity. Over the years much time, effort, and money has been spent constructing magnificent church buildings with great pipe organs and areas where choirs can perform. These beautiful settings may help to inspire people to worship God. At the same time, other people are able to worship God in the great outdoors while viewing the beauty of nature that God has given to us. Yet, we can also go into our prayer closet (Matt. 6:6) and find God and worship Him all by ourselves. Jesus even encouraged small groups of two or three to meet together. "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matt. 18:20)

Wherever or however we chose to worship, it needs to come from our heart because God is great and He wants us to praise Him with all we have. Certainly, God is worthy of all our worship.

1. Read Romans 12:1-2. It says that we ought to “offer our bodies as living sacrifices.”
 - A) What do you understand that to be?

 - B) In this passage, how does verse 2 add to your understanding of true worship?

2. Examine John 4:22-24. In your own words, what is the difference between attending a worship service and living in worship?

3. According to Hebrews 10:24-25, how does regular fellowship with other believers help you worship God with new and fresh eagerness?

4. Reading Matthew 5:23-25, what are some circumstances that might hinder your worship of God and how can you deal with these issues?

5. Look up Acts 2:42-47 and Colossians 3:15-17.
 - A) How can worshipping Jesus transform the lives of people around us?

 - B) Have you seen any change in the people with whom you have contact? (explain)

6. Study 1 Corinthians 14:26.
 - A) What does it look like when God’s people meet together for worship?

 - B) Does this passage say that worship is passive or active?

 - C) Do you come to worship prepared for the experience?

7. **Discussion Question:** What does worshipping God include and exclude? How am I hampering my life of worship by conforming to the world? How can I encourage my life of worship by renewing my mind?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you enter into times of worship with your heart and mind prepared.



I pray to God to know Him, to lay my requests before Him, and to find direction for my daily life.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

¹⁶ Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me. ¹⁷ I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. ¹⁸ If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; ¹⁹ but God has surely listened and has heard my prayer. ²⁰ Praise be to God, who

has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

Psalm 66:16-20 (NIV)

Prayer is how we communicate with God. It is vital for a Christian if they want to have a relationship with God. Just like a human relationship, we must communicate with the person we love. Prayer is how we get to know God.

Jesus prayed as an example for us and He instructed us about prayer. He prayed early in the morning (Luke 1:35); ask and it will be done (John 15:7); believe when you pray (Mark 11:24); don't use empty phrases (Matt. 6:7); ask, seek, and knock and it will be opened unto you (Luke 11:9); pray in secret (Matt. 6:6); don't lose heart (Luke 18:1). Since Jesus prayed to His Father to stay within the Father's will, so we ought to do the same.

There are a couple of acronyms that have been suggested for prayer: P.R.A.Y. - means **P**raise, **R**epent, **A**sk, and **Y**ield; and A.C.T.S., **A**doration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving, and **S**upplication. When the disciples asked Jesus about prayer, He responded by giving them the Lord's Prayer as a model (Matt.6:9-13). Prayer is coming to our Father and presenting ourselves as an offering to Him and then responding in faith and obedience. The methods that we use when we pray are not as important as coming to God with a sincere heart. Matthew 6:1-34 is certainly a primer for us to follow in our prayer life.

We also pray to find solutions to life's situations and problems. When we prepare for making decisions (Luke 6:12-13); to fight against demons (Matt. 17:14-21); to ask for more workers for the spiritual harvest (Luke 10:21); to overcome temptation (Matt. 26:41); and to have strength for going into spiritual battle (Eph. 6:10-20).

When we have specific requests, God promises to answer our prayers (John 14:13-14) but if the answer does not come as quickly as we think it should, we must realize that God does His work according to His timetable, not according to ours (Matt. 7:7; Luke 18:1-8). God is never too early, never too late, always on time, and answers His way. God is not a cosmic slot-machine as some people may wish, but He does delight in giving good gifts to his children. As the Lord's prayer states, we ask for God's will to be done here on Earth as it is in Heaven, not that our will be done here on Earth according to our wishes. Who are we to instruct God?

Prayer is the key to finding forgiveness from our sins (1 John 1:9). Prayer can be for personal salvation as well as for corporate situations (2 Chron. 7:14). In addition to confession, the prayers of the righteous are powerful, effective, and will bring healing to the sick and even affect the weather (James 5:13-18).

We need to be in an attitude of prayer at all times and for all occasions (1 Thess. 5:16-18; 1Tim. 2:1-4). God will bless our lives beyond what we can ask, or think, or hope for (Eph. 3:20). Without prayer, our Christian life will wither and die. Therefore, let us come boldly before the throne and make our requests known to our Heaven Father!

1. Why should we pray?
 - A) 1 Chronicles 16:11
 - B) 2 Chronicles 7:14-15
 - C) Matthew 7:7
 - D) Matthew 26:41
 - E) James 5:13-18

2. How should we pray?
 - A) Philippians 4:6
 - B) Mark 11:24
 - C) John 16:24
 - D) Matthew 6:5-8
 - E) Luke 11:7-11
 - F) Romans 8:26 & 12:12

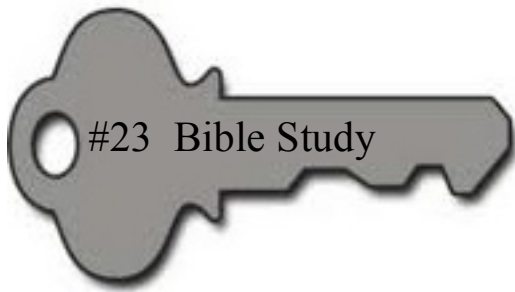
3. What should we pray for?
 - A) John 14:13-14
 - B) James 5:15-16
 - C) 1 Timothy 2:1-4
 - D) Psalm 112:6-8
 - E) Psalm 32:5-7
 - F) Jeremiah 33:3
 - G) Jeremiah 42:2-3

