

THIS IS YOUR HANDBOOK FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING!

A HANDBOOK FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING

An Interactive Bible Study for those interested in knowing more about life in Christ.

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We are anxious for you to understand the secret of successful living! This book includes everything you need to know to do so.

Use this booklet in a special way. The Study Guides may be reviewed in groups, or one at a time. Do not be in a hurry. Let each area lead to whatever discussions you desire to have about the materials.

You will need a full copy of the New Testament. The Study Guides will help you locate special verses of scripture to answer questions. You will be given the reference for every scripture. You may wish to underline each scripture reference as you read it. This will help you recall later on the verses that were reviewed in this study.

This material is written in small “steps” called “frames.” Read the materials with a pencil in your hand. Some frames give information. Others tell you to look up scripture references. Following them, you will find **testing frames**, which ask you for a response. Write in all answers as you go, even if it seems foolish to do so. You will retain much more by writing your answers than by just thinking about them. All answers should be easy for you, if you have fully read the frames just before the questions.

After you have answered each frame, check your answer against the one written upside down at the bottom of the page. If you have answered correctly, go on; if you have not, you may wish to go back a frame or two and review.

We trust you will fully enjoy each one of the Study Guides. Those of us who wrote and tested this material will be praying for you . . . praying that Jesus Christ will become as wonderful and lovely to YOU as He has to US!

PRACTICE SECTION

You ask, “Since the answers are at the bottom of the page, why bother to write my answers?” Writing your answers is the only way you can be sure you have learned essential points. If you do not write the answers, you will give yourself the illusion you know the material. (Why cheat yourself?) By immediately checking your answer, you know if you are ready to move on. If you missed the answer, review.

P-1 The reason for writing my a_____ is to be sure I know the e_____ p_____.

STUDY GUIDE ONE: FACT OR FICTION!

To experience SUCCESSFUL LIVING, life must be built on a solid, trustworthy foundation. People have selected many foundations for life. Some let desires shape their lives. Others let their careers shape life's patterns. We recommend a better foundation, which millions have found to be best of all . . . the Bible. You are now going to look into the New Testament, a significant section of the Bible.

May we give you some very basic information about the Bible? It is a collection of 66 books, written by 40 people who lived within a period covering hundreds of years of time. These 66 books are divided into two sections, the Old and New Testaments, separated by the birth of Jesus Christ.

The 39 books of the Old Testament were written before His birth. The 27 books of the New Testament were written after it.

1-1 The Bible is a collection of _____ books, written by _____ people.

1-2 Find and read 2 Timothy 3:16:

The Bible claims for itself that it is G_____ b_____.

1-3 Find and read 1 Peter 1:10-11:

The prophets who wrote the Old Testament scriptures s_____ i_____, trying to discover what the Spirit of Christ in them was saying as they wrote down "God-breathed" words.

Don't rush by these important verses! They help us understand that the authors of the books of the Bible had God breathing upon (inspiring, guiding) them as they wrote the manuscripts. When they finished writing, they studied their own writings to understand what God had said through them.

1-4 Find and read 1 Peter 1:12:

Who did they discover they had been writing for?

Themselves **Their own generation** **For Us!**

The staggering truth is that the Bible was written by God, writing through men controlled by Him. What they learned was that their writings were actually meant for those of us who live today!

If, as 1 Peter 1:12 says, "even angels long to look into these things," think how important it should be for us to study this amazing book. Remember . . . God prepared this book for *you* to read!

1-1: 66, 40; 1-2: God-breathed; 1-3: searched intently; 1-4: For Us!

1-5 Find and read Luke 19:41-44: To what place was Jesus referring?

J_____

These words were spoken by Jesus about 32 A.D., and Luke wrote them down about 58 A.D. They were exactly fulfilled in 70 A.D., when the Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem. Poor Jerusalem! The nation of Israel was scattered to the winds. Would they ever again live in the land?

In 600 B.C., the prophet Jeremiah wrote (Jeremiah 31:10):

The LORD says, "Nations listen to me, and proclaim my words on the far-off shores. I scattered my people, but I will gather them and guard them as a shepherd guards his flock."

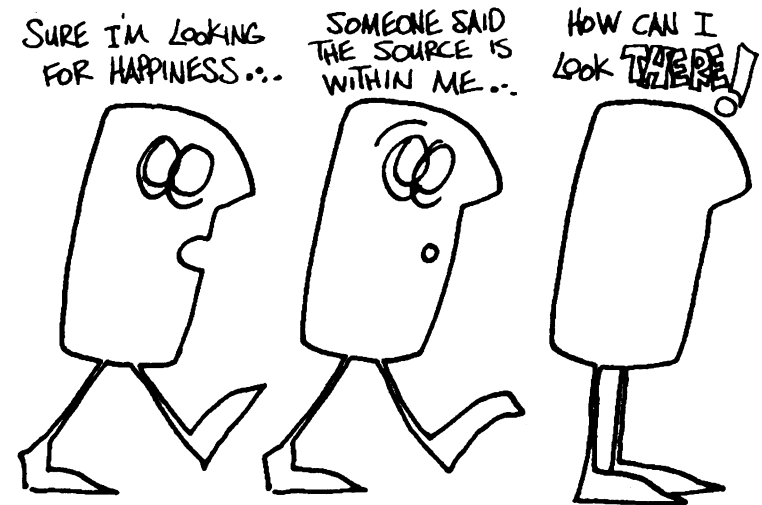
This prediction was fulfilled in 1948, when Israel was established as a nation. There are literally hundreds of predictions in the Bible which have been fulfilled. They cannot be explained away! God breathed the truth that is found in this book.

1-6 Find and read 2 Peter 3:3-15:

Record in a couple of sentences the impact of verses 3-8 and 9-15 upon you as you study them:

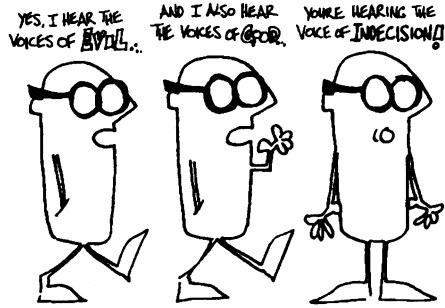
Verses 3-8: _____

Verses 9-15: _____



1-5: Jerusalem; 1-6: Your choice of response . . .

STUDY GUIDE TWO: WHAT MAKES ME TICK?



To live successfully, one must be sure to select the proper VALUES for life. Everything we do is based upon what we value.

2-1 Draw lines connecting each action with each value:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. MATERIALISTIC | a. Watches horror movies |
| 2. SELF-CENTERED | b. Lives for the next pay check |
| 3. GOAL-CENTERED | c. Prays daily |
| 4. ESCAPIST | d. Satisfies personal desires |
| 5. GOD-CENTERED | e. Works to become the manager |

2-2 Which of the persons described below is ruled by materialism?

- A. George took up medicine because he wanted to help heal sick persons.
- B. Marian took up medicine because she was fascinated by surgery.
- C. Fred took up medicine because he knew it would make him wealthy.

2-3 Which one chose medicine because of self-centered values?

- A. B. C.

2-4 Find and read Luke 12:16-21:

Why did Jesus say the man was not “rich” toward God?

- A. He valued wealth, but not a relationship with God.
- B. He did not think spiritual things were profitable.
- C. Neither of the above statements are true.
- D. Both of the above statements are true.

We rarely think about the values we have selected for living. We pick them up “like germs from the streets,” in the same way we might pick up a virus or the measles. We are never sure where we found our values, and we seldom consider the long-range effect of them. In fact, we seldom *think* about our inner values. To uncover them, we must examine the activities in our life style we have selected as “normal.”

