LESSON 5

The Christian Experience

Three foundations of or sources for an emphasis on everyday Christian living have been discussed: the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of the biblical revelation. In this lesson we shall consider another source for such an emphasis: the nature of the Christian's experience in and with Christ.

When this experience is properly interpreted, it leads naturally to an emphasis on everyday Christian living. The Christian life is not primarily a theory about life but rather it is a way of life, and a distinct way. From another viewpoint, we can correctly say that Christian living is not an external attachment to the Christian's life; rather, it evolves from the nature of his life in Christ. The outer expressions of that life are the results of an inner relationship of the child of God with the resurrected Christ.

The Initial Experience

There can be no question about man's need for some experience that will basically change the perspective and direction of his life. Our experience as well as the Bible has taught us that "all we like sheep have gone astray" (Isa. 53:6), that "none is righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10), that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Man needs help from outside himself to overcome sin in his life. He receives that help when he comes into union with the resurrected Christ.

There are different terms in the New Testament that are used to express the idea of the Christian's union with Christ. One of the most familiar and most meaningful of those expressions is "in Christ," a favourite of Paul. Deissmann says that these or comparable words such as "in Christ Jesus," "in the Lord," "in him" occur 164 times in Paul's epistles.[1] The words or "formula" are somewhat comparable in their uniqueness in Paul's epistles to his well-known trilogy of faith, hope, and love. Outside of Paul's epistles "in Christ" is found in the New Testament only once in Hebrews (3:14) and three times in First Peter (3:16; 5:10, 14).

A glance at a few of the many occurrences of "in Christ" in Paul's epistles will reveal something of the richness of the life the child of God has or can have in his union with Christ. Paul says that our redemption..."is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24),

[1] Adolf Deissmann, *The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul*, trans. by William E. Wilson (2d ed.; Hodder & Stoughton, 1926), p. 171. An earlier and equally important book of Deissmann's was *St. Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*, trans. by Lionel R. M. Strachan (Hodder & Stoughton, 1912). Two books that accept and utilize the mystical interpretation of "in Christ," which was first popularized by Deissmann, are James S. Stewart, *A Man in Christ* (Harper, 1935), and William Barclay, *The Mind of St. Paul* (Harper, 1958).

The Christian life is a distinct _____ *of* _____.

(way, life)

Read the adjacent paragraph and answer this question:

When does man receive help to change his life?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

One of the most familiar and most meaningful expressions of the Christian's union with Christ is "_____."

(in Christ)

List Paul's "in Christ" expressions and give the Bible reference for each one.

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that we are made "alive to God in Jesus" (Rom. 6:11), and to the Galatians he wrote, "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith" (Gal. 3:26). In addition, the freedom that we have as Christians is in Christ Jesus (Gal. 2:24). We are sanctified in Him (1 Cor. 1:2), are one body in Him (Rom. 12:5), are "fellow workers in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 16:3), are all one in Him (Gal. 3:28), and have been made to sit "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Paul also speaks of the "upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14), a call that will create a continuous tug in our lives. In the great chapter on the resurrection Paul speaks of those who have "fallen asleep in Christ" (1 Cor. 15:18). We should be grateful that those who are "in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22) and "so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). We are in Christ; Christ is in us. This union is so vital that it can be compared to the air we breathe. We are in the air, and the air is in us.

The idea of union with Christ is not restricted in the Pauline writings to the formula or words "in Christ." There are places where "through Christ" is used in a way strikingly similar to "in Christ" (see 2 Cor. 3:4, 14). Furthermore, to the Romans Paul said, "You are called to belong to Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:6) and exhorted them to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 13:14). To the strife-torn Corinthians he said, "You are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:23). He also said that their bodies were members of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15) and that they formed or belonged to the body of Christ: "we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13; cf. Rom. 6:3), we "are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Cor. 12:27). Applying other words of Paul to our own lives we can say that Christ in us is our hope of glory (Col. 1:27), that our lives are hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3)—hid in the sense of both concealment and safety. Also, as we have received "Christ Jesus the Lord," we should "so live in him" (Col. 2:6). Paul also uses the term "with Christ" (see Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 13:4; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 4:17; 5:10).