4. Who should we pray for?
 - A) Ephesians 6:18
 - B) Matthew 19:13-15
 - C) 1 Samuel 12:33
 - D) John 17:20-26
 - E) Matthew 5:43-44
 - F) 2 Thessalonians 11:12

5. When should we pray?
 - A) 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
 - B) Mark 1:35
 - C) 1 Peter 4:7
 - D) Jeremiah 29:13
 - E) Mark 11:24

6. **Discussion Question:** What is the biggest obstacle in your prayer life? What action should you take to overcome this obstacle? Do you fast when you have special prayer requests?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you to pray without ceasing and for God to show you the ways that He answers your prayers.



I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

¹² For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes

of him to whom we must give account.

Hebrews 4:12-13 (NIV)

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. ¹⁰⁶ I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. ¹⁰⁷ I have suffered much; preserve my life, LORD, according to your word. ¹⁰⁸ Accept, LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws. ¹⁰⁹ Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law.

Psalms 119:105-109 (NIV)

Reading the Bible is like reading the manufacturer's handbook for a car or a piece of machinery. It gives us a list of all the parts, how they fit together, and how they function as a whole. It is the ultimate guide for how the unit should properly operate. The Bible has been described as the **B**asic **I**nstructions **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth. It certainly is this, but also much more.

It has been said that there are eight reasons to study the Bible: 1) It is God's Word to us. 2) We get to know God better. 3) We can avoid error. 4) It contains the words of Jesus. 5) God wants us to study it. 6) We can help others. 7) We learn what it says firsthand. 8) It is full of cultural literacy.

In addition, it is the truth for a world that wants to know what is the right way to live. It is historically accurate. It explains the sinful condition of man along with God's remedy and the steps we can take to become free from sin and alive to righteousness (Romans 6:1-14). When we read the Word, we are inspired to make changes in the way we live. There are many examples of right living and also wrong living. We learn of blessings, for those who obey, and curses, for those who do not.

When you step back and look at the large picture of the Bible, we learn that God created all there is and man was placed in the Garden of Eden where life was perfect. God came to man, in the cool of the day, to walk and talk with him (Gen. 3:8-9). However, sin broke this intimate fellowship between God and man. When sin entered the world, it became corrupt and mankind became further and further separated from God, except for a few individuals. God decided to destroy the Earth with a flood but even then, man continued to reject God. Then God made a covenant with Abraham and established His chosen nation. A system of sacrifices was established by God so man could re-establish communion with God. However, even the chosen people were rebellious and stiff-necked, although God showed His blessings and promises to them. Finally, God established a second covenant with mankind and sent His one, and only Son (John 3:16) so man could find grace and mercy at the foot of the cross. The Bible then records the words and actions of Jesus and the instructions of the apostles to guide us in living a holy life. Finally, the Bible ends with announcing a glorious future with God in Heaven, no more sorrow, no more pain! We will eternally be with God and sin will finally be defeated. Again, we are back to perfection with a new Heaven and a new Earth!

Therefore, we must study God's Word daily and discover God's ways. We need His direction for our life, because when we rely on our own instincts it leads us into sin and death. However, in the Word of God, we find life and hope. Knowledge should lead us to obedience. As we apply Biblical truth in our life, we are transformed and become a new creation – just what God has planned for us!

1. Why should we study the Bible?
 - A) John 5:39
 - B) 2 Timothy 2:15
 - C) Ezra 7:10
 - D) Romans 15:4
 - E) John 8:32

2. What benefits do we get from studying the Bible?
 - A) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - B) Psalm 119:105
 - C) Hebrews 4:12
 - D) Acts 17:11
 - E) 2 Samuel 7:28

3. What methods should we use when we study the scriptures?
 - A) Proverbs 30:6
 - B) Revelation 22:19
 - C) Acts 8:30-35
 - D) 1 Peter 2:2
 - E) Revelation 1:3
 - F) Proverbs 2:1-5

4. How should studying the Bible affect our life?
 - A) Psalm 119:11
 - B) Joshua 1:8
 - C) Proverbs 3:1-2
 - D) Deuteronomy 11:18-21
 - E) Ephesians 6:17
 - F) John 13:17
 - G) James 1:22
 - H) Matthew 13:18-23
 - I) Matthew 4:1-4
 - J) 2 Peter 1:3-4

5. **Discussion Question:** What struggles do you encounter with your own study of the Bible? What steps could you take to improve your Bible study time? Share “tips” and techniques that you have found to be helpful in your own personal Bible study time.

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you take steps to improve your study of God’s Word and also for you to be more obedient to what He teaches you each day.

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.



WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:28-34 (NIV)

Being single-minded means having a focus that is solely directed on our relationship to God and what it means to our life. As our theme verses say, for a Christian, our primary focus should be on seeking “first his kingdom and his righteousness” and letting all of the other “things” take care of themselves.

However, for many Christians, we can be easily distracted by the cares of the world and often have doubts about our relationship to God. It is especially difficult when we encounter hard situations and problems. Life happens and we can easily become overwhelmed by the circumstances that occur and all of a sudden we focus on these things, panic, and then rely on our own resources instead of turning to God.

In a article by John MacArthur, he uses Matthew 6:19-34 as a model for being single-minded. We should have a single treasure (vv.19-20). Yes, we need to provide for our families, make wise investments, and have money to give to the poor and support God’s work. But, are we hoarding funds or only using our money for selfish and unnecessary things?