What about the values which control your life style? Have you ever scrutinized them? Why don't you do so now? Place a ✓ beside activities mentioned below which are important to your life style:

- 2-5 I am a “workaholic,” and am proud of it.
 Recreation is the highlight of my day.
 Making money occupies my idle thoughts.
 Partying is definitely a part of my week.
 Having a personal relationship with God is important to me.
 I would do almost anything to preserve my friendships.

2-6 Did you find the above list did not include some important activities in your own lifestyle? If so, jot down a couple of them here:

2-7 List two or three of the key values which cause your actions, as revealed by the activities listed above: (Example: materialism)

2-8 Find and read Philippians 3:7-14. These words were written by Paul, an early Christian who was a brilliant attorney. They reveal his values and his lifestyle activities. In verse 7, what lifestyle activities had he deliberately discarded?

“w_____ was to my p_____”

2-9 List the activities in his new life style, as described in these verses:

A. Verse 10: “I want to k_____ C_____”

B. Verse 14: “I press on toward the goal to w_____ the p_____”

We have been thinking about lifestyles, and the way they reveal our true values. Paul has obviously thrown over former values to adopt a radically different life style. What made him tick? What caused him to change? His own report of the reasons for his radical change are found in Acts 26:4-29. If you are interested enough, you might like to ponder his explanation.

Obviously, before any person is open to change, there must come a dissatisfaction with the way things are. Paul's case proves this!

STUDY GUIDE THREE: WHY ARE WE HERE?

Can you imagine a child who is loved by both parents, supplied with all personal needs and luxuries, and who refuses to talk with them? Can you imagine that child then reaching working age, ignoring the parents, and caring exclusively about personal desires?

Many of us are like that child! Concerned about self, we spend our life choosing what pleases us. We never give a thought to having a personal relationship with the One who created us, or to the possibility that He has a plan which will make life more meaningful than following our own plans.

3-1 Find and read Revelation 4:11:

According to this verse, by whose will are we created? _____

Life is successful only when it becomes properly related to God. Appreciating His great wisdom, we recognize life will become most significant only when guided by Him.

3-2 Find and read 1 Corinthians 2:6-10:

According to this passage, which human “experts” can provide guidance equal to that offered by God?

- Psychiatrists
- Philosophers
- Both of the above
- Neither of the above

Living life without having any guidance for it is a tragedy. One man said, “I have often wondered why I am here. Since I don’t have any idea why I am here, I’m going to enjoy it as best I can unto my life ends!”

Do you own a watch? It is a mechanical device for measuring *time* . . . something we can never own. The best we can do is to manage it! Living is actually nothing more than “spending” time. In the case of the man just mentioned, he lives with a feeling he is just “killing” time. That’s an interesting way of saying he is wasting *life*, isn’t it?

Time belongs to God. It is something He gives to us, and it is something we cannot recover, once spent.

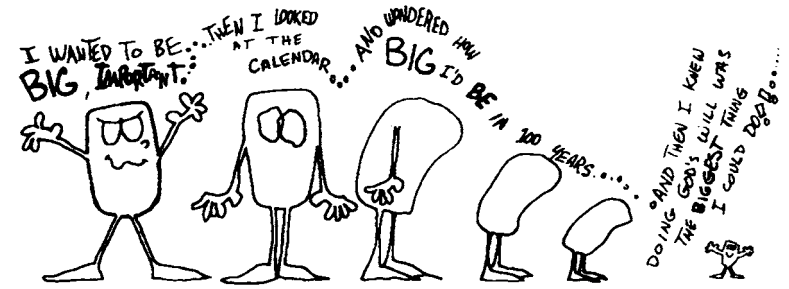
3-3 Which of the following items cannot be replaced, once lost?

- A wife
- A house
- A car
- A day

3-4 Find and read again Luke 12:16-21:

What did the rich man assume he “owned” that he could not control?

- Barns
- Grain
- Goods
- Time



A person was heard to say, “Excuse me—I don’t want to hear about Jesus Christ at this stage of my life. I want to enjoy life first. Later on, I may get interested in following Him . . . but not now.”

3-5 The assumption of this person is that (✓ your answer)

- A. Time spent in God’s plan is not pleasurable.
- B. Time spent outside God’s plan is not pleasurable.

3-6 Find and read Hebrews 9:27:

According to this verse, there is a life after death, and a time when we face J_____.

Since life is so uncertain, does it make sense to think only about this life, when we know there is existence after death? Our actions, decisions, and value systems on earth shape our life after death. People who do not think through the relationship between life now and life hereafter are trying to escape from reality.

In C. S. Lewis’ fascinating book, *The Great Divorce*, he portrays a group of people in hell taking a bus excursion to heaven. When they get off the bus, they discover their shadowy forms cannot walk on the real blades of grass in heaven. Each blade becomes a spear to cause them pain! He goes on to make this powerful point: If men enjoy living in this life apart from the fellowship and obedience of God, even *heaven* would be *hell* for them! You see, in heaven all men fellowship with God, and all men do His will.

3-7 If a person refuses to fellowship with God on earth, which of the following heavenly activities would he find enjoyable? (UNDERLINE YOUR CHOICES)

1. Obediently following the directions of a loving God at all times.
2. Spending time just fellowshipping and sharing with God.
3. Continually, endlessly seeking to please God with every action.
4. Existing forever in a land without gambling, immorality, lust, personal power, drunkenness, or films and books describing sex and violence.

STUDY GUIDE FOUR: AHA! THE DIFFERENCE IS . . .

“There are so many friends of mine who believe different things about God! How can I be sure that what I am studying in this course is true?” Hundreds of times a day, someone says, “All religions are the same. As long as one is sincere, any religion is OK.”

That’s just not true. All religions are NOT the same. Did you know, for example, that some religions deny the existence of *any* God? Others teach there are many gods. Some teach that we will live forever, and others teach there is no life after death.

If you want to know about eternity or the meaning of life, be certain your authority is not guessing. (That really narrows the field, doesn’t it?) As we discovered in Study Guide One, the Bible is really the only source we can turn to for accurate information. What does it teach us about God?

4-1 Find and read 1 John 4:13-16:

These verses say God is willing to live _____ us.

Notice in this scripture that God is ready to live in us. We immediately think, “I’m not pure enough to be a dwelling place for a holy God.” That’s true. We’ll think about that . . . but just now, simply recognize the fact that God is *willing* to live in any man who qualifies to be inhabited by Him! He is not far away and unapproachable, as many religions teach.

Another important fact about Him is that God has personally come to us, providing His own way for us to be in fellowship with Him.

4-2 Find and read John 3:16. Who did God give to create a connection between Himself and us? _____

Christianity is not one of the world religions. That’s because it isn’t based on keeping a set of rules or striving for perfection. Instead, Christians focus on a *relationship* with God. It’s described as the relationship between a loving father (God) and his children (us).



4-1: In. 4-2: He gave His one and only Son.

The Bible, therefore, tells us that God is personal. He loves us, and He wishes to everlastingly fellowship with us by living within us. No religion ever even *suggests* such a thing!

Another contrast between what the Bible teaches and what religions teach involves the question of sin. In religions, sin is usually explained away as a “hindrance to man’s progress,” or as “a failure to obey a set of laws or rules.” The Bible gives sin a radically different definition.

4-3 Find and read Romans 1:20-23:

According to these verses, sin is: (✓ correct answers:)

- A. Failing to obey a set of rules.
- B. Realizing God exists, and deliberately rejecting that knowledge.
- C. Worshiping idols instead of worshiping God.
- D. Inner human weaknesses to be overcome by meditation.

According to the Bible, sin is simply “self control!” Instead of giving the control of one’s life to God, we play god of our existence. We decide for ourselves what we want “right” and “wrong” to be. Thus, each of us acts as the “god” of his or her own life.

4-4 Find and read Ephesians 2:1-3:

What do you think it means to “gratify the cravings of our sinful nature?”