In two places where Paul pictures as fully as anywhere his own close personal relationship to the resurrected Christ, he does not use the words "in Christ." For example, he says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20) and again, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21).

Two things are necessary for one to have the experience which brings him into union with Christ. There must be outreach of God to man matched by the outreach or upreach of man to God. The first is grace; the second is faith. The initiative comes from God, the response from man. God is the acting power in man's salvation, man the reacting power. But he must react, he must take the leap of faith.

The Continuing Experience

Union with Christ is not only an initial experience but also a continuing and growing one. We have been made new creations in Christ Jesus. Just as surely we are in the process of being made into his likeness. In a sense we are being called to be what we already are. These two aspects of our union with Christ, the past and the present, but particularly the latter, are expressed in a

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(Compare your answers with the text.)

_____

List other expressions used by Paul to express one's union with Christ. Give the Bible reference for each one.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

_____

Name two things to help one experience union with Christ.

_____

_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

_____

Union with Christ is not only an initial experience but also a _____ and _____ one.

distinctly Johannine word: abide or abides.[2] It is comparable in meaning to Paul's "in Christ," although Paul's term is more frequently applied to the initial Christian experience.

The word "abide" as it applies to the Christian's relation to Christ is particularly prevalent in the great Vine and Branches chapter (John 15) and in First John. In the former, Jesus revealed that He considered the union or relation of His disciples to Him so close and vital that it could be compared to a vine and its branches. The branches are not separate from the vine; they are an integral part of the vine. The sap or life blood of the vine flows into and through the branches. It is the source of their life and their fruitfulness. No wonder He said, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (v. 5).

There are two places in First John where the concept of abiding in Christ is in a setting that gives them special significance for the Christian life. The first one is: "All who keep his commandments abide in him" (3:24). The other statement which should be tremendously challenging to every Christian is as follows: "Here is the test by which we can make sure that we are in him: whoever claims to be dwelling in him, binds himself to live as Christ himself lived" (2:6, NEB) or he "ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

The preceding correctly suggests that being a Christian means primarily a commitment to and communion with the resurrected Christ. This in turn means commitment to His way of life. The test of our lives is not so much what we believe about the historic Jesus as it is our relation to the resurrected Christ. The acceptance of certain basic doctrines or dogmas is important, but more important is one's relation to the Divine Person. Doctrines or beliefs are important, but we should keep them in proper perspective. One may be rigidly orthodox in his beliefs and thoroughly unchristian in his relationships and attitudes. He may even attempt to make orthodoxy a substitute for everyday Christian living. It is easier to "believe" than to "practise."

This means that one is wrong when he considers any person a good Christian simply because of his adherence to a particular doctrine, the absence in his life of a certain vice, or the presence of a particular virtue. The good Christian is one who is so vitally related to the resurrected Christ that this relationship inevitably affects every area and relation of his life. The kind of life he lives flows so naturally from his union with Christ that he is largely unconscious of the kind and quality of life he lives. This is increasingly true as he matures in his experience with Christ.

An outgoing life of service for God and to our fellowman was the basic purpose of the initial experience when we became new creations through union with Christ. We were not saved just to be saved. There was a purpose in that initial experience that reached far beyond the experience itself. Paul suggested what he considered the normal Christian experience when he said: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any

[2] John's well-known triology of favourite words are life, light, and love. In addition to "abide" another that should be added to the list is "send" or "sent," which is found more frequently in the Gospel of John than any other of his generally recognized favourite words.

(continuing, growing)

Jesus considered one's relation to Him to be as vital as a _____ to its _____.

(vine, branches)

Are the following statements true or false?