We should have a single vision (v.22). Our eyes should be focused on spiritual experiences and blessings instead of selfish greed. We need to abandon our material ways, deny ourselves, and follow Christ daily. This is especially a real problem in American society. We are constantly bombarded with advertisements that are designed to make us “want more” or “get stuff” that we don’t really need.

We should have a single master (v.24). We cannot afford to be pulled in two directions. It is easy to think that we can live with a foot in both the material and spiritual world. There is no middle ground and a house divided cannot stand. A single master is what God desires from us (Rom. 6:16-22). Yet, it is a constant battle that we face and it requires us to make a daily decision to keep our eyes focused on Christ.

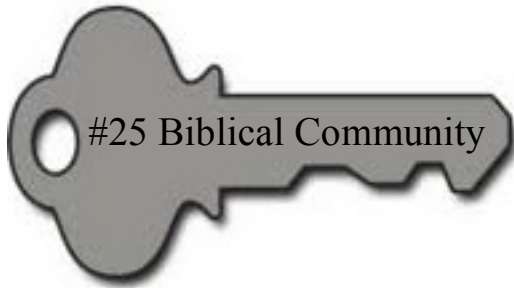
We must have a single goal (v.33). Righteousness and the kingdom of God must be foremost in our thinking and we need to realize that priorities matter. When we have our primary focus on Godly matters, the other matters will become secondary and take their proper place. God knows what “things” we need and is always ready to supply what is necessary. Like the Israelites of the Old Testament, we only need to gather enough “manna” to meet today’s needs. However, we can get wrapped up in the future and neglect the issues that face us today.

Let’s live our lives in service to God. Make it a priority to spend time each day reading God’s Word, praying, and being spiritually prepared. In addition, we should practice a simpler lifestyle

rather than one that is cluttered with too many activities and excessive material possessions. This will help us to be single-minded in our pursuit of God.

1. What does the Bible say about single-mindedness verses doubled mindedness?
 - A) James 1:2-8
 - B) Luke 16:13
 - C) 1 Corinthians 10:21
 - D) James 4:8
 - E) Psalm 119:113
 - F) Luke 9:62
2. What kind of thinking can lead us astray from pure devotion to Christ?
 - A) 2 Corinthians 11:3
 - B) Hebrews 13:9
 - C) Romans 1:21-25
 - D) Ephesians 4:14
3. What can help us become more single-minded in our walk with Christ?
 - A) 1 Corinthians 2:12-16
 - B) 1 Corinthians 15:58
 - C) Philippians 3:12-14
 - D) 1 Peter 5:9
4. How does Biblical success differ from success in modern-day America?
 - A) Matthew 10:22
 - B) Exodus 20:3
 - C) Luke 12:22-34
5. **Think Question:** Look up Luke 10:38-42, 2 Timothy 2:22, and Matthew 6:33. What five things can you do to implement making God first in your life?
6. **Discussion Question:** Why is it important to know your priorities and why is it sometimes hard to stick to these principles?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you to become more single-minded in your relationship to Christ and help you get rid of “things” that may draw you away from following Him more closely.



I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold

property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

What is Biblical community? It is a community of Christians, fellow believers in Christ that hold a common belief based upon the Bible and the teachings of Christ. It is not a building, nor is it one particular denomination. Remember, the church of Christ is made up of those who confess that Christ is Lord of their life – the people!

This community has several characteristics as suggested in our theme verses. It is people that devote themselves to Biblical teachings. The Word of God is full of wisdom about how God's people should live. Their actions, habits, how they treat others, and what their lives look like to the rest of the world are included in these teachings

The community enjoys fellowship with each other. Fellowship includes friendly relationships with each other based upon common interests and the sharing of like-minded ideas. It may include eating together (which is a common practice in many churches) and it also includes working toward common goals, being in close relationships, and overall enjoyment of spending time with each other.

The community breaks bread together. In the ministry of the church, communion is sharing the bread and wine in memory of what Christ did for us on the cross. Yet, it also includes the idea of sharing our food resources with each other for a special meal from time to time. Also, it would include making sure that each family in our community has their physical needs taken care of by other people within the group. That is why many groups maintain food pantries and benevolent funds to help those who do not have enough resources.

It is also a praying community. Prayer is vital to maintaining the Christian basis on which the community is built. Prayer gives direction to the members on both a personal and corporate level. Most of all, prayer connects the community to God, our Father.

The community experiences miracles, signs, and wonders due to the work of the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His followers after He returned to Heaven. Then, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God came down and the "Christ followers" were never the same. Since then, the Spirit has continued to work among believers, and still does today.

The community has all things in common. In the first century, they had a very special communal arrangement that our American society does not duplicate. However, within the larger Christian community there is a great amount of sharing and cooperation at various levels. Starting with small groups, local churches, denominational endeavors, international cooperative mission organizations, and finally working together with various Christian ministries, the community is moving to fulfill the great commission around the world. This is our common goal.

The mission of the Christian community is to spread the Good News to our family, our neighborhood, our local area, our region, our country, and finally to the entire world. It is urgent for us to get involved with this mission because time, as we know it, is running out and no one knows the day or hour of the Lord's return.