4-5 Find and read Romans 3:23:

According to this verse, sin is coming s_____ of the g_____ of God.

We usually compare ourselves to some other human being to decide whether we are a “good person.” This verse tells us to use God as our measuring stick. If we fall short of His glory, we do not measure up.

For the non-Christian, the only way for us to cover our sins is either to deny they exist, or to do enough good deeds to balance off the bad ones. Therefore, we must personally deal with the results of our sin through our own efforts. The Bible introduces us to another way: “GRACE.” This word means we receive what we don’t deserve when we’re guilty.

4-6 Find and read Ephesians 2:8-9:

According to the Bible, what can save us from sin? G_____.

Grace means “unmerited favor.” That’s a concept you will not find in any religious system. Only the Bible tells us that a personal, loving God is ready and willing to pardon us for our self-centered, rebellious lifestyle and to live within us. That’s good news!

4-3: B, C. 4-4: Your thoughtful opinion. 4-5: short, glory. 4-6: Grace

STUDY GUIDE FIVE: WHY DO WE NEED COMMANDMENTS?

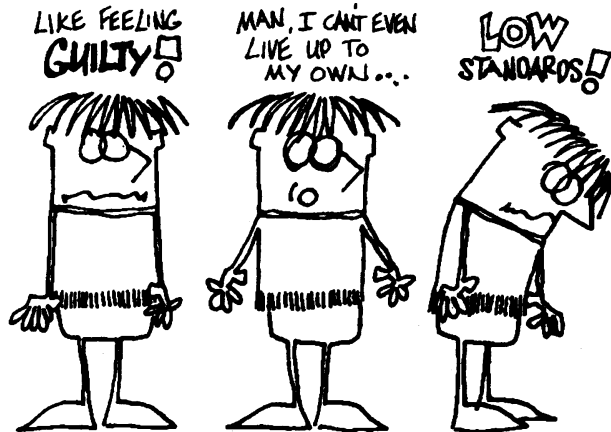
Christians are sometimes accused of being bound by a set of negative rules and regulations, keeping people from doing what they want to do. Magazine articles ridicule the “Queen Victorian ethics” of the Christian faith. One critic said, “If I become a Christian, I could not naturally develop my personality. The Ten Commandments would smother me.” Some people seem to believe God’s primary goal for every person is to take away all joy, all pleasure.

5-1 Find and read 1 Timothy 1:9-11:

According to this passage, the law is made for l _____ and r _____, and u _____ and s _____, the u _____ and i _____.

Why would people wish to remain free of God’s law? For only one reason: *to break them!* In other words, they want to be free to . . .

- Worship false gods
- Make idols to worship
- Commit adultery
- Lie about neighbors
- Curse, using God’s name in vain
- Work seven days a week
- Dishonor their parents
- Commit murder
- Steal
- Scheme to own what belongs to their neighbors



Would we enjoy having people like that living on both sides of us? Do we object to the laws of our nation protecting us from the pain caused by unscrupulous people? Of course not! Then, why would anyone object to the laws of God, which protect us from the pain caused when we violate them?

5-1: lawbreakers, rebels, ungodly, sinful, unholy, irreigious

God’s laws restrict only those who wish to break them. The Bible tells us how many people are included in this group:

5-2 Find and read Romans 3:10-18:

According to this passage, how many people have a natural desire to keep God’s laws?

- EVERYONE MOST EVERYONE NO ONE

There’s a self-centered spirit in us all which makes it impossible for us to keep God’s commandments. Some say, “I try to keep the Ten Commandments.” But, have you ever believed someone who said, “I always keep the Ten Commandments?” Because humans are rebellious, God’s law was written on stone tablets to call them to behave themselves. True Christians don’t try to keep the Ten Commandments. Here’s why:

5-3 Find and read Hebrews 10:16:

According to this verse, where do Christians go to find the law of God?

- To the stone tablets of Sinai To their own hearts

Christians aren’t unhappy because they must keep a set of rules. Instead, they live naturally by God’s commandments. Children who deeply love their parents don’t consider it a hardship to be obedient. It’s like being faithful to your spouse—you do it not because you *have* to, but because you *want* to!

5-4 Find and read Romans 6:20-23:

Draw lines which connect the results of being slaves to sin or to God:

SLAVE TO SIN

SLAVE TO GOD

- a. Leads to holiness
- b. Results In death
- c. Results In eternal life
- d. Free from control of righteousness

5-5 Find and read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20:

According to this passage, which of these two statements describes why a Christian lives a pure life? (Underline your answer.)

- A. As a Christian, I want to go to heaven. I am afraid that if I don’t live according to God’s laws, He will send me to hell in anger. Therefore, I try my best to live right so He will be pleased with me.
- B. As a Christian, I’m deeply in love with my Lord God. I would no more think of betraying Him than I would betray people I deeply love.

5-2: no one. 5-3: To their own hearts. 5-4: SLAVE TO SIN: b, d.; 5-5: B

STUDY GUIDE SIX: WAS JESUS A HYPOCRITE?

Jesus Christ often spoke against hypocrisy, for it is a sin. In the Bible we read He repeatedly rebuked the hypocrites for their sin. He constantly warned his disciples against becoming one.

6-1 Find and read Matthew 7:1-5:

Here we see how Jesus Christ describes hypocrites. They can see a s_____ their brother's eye, but cannot see the p_____ in their own.

6-2 We know the second object is much larger than the first. Jesus was saying here that hypocrites always like to j_____ others when they have worse things to be judged in their own lives.

6-3 Find and read Matthew 6:1-6:

According to this scripture, hypocrites like to: (✓ your answer)

- A. Let the whole world know they are doing good.
- B. Do a good deed quietly without anyone noticing it.

6-4 From the above two portions of scripture, we clearly see what Jesus taught regarding hypocrisy: (✓ your answer)

- A. Christians are expected to be a little hypocritical.
- B. Christians should not be hypocrites.
- C. Christ did not take the sin of hypocrisy too seriously.

Are some Christians hypocrites? Many sincere Christians would have to answer the question by saying, "I don't know!" Their reason for such a response is because of this scripture:

6-5 Find and read Romans 14:10-13:

God says plainly in this scripture that each of us will give an account of h_____ to God. If there are Christians who are hypocrites, they have committed the sin of hypocrisy. God will deal with them!

When a person receives Jesus Christ into his life, that person receives a new, Godly nature within. Nevertheless, the Christian still has complete freedom to choose between right and wrong.

6-6 If a Christian has the life of God within him and still chooses to do things contrary to Christian teaching, he has chosen to do (✓ ANSWER:) RIGHT WRONG.

Is it possible that Jesus was a hypocrite? Does such a question shock you . . . even offend you? Think about it. It's important to know!

6-7 Which of the following statements do you believe about Jesus?