1. What type of relationships should exist with the Christian community?
 - A) Hebrews 10:24-25
 - B) Acts 2:42-47
 - C) Galatians 6:2
 - D) Romans 12:3-13

2. When the community shares things in common, it suggests that we hold each other accountable. What should be included in holding each other accountable?
 - A) Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
 - B) 1 Thessalonians 5:14
 - C) Matthew 5:13-16
 - D) Philippians 2:3-16
 - E) John 15:1-12

3. When members of the community need spiritual direction, what actions should be taken?
 - A) Matthew 22:37-40
 - B) Psalm 133:1-3
 - C) John 15:12-13
 - D) Proverbs 17:17
 - E) 1 Peter 4:8-11
 - F) Proverbs 3:1-4
 - G) Colossians 3:13
 - H) Romans 1:11-12

4. Since prayer is important to the Christian community, what should we be praying for?
 - A) Romans 12:9-21
 - B) James 5:16
 - C) 1 Corinthians 1:10
 - D) Ephesians 4:2-6
 - E) 1 Corinthians 12:25-27

5. **Discussion Question:** Who are you accountable to in your spiritual journey? Who can you mentor and help within the Christian community?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you understand what your role is within the Christian community, how you can find assistance when needed, and how you can help others.



I know and use my spiritual gifts and fulfill God's purposes.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (NIV)

⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Romans 12:4-8 (NIV)

God gives spiritual gifts to all believers. Each person is unique in their gifts and how they can be used. No two Christians have the same gifts, however, they are all given to us by God and are given for the common good of the Christian community – the church.

We need to know what our spiritual gifts are. On the following pages there is a spiritual gift inventory that you should take if you are not certain which spiritual gifts that God has given for you to use in the body of Christ. There are also some websites on the internet where you can go that will help you discover your spiritual gifts. Some of these are free and others will charge a small fee for an analysis of your answers. Most of these spiritual gift inventories work the same, you are asked many questions and based upon your responses, they analyze the data and produce a written report.

<http://www.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts>. and buildingchurch.net/g2s-i.htm are two possible websites you can visit or simply do the questions that are in this booklet.

The important thing is to know your gifts and to use them for the benefit of the body of Christ. Jesus gave the parable of the ten minas in Luke 19:11-27 and it talks about a king that went away and gave his servants each one mina (3-month's wages). They were total to put the money to work. When the king returned, he asked for an accounting from each servant. One earned 10 minas, one earned 5, but one had hidden the money and it did not even gain interest. The king was angry with this servant, had the mina taken away and given to the servant that had earned 10. The moral to his parable is that we are to use what has been given to us by the King.

If you read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, you will find that the body of Christ (the church) cannot properly operate if some of the gifts are missing or if we all use the same gift. Like our own physical body, we are made up of many parts that function together as one. If one part is missing, we can become disabled and may not be able to carry out our necessary functions. Within the body of Christ, we need people who are all willing to take on different functions, utilize their role, and practice their gift so that nothing is missing.

1. What are the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 12:27-31 and in Ephesians 4:11-16?

2. In 1 Corinthians 12:27-31, what do you think is meant by the phrase the “greater gifts?”

3. What information is contained in 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, and how does it related to chapter 12?

4. How should we use our spiritual gifts?
 - A) Romans 12:3-8
 - B) 1 Peter 4:10-11
 - C) 1 Corinthians 12:7
 - D) Ephesians 4:12-13
 - E) Acts 1:8
 - F) Romans 1:11-12
 - G) 1 Peter 3:15-16
 - H) Joel 2:28-30

5. **Discussion Question:** After completing the spiritual inventory, share your spiritual gifts with the group. Do you believe that you are exercising all of your spiritual gifts? What things might be preventing you from using your gifts.

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you understand what your gifts are and ask for the opportunity to utilize them in the body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY

DIRECTIONS

This is not a test, so there are no wrong answers. The *Spiritual Gifts Survey* consists of 80 statements. Some items reflect concrete actions; other items are descriptive traits; and still others are statements of belief.

- Select the one response you feel best characterizes yourself and place that number in the blank provided. Record your answer in the blank beside each item.
- Do not spend too much time on any one item. Remember, it is not a test. Usually your immediate response is best.
- Please give an answer for each item. Do not skip any items.
- Do not ask others how they are answering or how they think you should answer.
- Work at your own pace.

Your response choices are:

- 5—Highly characteristic of me/definitely true for me
- 4—Most of the time this would describe me/be true for me
- 3—Frequently characteristic of me/true for me—about 50 percent of the time
- 2—Occasionally characteristic of me/true for me—about 25 percent of the time
- 1—Not at all characteristic of me/definitely untrue for me

- _____ 1. I have the ability to organize ideas, resources, time, and people effectively.
- _____ 2. I am willing to study and prepare for the task of teaching.
- _____ 3. I am able to relate the truths of God to specific situations.
- _____ 4. I have a God-given ability to help others grow in their faith.
- _____ 5. I possess a special ability to communicate the truth of salvation.
- _____ 6. I have the ability to make critical decisions when necessary.
- _____ 7. I am sensitive to the hurts of people.
- _____ 8. I experience joy in meeting needs through sharing possessions.
- _____ 9. I enjoy studying.
- _____ 10. I have delivered God's message of warning and judgment.
- _____ 11. I am able to sense the true motivation of persons and movements.
- _____ 12. I have a special ability to trust God in difficult situations.
- _____ 13. I have a strong desire to contribute to the establishment of new churches.
- _____ 14. I take action to meet physical and practical needs rather than merely talking about or planning to help.
- _____ 15. I enjoy entertaining guests in my home.