- Great teacher Religious Prophet
- Good person Literal God

6-8 Find and read John 10:30: What did Jesus say His relationship was to God the Father?_____

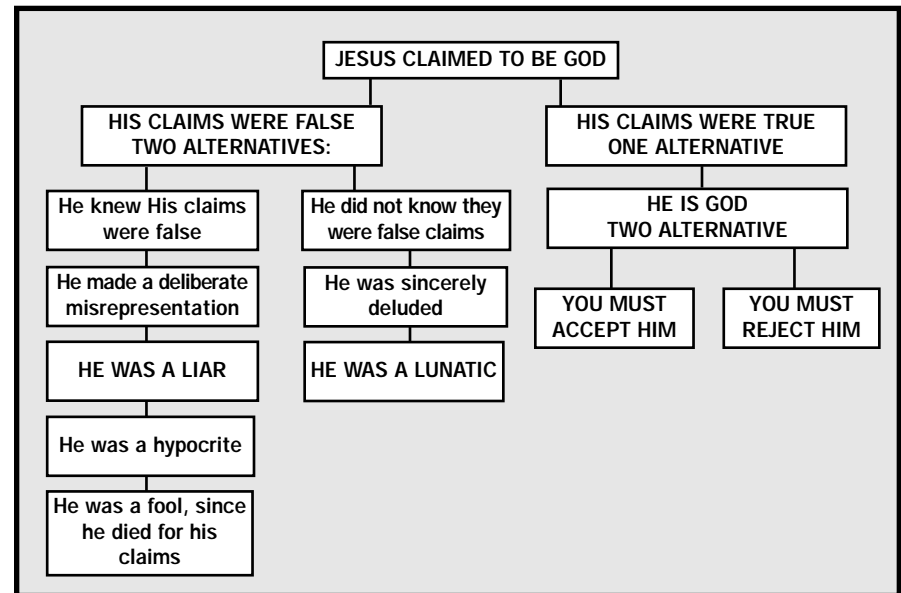
6-9 Find and read John 8:56-58: What did Jesus claim about the length of His existence?_____

6-10 Find and read John 14:9: Who did Jesus say they were seeing when they saw Him?_____

6-11 Who did Jesus flatly claim to be?

- Great teacher Religious Prophet
- Holy Person Literally God

Such claims by Jesus leave little room for arguments! It leaves us with only three alternatives, as depicted by this chart:



Which conclusions shall we accept? Think about the quality of Jesus' teachings. Those who heard Him said, "No man ever spoke like this man" (John 7:46). His teachings were practical. He talked of man's relationship with God. He talked of man's relationship with man. Would you spend time studying the teachings of a man who has caused the entire world to be radically changed? If your answer is "Yes," then you must face the radical claims He made for Himself. He did not say He was *like* God but rather that He was God!

Perhaps the first four books of your New Testament will take on new meaning to you now. You see, they are life histories of Jesus. Have you ever read one of these books? You can easily do so in one evening!

STUDY GUIDE SEVEN: GOD IS NOT SILENT

“You Christians believe in the existence of a God who created the whole universe! Have you ever seen or touched Him? Isn't it ridiculous and superstitious to believe in someone when you do not know where He is, or what He looks like? I don't believe in the existence of anything which cannot be seen!”

7-1 How many of the following do you believe in, even though you have never seen them?

- Air Gravity Electricity Love

We can confirm the existence of air and gravity through the tests of science. We can confirm the existence of George Washington by the evidences of history. We can confirm the existence of love by the evidences of personal experience. To make the sweeping statement that “things which cannot be seen do not exist” is unjustified.

There are two ways man can know God. The Bible tells us about both of them.

7-2 Find and read once again Roman 1:20:

What two things has God revealed about Himself through His creation of the world?

1. His e_____ p_____.

2. His d_____ n_____.

God revealing Himself through creation is called “Natural Revelation.” The word revelation means “to uncover.” It's a word which describes drawing back a curtain so an audience can see a play. That's what God did by creating the universe. He drew back the curtain of privacy to reveal His eternal power and His divine nature.

For example, the bigness of the universe reveals God's power. An examination of a raindrop under a microscope reveals hundreds of tiny creatures swimming in it. Heat the drop, and these microscopic creatures squirm with pain. . . each one has a nervous system!

7-3 Find and read Romans 1:21:

(We are deliberately looking at this verse again!)

What has man done with “Natural Revelation?”

Their t_____ become f_____.

Their f_____ hearts became d_____.

The Bible does not try to prove God exists. The reason is because Bible writers knew all men were aware of God through Natural Revelation. In the Bible, we discover a second way God has revealed Himself: Special Revelation. This means that God has revealed Himself in a personal way to us. His coming in Jesus Christ and the record of His activities among men are these personal ways.

An interesting term is used to describe Jesus' coming to the earth by John. He calls Jesus “the Word.” There are many meanings to this term, but we are going to think of its most basic one just now. Imagine you are in a pitch-dark forest. You cannot see a thing! Suddenly, you hear a voice saying “I am here—over here!” The word spoken makes you sure you are not alone.

7-4 Find and read John 1:1-5:

Who is the “Word” in this scripture? _____

7-5 What part did the “Word” have in the creation of the world?

7-6 What was the reaction of those who were in the darkness, when they heard this “Word” and saw its light?

They didn't u_____ it.

7-7 Find and read John 1:10-14:

In these verses, did all who receive the Word become children of God? (✓ your answer) Yes No

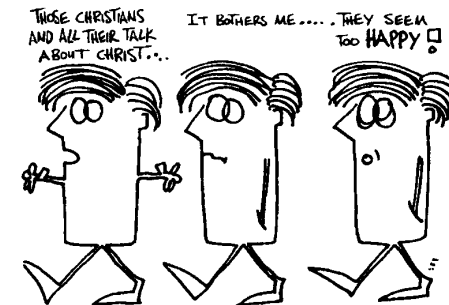
7-8 Did those who refused to receive Him also become children of God? (✓ your answer) Yes No

7-9 In verse 14, what did God do so we could “see” Him?

He b_____ f_____ and

I_____ for a while among us.

God is not silent! He has revealed Himself to us. He can be known both by His creation and His Word. If we seek Him, we will find Him!

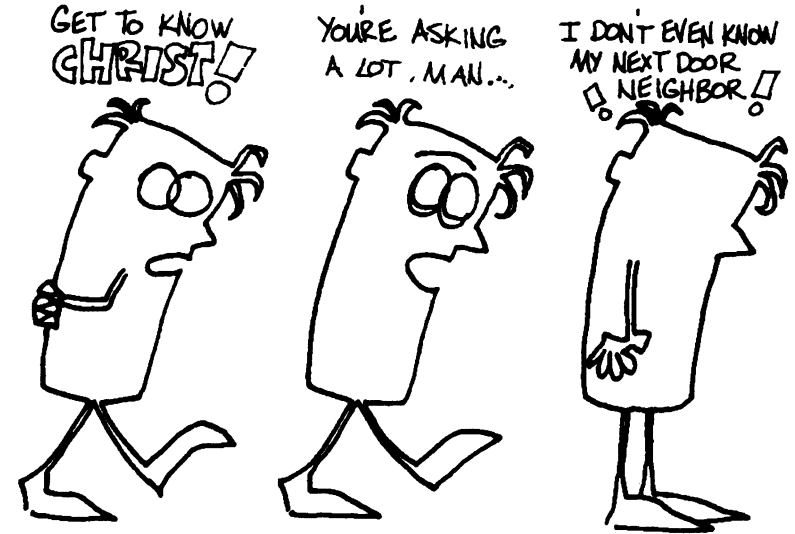


REVIEW

1. How many books are there in the Bible? (See Study Guide 1)
2. How do we collect our values? (See Study Guide 2)
3. Why are we here? (See Study Guide 3)
4. How does the Bible define “sin?” (See Study Guide 4)
5. Do Christians keep the Ten Commandments? (See Study Guide 5)
6. What is your conclusion about Jesus’ identity? (See Study Guide 6)
7. How has God revealed Himself to us? (See Study Guide 7)

If you are curious about the life of Jesus Christ, we suggest you read the Gospel of John.

WHY ARE THERE FOUR ACCOUNTS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?



Perhaps you have already discovered that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are separate records of the life of Jesus Christ. Why is there a need for four biographies of His life?

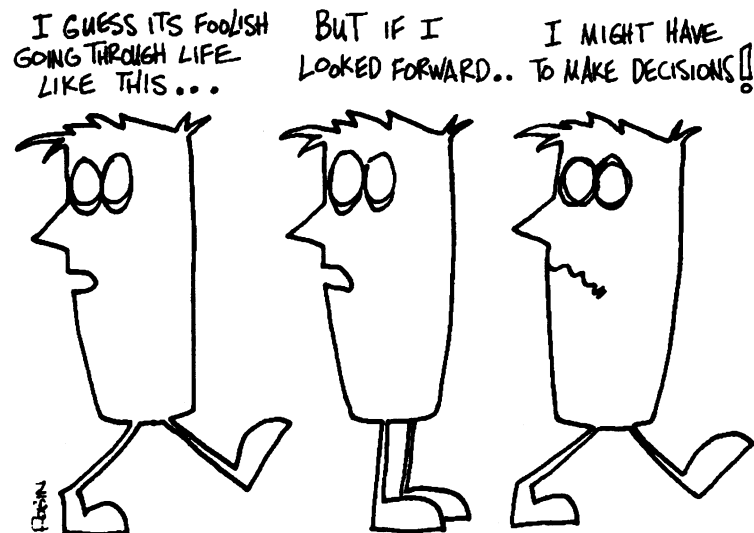
In Matthew, the theme is “BEHOLD, THE KING.” The genealogy given in Chapter 1 traces Jesus’ lineage from Abraham to his legal father, Joseph. We know He was born of a virgin, but through Joseph’s lineage he had the legal right to become the King of the Jews.

In Mark, the theme is “BEHOLD, THE SERVANT.” There’s no genealogy, because a servant’s blood line is of no significance. The theme of Jesus as the Servant of God predominates the book. (Read Mark 9:33-35).

In Luke, the theme is “BEHOLD, THE MAN.” Luke was a physician. He wrote the account of Jesus’ virgin birth in great detail. The mother of Jesus would have been his only source for many of the things he wrote for us to read. The amazing record of God becoming man is carefully provided in this account.

In John, the theme is “BEHOLD, YOUR GOD!” The signs and miracles Jesus performed occupy the chapters of this record. Each one confirms He was truly God, not just a man.

You will find each account fascinating. Read these four books soon!



STUDY GUIDE EIGHT: BEING PRACTICAL IN AN IMPRACTICAL WORLD

“Love your enemies?” The young business man frowned. “That lets others take advantage of you. Besides, it’s impossible!”

8-1 Find and read Matthew 5:22 and 5:27-28:

According to these verses, anyone who is angry with his brother will be s_____ to j_____, and anyone who lusts has c_____ a_____.

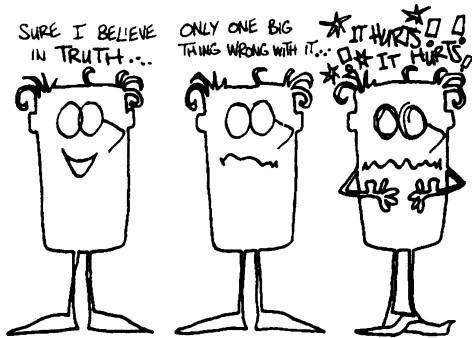
Are these standards too high? Can we ever be so good? No! We can never achieve such standards by ourselves. For that reason, many people decide they cannot become Christians. Consider this important fact: a person becomes a Christian by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, not by keeping Biblical ethical standards.

The Bible describes the impossible situation of the person who tries to achieve Biblical ethical standards by his own strength:

8-2 Find and read Romans 7:15, 19, 21, 23:

Which statement is true, according to these verses?

- A. Man has unlimited power within himself to be moral and good.
- B. Man can keep the Bible’s ethical standards by sincerely trying.
- C. Man is unable to live ethically because of sin.



A pen cannot write without ink. A car cannot run without gas. A person cannot live by Christian principles until Christ lives within! Christ alone gives the power to live a new life.

“But,” you ask, “Even with God’s power, how can we keep such standards in a world which does not believe in them? How can we be honest in a dishonest society? Is it practical?”

Practical means useful. Who are more useful than people who live by the power of God? Yes, it’s practical. Without the influence of Christian lives, society would become hopelessly corrupted.

Let’s think even more deeply about the question of practicality. What we really fear when we think of living according to Christian standards is being rejected by our friends who do not live by them. The fact that a person fears being different from others does not mean that being different is impractical.

8-3 Find and read Philippians 4:13:

In whose strength does the Christian do everything?

- His own strength.
- The strength of Jesus Christ.

8-4 Find and read Jude 1:24-25:

Who is responsible to keep the Christian from falling?

“Practical” should NOT mean “what is convenient, acceptable to my friends, or to my employer.” We must remind ourselves that God made standards that men might LIVE SUCCESSFULLY. They are not like fashions which change with our whims. The Bible taught 3,000 years ago, for example, that premarital sex is wrong. It is still wrong today. Men may twist standards to suit their own self-centered desires for profit or self-satisfaction, but it is NOT “practical” just because they do so.

Constantly revising our standards to suit our whims is dangerous. Hitler tried to do this. He said the “practical” solution to the Jew was: to exterminate them. This evil deed will be remembered for all time. Christian standards are a key to a decent life, a decent society, and decent people. We cannot change society’s standards until Jesus Christ becomes a LIVING LIFE within each of us. We are all free to make a personal decision to accept Christ as the provider of our strength, and live by God’s principles.

8-5 Find and read Matthew 11:27-30:

Jesus Christ will: (✓ your answer)

- A. Increase our problems.
- B. Help us in our problems.
- C. Expect us to be strong enough to live with our problems.

8-6 How can a person live an ethical life? (✓ your answer)

- A. By keeping all the moral teachings in the Bible.
- B. By going to church, praying a lot, and trying to do good works.
- C. By receiving Jesus Christ as my Lord and Master.

STUDY GUIDE NINE: MY RESPONSIBILITIES

Have you ever wondered why God made us free to make our own choices? As He created us, He certainly knew all about our potential for evil, cruelty, and selfishness. He could have made it impossible for us to choose between right and wrong, good and evil. What a happy world this would be if humans could only do what is right!

Many people have wrestled over the problem of evil. For example, a drunk hit and killed a child. The parents refused to allow God's name to be mentioned at the funeral: they were angry at God for letting their child die. In reality, God did not kill their child: a man was responsible for the death—a man who had chosen irresponsibility for his behavior pattern. Was God responsible for the man's choice? Of course not.

9-1 Find and read Romans 2:6 and 9:

A. In verse 6, do we find God has overlooked this irresponsible act?

- Yes No

B. In verse 9, what is the result of evil?

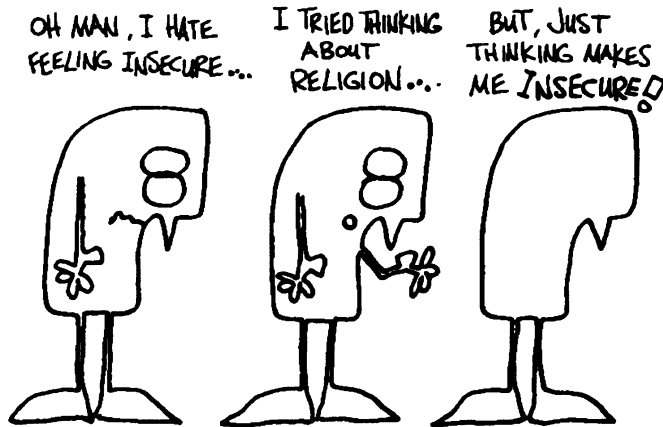
T_____ and d_____.

Let's imagine God made us without the ability to make choices. We would be robots, wouldn't we? Even worse, this limitation would make it impossible for us to ever love at all! Robots cannot love: they can only obey. In order to love, we must have the ability to make choices. Love is always a choice.

9-2 Find and read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7:

Of the fourteen qualities of love recorded here, how many of them require freedom of choice?

- Five of them. None of them. All of them.



9-1: A, no; B, Trouble, distress. 9-2: All of them.

God knew we could not love Him or anyone else. He gave us the freedom to choose between loving or not loving. Because the ability to love was so important, God gave us freedom—and along with freedom, He made us accountable for our choices.