- _____ 16. I can adapt my guidance to fit the maturity of those working with me.
- _____ 17. I can delegate and assign meaningful work.
- _____ 18. I have an ability and desire to teach.
- _____ 19. I am usually able to analyze a situation correctly.
- _____ 20. I have a natural tendency to encourage others.
- _____ 21. I am willing to take the initiative in helping other Christians grow in their faith.
- _____ 22. I have an acute awareness of the emotions of other people, such as loneliness, pain, fear, and anger.
- _____ 23. I am a cheerful giver.
- _____ 24. I spend time digging into facts.
- _____ 25. I feel that I have a message from God to deliver to others.
- _____ 26. I can recognize when a person is genuine/honest.
- _____ 27. I am a person of vision (a clear mental portrait of a preferable future given by God). I am able to communicate vision in such a way that others commit to making the vision a reality.
- _____ 28. I am willing to yield to God's will rather than question and waver.
- _____ 29. I would like to be more active in getting the gospel to people in other lands.
- _____ 30. It makes me happy to do things for people in need.
- _____ 31. I am successful in getting a group to do its work joyfully.
- _____ 32. I am able to make strangers feel at ease.
- _____ 33. I have the ability to plan learning approaches.
- _____ 34. I can identify those who need encouragement.
- _____ 35. I have trained Christians to be more obedient disciples of Christ.
- _____ 36. I am willing to do whatever it takes to see others come to Christ.
- _____ 37. I am attracted to people who are hurting.
- _____ 38. I am a generous giver.
- _____ 39. I am able to discover new truths.
- _____ 40. I have spiritual insights from Scripture concerning issues and people that compel me to speak out.
- _____ 41. I can sense when a person is acting in accord with God's will.
- _____ 42. I can trust in God even when things look dark.
- _____ 43. I can determine where God wants a group to go and help it get there.

- _____ 44. I have a strong desire to take the gospel to places where it has never been heard.
- _____ 45. I enjoy reaching out to new people in my church and community.
- _____ 46. I am sensitive to the needs of people.
- _____ 47. I have been able to make effective and efficient plans for accomplishing the goals of a group.
- _____ 48. I often am consulted when fellow Christians are struggling to make difficult decisions.
- _____ 49. I think about how I can comfort and encourage others in my congregation.
- _____ 50. I am able to give spiritual direction to others.
- _____ 51. I am able to present the gospel to lost persons in such a way that they accept the Lord and His salvation.
- _____ 52. I possess an unusual capacity to understand the feelings of those in distress.
- _____ 53. I have a strong sense of stewardship based on the recognition that God owns all things.
- _____ 54. I have delivered to other persons messages that have come directly from God.
- _____ 55. I can sense when a person is acting under God's leadership.
- _____ 56. I try to be in God's will continually and be available for His use.
- _____ 57. I feel that I should take the gospel to people who have different beliefs from me.
- _____ 58. I have an acute awareness of the physical needs of others.
- _____ 59. I am skilled in setting forth positive and precise steps of action.
- _____ 60. I like to meet visitors at church and make them feel welcome.
- _____ 61. I explain Scripture in such a way that others understand it.
- _____ 62. I can usually see spiritual solutions to problems.
- _____ 63. I welcome opportunities to help people who need comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counseling.
- _____ 64. I feel at ease in sharing Christ with nonbelievers.
- _____ 65. I can influence others to perform to their highest God-given potential.
- _____ 66. I recognize the signs of stress and distress in others.
- _____ 67. I desire to give generously and unpretentiously to worthwhile projects and ministries.
- _____ 68. I can organize facts into meaningful relationships.
- _____ 69. God gives me messages to deliver to His people.
- _____ 70. I am able to sense whether people are being honest when they tell of their religious experiences.
- _____ 71. I enjoy presenting the gospel to persons of other cultures and backgrounds.
- _____ 72. I enjoy doing little things that help people.

- _____ 73. I can give a clear, uncomplicated presentation.
- _____ 74. I have been able to apply biblical truth to the specific needs of my church.
- _____ 75. God has used me to encourage others to live Christlike lives.
- _____ 76. I have sensed the need to help other people become more effective in their ministries.
- _____ 77. I like to talk about Jesus to those who do not know Him.
- _____ 78. I have the ability to make strangers feel comfortable in my home.
- _____ 79. I have a wide range of study resources and know how to secure information.
- _____ 80. I feel assured that a situation will change for the glory of God even when the situation seem impossible.