How do you feel about “hit-and-run” drivers, who abandon their crushed and broken victims? Something inside us cries out for justice, doesn't it? That sense of justice within us is planted in us by God, right along with our freedom. We cannot run away from our wrong choices. Our own inner conscience condemns us if we try to do so.

9-3 Find and read Romans 2:15:

According to this verse, what is the purpose of our conscience?

It bears w_____ that we know right and wrong and know when we do right and when we do wrong.

Whenever and wherever humans choose to be evil or irresponsible, they become the source of pain and sorrow. The only way such pain could be avoided would be for us not to have the power of choice. Possessing that power is the price we pay for having freedom and for being able to love. Even creation suffers as a result of man's selfishness and irresponsibility!

9-4 Find and read Romans 8:22:

Because of the irresponsibility of man, what is creation now doing?

However, not one irresponsible, evil, or self-gratifying action we commit is forgotten by God. The Bible makes it clear that every single deed of ours must be faced, and the responsibility for it accepted.

9-5 Find and read Revelation 20:12:

How will the dead be judged? _____

The evil in this world is not caused by God! One hundred per cent of it is caused by humans who choose to control their own lives, who refuse to love, and who deliberately make choices that rebel against God's will. Every one of us will face the results of our irresponsibility.

9-6 Find and read 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: What does this scripture indicate will happen to the irresponsible?

Note: if you are interested in this subject, read *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis.

9-3 witness. 9-4: groaning as in childbirth. 9-5: according to what they had done. 9-6 verse 9

STUDY GUIDE TEN: WHO IS JESUS?

If a man today could cause ocean waves to disappear, distribute hundreds of bowls of rice from one sack and heal cancer, what would you believe about him? Would you call him a fake, a cheat, a devil, or . . . God? When Jesus Christ was on earth, He worked miracles greater than the ones mentioned here. He performed these miracles partly to show that He was God, and also to reveal His power.

There are four things we want to remember about Jesus: 1. His love, as He healed the sick; 2. His holiness, as He lived a sinless life; 3. His power, as He performed miracles; 4. His righteousness, as He dealt with sin. Let's examine scriptures related to these points:

10-1 Find and read 1 John 3:16:

In this verse, what did Jesus do to show us His love?

He laid down His l_____ for _____.

10-2 Find and read Hebrews 7:26:

In this verse, there are five characteristics of Jesus.

Among them, He is described as being

h_____, b_____, and

p_____.

10-3 Find and read Hebrews 1:2-3:

According to these verses, what did Jesus create?

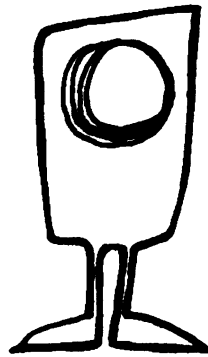
The u_____.

10-4 Find and read 1 John 3:5-7:

According to these verses, why did Jesus appear?

to t_____ a_____ our s_____.

These four qualities make us recognize that Jesus was God. No man could possess all these characteristics. When God came down to live with us, He became God and man at the same time. No human is perfect but He was! Jesus Christ had both a divine and a human nature. Even though Jesus faced every problem, temptation, and sorrow we face, He was without sin. As a divine being, Jesus worked miracles. As a man, He was subject to becoming physically tired, hungry, and knew pain. How could this be?



Nobody's PERFECT..

Consider this example: James bears a striking resemblance to his father, both physically and in the sound of his voice. Friends often remark how much he is like his father. They are partly right. James does possess certain physical features of his father, and he carries his genes. Despite that, he is still distinctly different from his father. In one sense, the son can be said to have two natures. He contains his father's characteristics—but he has personal characteristics which make him distinctly different from his father.

That was not true of Jesus. He contained the full personality of God. He was fully God! But, He was just as fully human.

10-5 Find and read Colossians 1:19:

How much of Himself did God put Into Jesus?

a_____ His f_____.

10-6 Find and read Hebrews 2:17-18:

According to this passage, why did Jesus become fully man?

He is able to h_____ t_____ who are

being t_____.

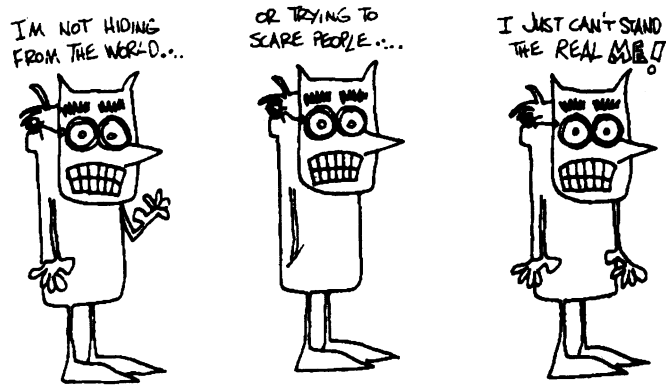
Jesus revealed God through His words, His actions, His attitudes, and His death. His purpose for coming to earth was to reveal God to man, and to pay for man's sins by dying on the cross. He was not forced to die on the cross to take man's punishment for sin. He willingly and voluntarily died for man, because He loved us.

Imagine, for some odd reason, you wanted a colony of ants to know you loved them. Could you communicate that by simply sprinkling sugar around their pathways? They would enjoy the sugar, but they would not know you gave it to them out of love for them! The only way you could reveal your love would be to become an ant and live among them, sharing fully their burdens. Can you imagine how strong your love would have to be to give up your life as a human and be reduced to an ant? What Christ did in coming to live in a human body was much, much more than that!

10-7 Find and read Philippians 2:6-11:

Write your impressions of this passage in the space below:

STUDY GUIDE ELEVEN: WHAT IS SALVATION?



Here is a passage from Isaiah 59:1-2 for you to read:

Don't think that the LORD is too weak to save you or too deaf to hear your call for help! It is because of your sins that he doesn't hear you. It is your sins that separate you from God when you try to worship Him.

God simply cannot come into our lives because of sin. If there is one thing God cannot tolerate, it is sin. He will not listen to our call when there is sin in our lives.

"But," you ask, "I'm not sure I know what you Christians mean when you use the word "SIN." Just exactly what are you talking about?"

11-1 Find and read Romans 5:12-13:

How did "sin" enter the world?

Through o _____ m _____.

Who was that "man?" He was the very first man in the human race. His name was Adam. According to Genesis 3:4-5, he and his wife Eve made a choice to "be like God." They believed Satan when he said, "You surely shall not die! . . . You will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Adam's sin is also our sin! It's a decision to "be like God," to decide for ourselves what is "good" and "evil." Adam chose to be his own god—and so have every one of us!

Each time we choose to define "good" and "evil" without listening to God's definitions of them, we are sinning. The misery in our lives and our world is the direct result of men "playing god."

11-2 Find and read Romans 6:13:

According to this verse, we are not to o _____ the parts

of our b _____ to s _____.

What do the "parts" include? (✓ your choices)

- My mind, with its thoughts
- My physical body, including its cravings
- Both of the above
- Neither of the above

We see, then, that "sin" is the self-ownership of our existence. It really doesn't matter whether we do good things or bad things in life. God judges as "sin" all activity He didn't guide us to do.

11-3 Find and read Matthew 23:23:

Who is Jesus talking to? (✓ your answer)

- A. Religious Workers
- B. Atheists

11-4 What are they doing? Tithing their s _____ to God.

The entire passage describes very religious men who evangelized, prayed, fasted, and studied the scriptures—but Jesus said they were like sepulchers. That is, they looked nice on the outside, but inside they were as corpses. Because Jesus knew their motive came from their self-owned lives, He said, "Woe to you . . ."

That's the danger of sin: we convince ourselves we are doing good, when we are actually simply doing things God did not cause us to do. Sin is doing anything that God did not guide us to do!

What can we do about this condition? To be free from it, we must exchange our self-controlled life for one controlled and guided by Jesus Christ.

11-5 Find and read John 8:23-24:

This passage says we'll d _____ in our sins if we do not believe Jesus is who He claims to be.

11-6 Find and read John 14:6:

According to Jesus' words here, why is the passage in 11-4 above true? He is the _____, the _____, and the _____.

We have all decided to control our own lives, and thus we are all sinners. Furthermore, we can't do anything about it. All our righteous deeds stem from a root of pride and self-ownership. It is only when we humble ourselves and admit we have a problem that we will come to Jesus as the only possible way to God.

STUDY GUIDE TWELVE: THAT PRECIOUS BLOOD



A woman began to cheat on her husband. When they moved to another town, she returned to being faithful to him. She could not forgive herself for what she had done. In the months that followed, she developed many physical problems. Doctors suggested her ailments were induced by her inner conflicts. She could not bring herself to admit to anyone what she had done. As the years passed, she became bedridden.

12-1 Her physical problems occurred because she was unable to f_____ herself.

A man committed murder while drunk. He spent 5 years in prison. His debt to society was paid. Twenty years later, he said, "My stay in prison was not long enough to make me feel I'm forgiven. I still feel guilty for what I did. I guess I'll never be free again!"

12-2 What was his problem? (✓ your answer)

- A. His prison sentence was too short.
- B. He could not forgive himself for his crime.
- C. He was afraid he might do it again.

Self-punishment is never enough to cancel out our wrongs, is it? It is not possible for us to simply forgive ourselves for what we have done in the past. We know that wrongs must be punished, and the punishment must fit the wrong. Therefore, we constantly live with the weight of personal guilt. Can anything be done?

In ancient times, a person would take a lamb to the priest, lay a hand on it, and confess wrong doings. That animal became a substitute for the sinning person. It would then be sacrificed. By its death, it took the judgment for the evildoer's wrong doings. The death of the animal made it possible for the person to be forgiven.

12-1: forgive. 12-2: B

12-3 Find and read Hebrews 9:13:

The blood of animals made people o_____ clean.

12-4 Find and read John 1:29:

John called Jesus the "_____ of God, who takes away the s_____ of the w_____."

12-5 Find and read Hebrews 9:14:

Why did Jesus shed His blood on the cross?

- A. To show the world He was a great teacher
- B. To receive the hate of those who disagreed
- C. To be our substitute, taking the punishment for our wrongdoing, and providing us with clear consciences.

God loved you so much that He would do for you what you could never, ever do for yourself! God himself became your substitute, bore your sin, and took your Judgment.

12-6 Read the last phrase of Hebrews 9:14. Why did God do this for us?

"So that we may s_____ t_____
l_____ G_____!"

12-7 Find and read 1 Peter 1:18-21:

What do you think the word "precious" means? Of greater value than s_____ and g_____.

Now we know why Jesus Christ died on the cross! He shed His blood because it was the ONLY thing which could possibly wash us clean of our sins. Some people believe if they give gold or silver to God they will gain merit by doing so. Not so! God is not interested in our gifts of money or anything else as a payment for sin. The blood of Jesus Christ alone can pay for it. We cannot abolish our "wrong doings" (sins) by doing something we consider to be "right doings."

If it is possible for "right doings" to balance out our "wrong doings," it was senseless for Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. The cross of Jesus makes sense only when we understand there is absolutely no other way for sin to be forgiven. It is through His sacrifice we are able to be certain God has forgiven us—and also to forgive ourselves for what we have done! No matter who you are, God knows you and your need. Christ's precious blood has been freely shed for you. There is no forgiveness for sins apart from His blood. There is total, complete forgiveness through it. Do you desire that forgiveness *right now*?

12-3: outwardly. 12-4: Lamb, sin, world. 12-5: C. 12-6: serve the living God. 12-7: silver, gold

STUDY GUIDE THIRTEEN: THE NEW LIFE AND THE NEW LIFE STYLE

In Study Guide Twelve, we considered that Jesus' blood is God's only way to deal with our sinful, self-controlled lifestyle. We also discovered that He actually wants to live inside us!

13-1 Find and read John 3:3:

According to Jesus, It is necessary for us to be b_____ a_____ before we can see the kingdom (the reign) of God.

Many people do not understand that becoming a Christian is an activity which God must do to us. In the same way that I cannot create myself, but need a father to create me by his seed, even so, I cannot become a "child" of God unless He "fathers" me, causing me to be "born again."

13-2 Find and read John 1:12-13:

According to this passage, what must we do in order to be "born again?"

R_____ Him

B_____ In His name

13-3 In verse 13, what two types of birth are described?

A. Children born of a h_____ 's w_____.

B. Children born not of natural descent, but born of G_____.

13-4 Which of these acts can make one a Christian?

- Baptism Catechism Prayer Tithing
 Fasting Joining a church

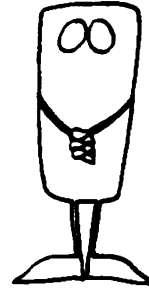
We don't have physical life until a man "fathers" us. It's the same with becoming a child of God. The initial activity is up to God, not to us. Our good deeds cannot make us Christians.

God desires to implant His own life inside your life. He will create a new existence for you when He "fathers" you. What must you do to be born again? Accept the precious blood of Christ as your sin-offering, and offer yourself to the Father as a body ready to receive His Holy Spirit. That is all!

Christians sing, "Just as I am, without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me; and that Thou biddest me come to Thee, Oh! Lamb of God, I come, I come." That's how we are born again. If you haven't yet asked Him to give you His new life, do it now!

13-1: born again. 13-2: receive, believe. 13-3: husband's will, God. 13-4: none of them

Wow, they call
TRANSPLANT
HEARTS, KIDNEYS, BONES.



13-5 Find and read 2 Corinthians 3:18:

In the same way that the genes of our natural father cause us to take on his characteristics, as born again children of God we are being

t_____ into His i_____.

13-6 The source of these changes is the L_____, who is the S_____ that lives Inside us.

Being a child of God is an overwhelming experience! Not only is there a new life, but also a new lifestyle. For the first time, we feel close bonds with other Christians.

13-7 Find and read I Corinthians 12:12-13:

What Is the Christian family like?

- A. A Body B. A Corporation

13-8 Find and read I Corinthians 12:27:

What do all those who are born again become?

A part of the b_____ of Christ.

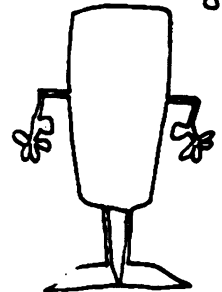
Unless and until you actually become a member of the body of Christ, you have no idea how wonderful life can be! The important thing to recognize is that you do not "join" a body of Christ—you are born into it. The Holy Spirit, according to what you have just read, "baptizes" us into that body.

The word "baptism" means to "immerse." The Holy Spirit submerges the newly born Christian into the Lord's body!

What happens when a baby is born? Is it left alone? Must it earn admission into the family? Of course not! The baby has entered the family by birth and is lovingly accepted. This is also true of Christians. To join a true church is to enter into a loving, caring cell group where each one cares about everyone else. Here's an important fact: there are no "individual" Christians! All Christians are a part of the body of Christ, and they care about one another.