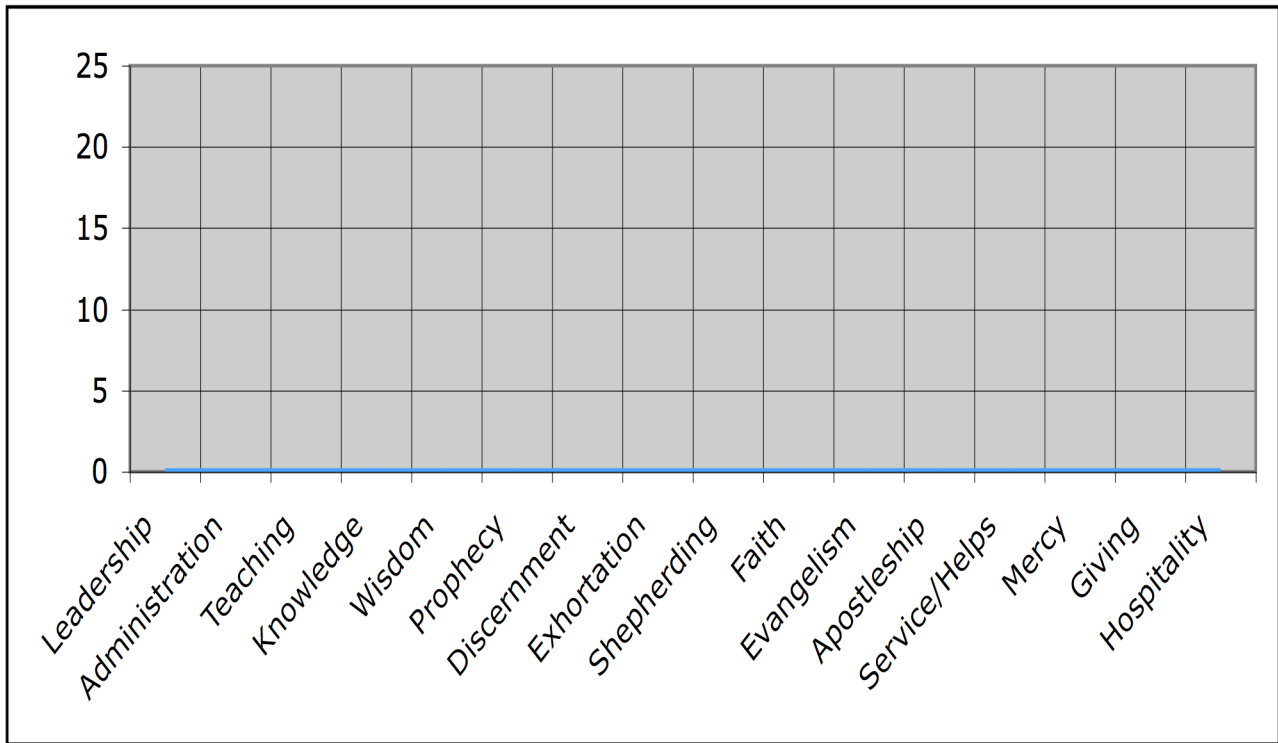
SCORING YOUR SURVEY

Follow these directions to figure your score for each spiritual gift.

1. Place in each box your numerical response (1-5) to the item number which is indicated below the box.
2. For each gift, add the numbers in the boxes and put the total in the TOTAL box.

LEADERSHIP	Item 6	+	Item 16	+	Item 27	+	Item 43	+	Item 65	+	Total =
ADMINISTRATION	Item 1	+	Item 17	+	Item 31	+	Item 47	+	Item 59	+	Total =
TEACHING	Item 2	+	Item 18	+	Item 33	+	Item 61	+	Item 73	+	Total =
KNOWLEDGE	Item 9	+	Item 24	+	Item 39	+	Item 68	+	Item 79	+	Total =
WISDOM	Item 3	+	Item 19	+	Item 48	+	Item 62	+	Item 74	+	Total =
PROPHECY	Item 10	+	Item 25	+	Item 40	+	Item 54	+	Item 69	+	Total =
DESCERNMENT	Item 11	+	Item 26	+	Item 41	+	Item 55	+	Item 70	+	Total =
EXHORTATION	Item 20	+	Item 34	+	Item 49	+	Item 63	+	Item 75	+	Total =
SHEPHERDING	Item 4	+	Item 21	+	Item 35	+	Item 50	+	Item 76	+	Total =
FAITH	Item 12	+	Item 28	+	Item 42	+	Item 56	+	Item 80	+	Total =
EVANGELISM	Item 5	+	Item 36	+	Item 51	+	Item 64	+	Item 77	+	Total =
APOSTLESHIP	Item 13	+	Item 29	+	Item 44	+	Item 57	+	Item 71	+	Total =
SERVICE/HELPS	Item 14	+	Item 30	+	Item 46	+	Item 58	+	Item 72	+	Total =
MERCY	Item 7	+	Item 22	+	Item 37	+	Item 52	+	Item 66	+	Total =
GIVING	Item 8	+	Item 23	+	Item 38	+	Item 53	+	Item 67	+	Total =
HOSPITALITY	Item 15	+	Item 32	+	Item 45	+	Item 60	+	Item 78	+	Total =

GRAPHING YOUR PROFILE



1. For each gift place a mark across the bar at the point that corresponds to your TOTAL for that gift.
2. For each gift shade the bar below the mark that you have drawn.
3. The resultant graph gives a picture of your gifts. Gifts for which the bars are tall are the ones in which you appear to be strongest. Gifts for which the bars are very short are the ones in which you appear not to be strong.

Now that you have completed the survey, thoughtfully answer the following questions.

The gifts I have begun to discover in my life are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- After prayer and worship, I am beginning to sense that God wants me to use my spiritual gifts to serve Christ's body by _____.
- I am not sure yet how God wants me to use my gifts to serve others. But I am committed to prayer and worship, seeking wisdom and opportunities to use the gifts I have received from God.

Ask God to help you know how He has gifted you for service and how you can begin to use this gift in ministry to others.

Description of the Spiritual Gifts

Leadership — Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).

Administration — Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).

Teaching — Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God's Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).

Knowledge — The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God's Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).

Wisdom — Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).

Prophecy — The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).

Discernment — Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).

Exhortation — Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).

Shepherding — The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).

Faith — Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

Evangelism — God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).

Apostleship — The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

Service/Helps — Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).

Mercy — Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).

Giving — Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).

Hospitality — Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).



I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever

you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:15-17 (NIV)

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)

We are each given the same amount of time everyday – 24 hours. Although we do not know how many days we are given to live this life, in Psalm 90:12 we are told; “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” The topic of time is often talked about in the Bible; there are 888 references to the word in the NIV translation.

So how do we use the hours that we are given every day? As our theme verse from Ecclesiastes states, there is a time for everything. There is a list in Ecclesiastes 3:3-8 that includes a time to be born, to die, to plant, to kill, to heal, to weep, to laugh, to mourn, to dance – just to name some.