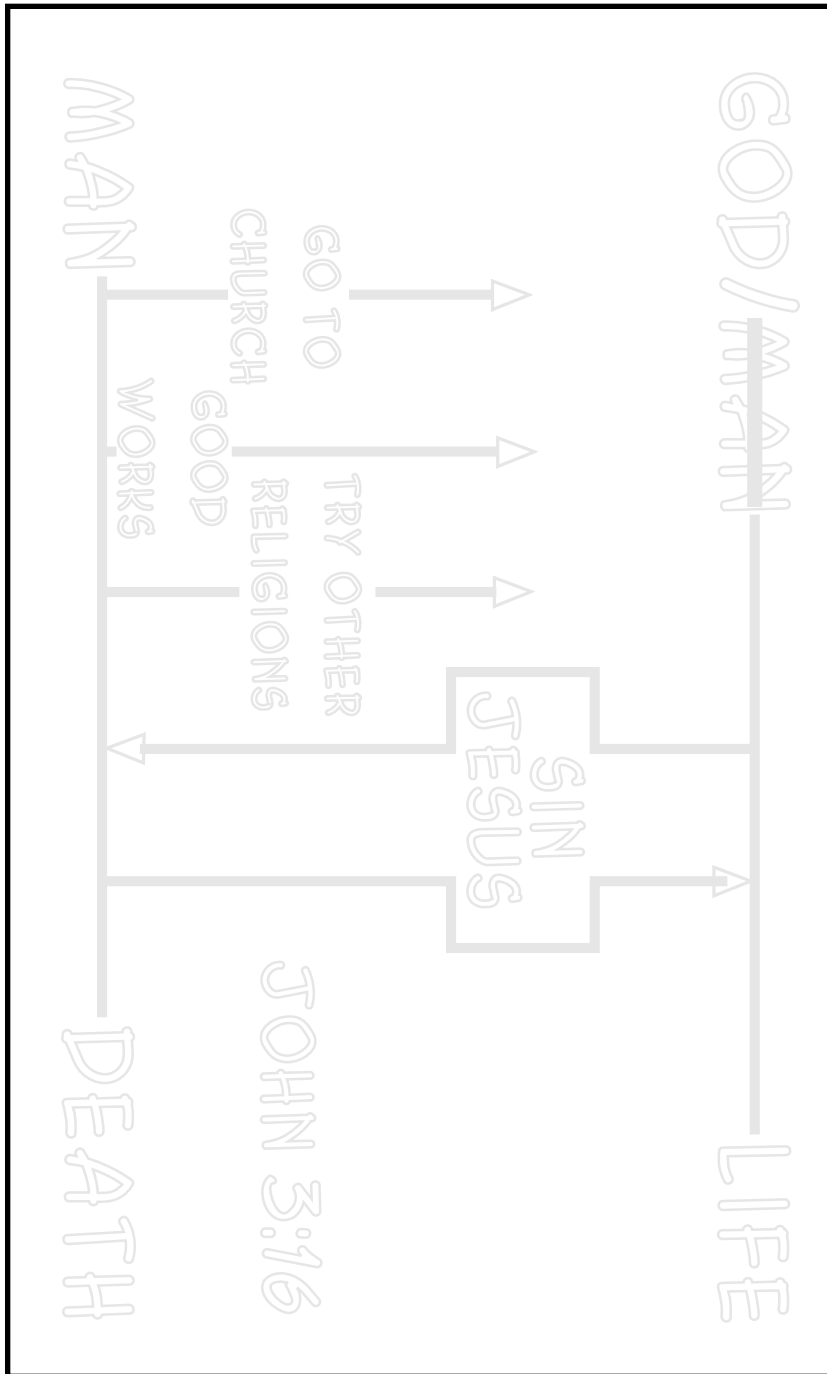
Do you long to have a new lifestyle? Be assured there is absolutely no reason why you cannot be born again at this very moment!

CAN THEY TRANSPLANT
GUILTLESSNESS?



13-5: transformed, image. 13-6: Lord, Spirit. 13-7: A. 13-8: body

(ASK YOUR FRIEND WHO GAVE YOU THIS BOOKLET TO EXPLAIN THIS DIAGRAM TO YOU)



MY DECISION

THERE ARE FOUR STEPS TO BECOMING A CHRISTIAN:

1. Agree your sin has separated you from God, who loves you.
2. Reject your self-owned lifestyle; desire to be led by God alone!
3. Trust that Jesus' death on the cross was God's only way to judge your sin. Believe His resurrection proves He was God, and that your sin is forever forgiven you.
4. Invite Jesus to forgive your sin, control your life, and make you right with God.

YOU MAY WISH TO PRAY THIS PRAYER AS YOU DO SO . . .

"LORD JESUS, I agree that I have lived a self-owned life, and that this makes me a sinner. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I surrender the control of my life to you, and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for coming to live within me. In Your name I pray, Amen."

A SPECIAL WORD TO YOU . . .

If you have accepted Jesus Christ as Your Savior and Lord, we welcome you into the family of God! Here are some suggestions for you:

1. Share your decision with your friends at once.

As you do so, many will have a desire to know more about why you have done this. Share as best you can. If you need help in answering questions, invite the person who helped you complete this booklet to talk with them.

2. Be Baptized.

Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in Christ, and is the way Jesus said we are to tell the world we are His. (Find and read Acts 8:26-40.)

3. Begin to grow.

The New Testament will become the “food” you digest. Read through 1 John several times. It has many things to say to a new Christian. In addition, begin to talk with your new Father (that’s what prayer is!). You will find it not only easy to do, but a vital experience in your new life in Christ.

4. Become a member of a Cell Group.

Share in the Bible study, worship, and fellowship provided in it. The person who gave this booklet to you would be delighted to discuss this matter further with you, to introduce you to its lifestyle, sit with you in group meetings, and help you get acquainted with the other Cell Members.

5. Accept spiritual truths with a teachable heart.

Spiritually, you are like an infant who has just been born. No baby can exist alone. Each baby must rely on mature persons who love and nurture, care and protect, providing patience and love in all situations. Those who have shared Christ with you will continue to be caring persons to you. Be open to their love and care. With them, enter into the greater truths that God’s Holy Spirit will show you as you read the New Testament.

A SPECIAL GIFT FOR YOU!

Beginning The Journey

**It’s a guide to help you grow in your new faith.
Request a copy of it from the person who
gave you this booklet.**

WHAT IS A “CELL GROUP CHURCH?”

The church in the New Testament was not like the churches we see around us today. Early Christians met in their homes to worship, to build up and encourage one another, and to pray. They shared a beautiful meal together called the “Love Feast.” They were, in all respects, the “families of Christ.” We call these “Cell Groups.” Sometimes they are given other titles, like “Growth Groups,” “Basic Christian Communities,” “Shepherd Groups,” or “*Oikos* Groups.” Whatever name they are given, they are very similar all over the world.

These home groups didn’t remain separated from all the other ones. There were times when they would all gather together at one time. For example, in Troas Paul spoke to an assembly of the Cells. They were meeting in the upper room of a large house. As he spoke to them, one young man went to sleep while sitting on the window sill. (*You can read the story for yourself in Acts 20.*)

A “Cell Group Church” is made up of *Cells* and *Celebrations*. *Celebrations* are gatherings of all the Cells for worship and Bible teaching. Sometimes a group of Cells in one area will also get together for a regional *Congregation* meeting. The emphasis of a Cell Church, however, is always upon the Cell Groups that meet in homes.

There are many things you will discover about the Christian walk in a Cell Group. Most important is entering into the commitment of caring for others, and receiving their care of you as a great gift.

In the Celebrations, you will enjoy the preaching or teaching and the times of worship and praise—but you will not grow in your new life by simply attending them.

Our human bodies are made up of thousands of Cells. A Cell is the beginning organism of all life forms. That’s also true of the Body of Christ. You may visit a Celebration and think, “Look at this church!” To truly understand Christ and His church, you must become a part of Cell Group life. There—and only there—can you grow as you should.

Soon—very soon—you will be saying to yourself, “Why did I wait so long to become a Christian? It’s true that we have a great future in the age to come, when Christ comes to establish His kingdom on earth. In the meantime, life in a Cell Group Church gives you a little taste of what’s ahead. Decide now to join one. *The person who gave you this booklet will help you do so!*