Of course, most of us often say that there isn't enough time – at least it is an excuse we offer for failing to do certain things that need to be accomplished. We make decisions every second about how to use the time we have. How we use time is always a choice we make. Unlike money or natural resources, we cannot stockpile time to be used at some later date. You must use your time right now and it can't be retrieved or “lived over” again. So far, we do not have a time machine where we can go forward or backward in time to see what lies ahead or re-live events that have occurred.

Time was created by God – in the beginning (Gen. 1:1). The Bible teaches that this life is a prelude to eternity. Eternity is beyond time and is never ending. Our time on Earth is preparation for where we will spend eternity – heaven or hell. This is what makes each day of our life so important and gives us a challenge to use them wisely. The way we utilize our days will determine where we spend eternity.

So how should we spend the time that we have? First, we must make the decision to secure our salvation so that we will be able to spend eternity with God. Secondly, we must then use our remaining days living a life that is pleasing to God and helping people around us to also make this important decision to follow Christ.

As Christians, we have been given the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20), to go into the world and make disciples. God has given each of us gifts so that we possess God-given skills and abilities to work along with other believers to present the Good News to the rest of the world.

Are we doing our Father's work? Are we praying for the lost? Are we helping to meet the physical and spiritual needs of those around us? Are we serving in the church? Are we working to help save the lost and to disciple new believers? Do we have the time to do all of this?

Although we do not know what tomorrow may bring (James 4:14), there is a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things under the control of Christ (Eph. 1:10). It is up to us to take control of the time we are allotted here on Earth to accomplish all that God has for us to do. “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

1. According to James 4:13-15, what does the Bible say about the time that makes up our life?

2. When will time end?
 - A) Mark 13:14-31
 - B) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
 - C) Daniel 12:1-7
 - D) Revelation 22:6-13
 - E) 2 Peter 3:3-7 & 10-13

3. How does God view time?
 - A) 2 Peter 3:8-9
 - C) Psalm 90:1-6
 - D) Psalm 39:4-5

4. How does God control time?
 - A) 2 Kings 20:9-11
 - B) Joshua 10:12-14

5. What opportunities should we take when it is “time?”
 - A) 2 Corinthians 6:1-2
 - B) Ephesians 5:15-18
 - C) Colossians 4:2-6

6. **Discussion Question:** How do you decide how to use your time in the best way? What do you believe is the biggest obstacle for people using their time wisely?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you to make good decisions in how you use your time and which activities are most important to you helping to fulfill the Great Commission.



I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

⁷ But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. *2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV)*

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap

generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 (NIV)

⁸ “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. ¹¹ I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. ¹² “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

Malachi 3:8-12 (NIV)

There are more than 800 scriptures that discuss money. Our theme verses focus on using our money to support God's work. Tithing is a touchy subject for many Christians because they do not think they can live better off with only 90% of their income than with 100%.

While researching this topic, a website, Belief.com listed 10 principles that we should consider about our money.

1. God gives us the ability to create wealth (Deut. 8:18).
2. When we enjoy wealth, we need to thank God for giving us the strength to earn it (Jer. 9:23-24).
3. We should save to give an inheritance to our children (Prov. 13:22).
4. Strive to live debt free so you are not a slave to the lender (Prov. 22:7).
5. Be on your guard against greed or having your possessions owning you (Luke 12:15).
6. Remember, money isn't evil, but loving it is (1 Tim. 6:10).
7. Give your money back to God (Prov. 3:9).
8. Remember to acknowledge that everything belongs to God (Lev. 25:23).
9. Put God before your money to keep things in proper perspective (Matt. 6:33).
10. Count the cost of your spending so that you do not overspend (Luke 14:28).

In American society, many of us think that we are poor and therefore we wrestle with holding to the Biblical commands to tithe and give offerings above and beyond our tithe. The reality is that almost all Americans have more material possessions and money than the average people in most other countries. We do not realize that our entire economy has been blessed by God due to the principles laid down by our founding fathers. In a recent trip to China, a friend was told that the government has realized that many Christian business people have prospered well beyond the average Chinese businesses. That is a real tribute to the idea that when we follow Biblical principles it will give us the ability to create wealth.

God gives wealth to those who will use it wisely and not just to gain possessions. It has been shown that people, who are generous with their resources and give to both worthy sacred and secular

causes, are those that God blesses. As Jesus pointed out to his disciples, when the widow gave her two coins, she gave more than all the rest because she gave all she had (Luke 21:1-4). What a model for us in order to motivate us to give!

1. How can wealth interfere with our relationship to God?
 - A) 1 Timothy 6:10
 - B) Matthew 6:19-24
 - C) Luke 18:18-29
2. What does the Bible say about the value of wealth?
 - A) Ecclesiastes 5:10-15
 - B) Isaiah 55:2
 - C) Proverbs 23:4-5
 - D) Luke 16:9-13
3. What does the Bible say about tithes and offerings?
 - A) Leviticus 27:30
 - B) Deuteronomy 12:5-6, 11
 - C) Nehemiah 10:36-37
 - D) Malachi 3:8-10
 - E) Exodus 22:29 & 25:1-2
4. What is more important to God than tithes and offerings?
 - A) 1 Samuel 15:22
 - B) Psalm 40:6 & 51:16-17
 - C) Mark 12:32-33
 - D) Hebrews 10:5-8
5. **Discussion Question:** Share with your group how God has blessed you because of giving tithes and offerings. How or what can we tithe besides our money?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you know where to direct your financial and material resources so they can be most effectively used to fulfill the Great Commission.



I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:19-20 (NIV)

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Philippians 2:14-18 (NIV)

¹¹ Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. ¹² We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. ¹³ If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5:11-15 (NIV)

We have been given the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) to go into all the world, make disciples, baptize believers, and to teach them to obey Christ's words. For a Christian, being silent about our faith is not an option. The reality is that our actions and attitudes are a just as vital a witness to non-believers as our words. Francis of Assisi is often quoted as saying, "Preach the gospel at all times; when necessary, use words."

Many Christians think that they don't know enough to share their faith. Some people are afraid of what others will think of them because the world tells them that faith is a private matter. However, every person expresses their values to people around them. What people say and do does influence other people, especially in this time of social media. So, unless you live in a vacuum and have no friends or interactions with others, we all exert influence upon our friends and family to some degree. What impact and what messages are we giving to those people? If you are a Christian, it ought to show in the words you use, the actions you take, your attitudes, and values you express.

You do not have to be the graduate of a Bible college or have spent hours in deep Bible study to share your faith. Your faith is the story of how Christ has changed your life. You were once a sinner but now you have found forgiveness in Christ. The things you know best about Christ are a direct result of the changes that He has brought into your life. Knowing theology and having a vast knowledge of the Bible is useful, but not necessary when you share what Christ has done for you. Others will and can argue with your theology, or debate the Bible verses you might quote to them, but no one can argue with a life that has been changed by the power of the Holy Spirit! A changed life trumps all arguments that the world can throw against you.

The present day is full of uncertainty and false thinking. Anything is allowed and if you are sincere, it is considered valid. However, there is truth, ultimate Truth, found in Christ and in the teachings of the Bible. People are attracted to the real thing – something that is genuine and when you

“live” the Word of God, they will want to know more about it. That is why Saint Francis said to “preach” and when necessary, use words.

1. Why do we need to share our faith with others?
 - A) Romans 1:12
 - B) Matthew 10:5-8
 - C) John 15:15-17
 - D) Ephesians 2:8-9
 - E) Proverbs 3:3-6
 - F) James 2:14-24

2. What does the Bible say about defending our faith?
 - A) I Peter 3:15
 - B) 2 Timothy 4:1-2, 22-26
 - C) 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
 - D) 2 Timothy 3:14-17
 - E) 2 Timothy 2: 14-16
 - F) Titus 1:9
 - G) Acts 17:11-12

3. How important is our faith?
 - A) Hebrews 11:6
 - B) Romans 12:3
 - C) Galatians 2:15-16
 - D) James 1:5-8
 - E) Romans 4:20-25

4. What can faith do?
 - A) Mark 11:22-24
 - B) Hebrews 11:1 + whole chapter
 - C) Matthew 21:21-22
 - D) Mark 16:6
 - E) Mark 9:19-29

5. **Discussion Question:** In your everyday life, give some examples of how you share your faith. What are you doing to better know how to share and defend your faith?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to help you shine like stars in a dark and wicked world so that others may see your Christian character and become interested in turning their life over to Christ. Ask God to help you develop a “hit list” (in a Christian way) so you can pray for the salvation of friends and family. Recall James 5:16 (b) “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”



I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

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

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

perfect will.

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:15-17 (NIV)

⁷ For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Romans 14:7-8 (NIV)

Are you living out God's purposes for your life? It is a question that each Christian should daily ask. Francis Shaeffer wrote a best selling book, *How Should We Then Live?*, that addresses the issues that we all face while living in a culture that is post-Christian. We are surrounded by a culture that opposes Biblical values and practices and is increasingly hostile to all that is Christian. What is our response?

We should no longer live our lives for ourselves but for Christ (2 Cor. 5:15). It is no longer I that lives, but Christ that lives in me and I am living by faith (Gal. 2:20). We must deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow Jesus (Matt. 16:24). When we lose our life for Christ, we are actually finding life (Matt. 16:25). A life lived for Christ and having salvation for our soul is better than gaining the whole world (Matt. 16:26).

So how does this all occur in our life? We need to ask Christ to take control of our life – not just some part, but all of it. We give up the right to accomplish our own agenda and surrender ourselves to what He wants. This includes no longer living in our own strength. As Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (NKJV) Our strength comes from the power of the Holy Spirit working in us and through us.

Jesus gave us a number of great examples pertaining to doing the will of the Father. Christ told us that he came "to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) He went even farther and said, "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." (John 5:30) In the Lord's Prayer, we say "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Even on the eve of his crucifixion, Jesus prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matt. 26:39)

As we contemplate giving our lives to Christ and sharing our faith with others, we need to give up our agenda and submit to the will of God our Father. He will lead us and direct us as we minister to others. Jesus instructed the disciples not to worry about how to answer when they were brought before rulers because the Spirit would give them the words to say (Matt. 10:19-20). That is why when we are witnessing to others and they ask us difficult questions, we often come up with answers that did not originate in our brains – the Spirit enables us to give an answer for the hope that lies within us.

1. What do the Scriptures tell us about giving our lives to Christ?
 - A) Matthew 16:5
 - B) 2 Corinthians 5:15
 - C) Galatians 2:20
 - D) Matthew 16:24-26
 - E) Romans 14:7-8

2. According to Ephesians 3:16-21, where does the strength to witness come from and what will be the results?

3. Reading Romans 12:1-2, what does it say about giving ourselves to God?

4. In 1 Peter 3:15-17, what should we do to prepare ourselves for doing God's will?

5. **Discussion Questions:** Share with your group how the Spirit helped you know what the will of God was in your life. What sometimes hinders you from stepping out and walking in the will of God? Are you able to accomplish all that God wants you to do without becoming a full-time Christian worker (pastor, missionary, etc.)? What does it look like in your life to no longer live for yourself but to live for Christ?

Close your session with a time of prayer. Ask God to give you the courage to do His will and to accomplish the "Kingdom work" that He has in mind for you to do.