1. A Christian must be committed to Jesus' way of life. _____

2. The test of our lives is what we believe about Jesus. _____

3. Acceptance of basic doctrines is not important. _____

4. One can believe correctly and still be unchristian in his relationships and attitudes. _____

5. The kind of life lived by the "good Christian" flows naturally from his union with Christ. _____

(1.true; 2.false; 3.false; 4.true; 5.true)

The initial Christian experience (salvation) reaches far _____ the _____ itself.

man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works''(Eph. 2:8–10). Particularly important for the Christian life is the purpose of the salvation: ''for good works'' or ''good deeds.'' It was Martin Luther who said, ''Our faith in Christ does not free us from works but from false opinions concerning works, that is, from the foolish presumption that justification is acquired by works.''

There is a statement by Jesus in the wonderful Vine and Branches chapter that sets forth the same perspective. He said to His disciples: ''You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit'' (John 15:16). Notice the purpose of the choosing: ''that you should go and bear fruit.'' He did not choose them, and He does not choose us simply to enjoy fellowship with Him, as rich and rewarding as that can be. No, he chose us to bear fruit, and we bear fruit as we abide in Him.

Through our union with Christ there is created within us a desire to bear fruit for Him. There is also born within us new motives, a new dynamic, a new desire to know and do His will. We discover in our union with the resurrected Christ not only a new desire but also a new power to move in the direction of the purposes of God for our lives. Notice it says ''to move in the direction of.'' We can say with Paul that we have not ''already obtained,'' we are not ''already perfect.'' Can we honestly also say with Paul, ''But I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own'' (Phil. 3:12)?

There are three terms that summarize the rich blessings that come to our lives as a result of our union with and abiding in the resurrected Christ: justification, sanctification, and glorification. These are different ways of looking at our salvation in Christ. We are saved in all tenses: past, present, and future.

(beyond, experience)

Jesus chose us to _____ _____.

We bear fruit as we _____ *in* _____.

(bear, fruit, abide, Him)

Three terms that summarize the blessings of the Christian life are (1) _____ *(2)* _____ *(3)* _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The Maturing Experience

Maturity in and for Christ operates in the present tense. It represents the sanctification aspect of our salvation.

The more mature the Christian, the more he realizes that his union with Christ has brought into his life a richness and fulness that he not only had not known but that he had not dreamed could be true. He discovers that the more fully he abides in Christ, the more abundant life becomes for him. He comes to understand clearly that life in Christ may mean death, but it is life in and through death. He finds that his union with Christ does not limit his life but releases new sources of life within him. Life in Christ for him does not mean the loss of freedom (John 8:36). It does not isolate him from people; rather it results in a more meaningful and inclusive outreach to and for people. Paul says that as he matures in Christ he will have not only a better understanding of and a changed attitude towards sin, he will also maintain a different relation to it.

The preceding and other blessings that result from our union with Christ do not come automatically and have not been fully realized in our lives. For example, there is a sense in which old things have passed away but a very real sense in which they are in the process of passing away. To use Paul's terms, we ''have put on the new nature,'' but the new nature ''is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator'' (Col. 3:10): ''have put

Life becomes more _____ *when the maturing Christian abides more* _____ *in Christ.*

(abundant, fully)

There is a sense in which the old things are in the _____ *of* _____.

on''—past; ''being renewed''—present which reaches into the future.

Let us mention again a very meaningful paradox in the Christian life, a paradox that may be expressed in various ways. The more mature we are in Christ, the more conscious we will be that our union with Him is imperfect and incomplete. Another way of expressing the same idea is to say that our union with the resurrected Christ is both the end and in a very real sense the beginning of our search for meaning in life. In Him there is both release from tension and the creation of tension.

This paradox is closely related to the place of the indicative and imperative in the Christian life. As we mature in Christ, the outward expressions of the Christian life will flow more naturally from the vitality of our relation with Christ. In other words, life will be lived more and more in the indicative mood. We will do what we do not so much because we are commanded to do so but because we want to. But none of us is so mature that we do not need the imperatives of life. Really, as someone has suggested, the indicatives of the Christian life are veiled imperatives. The outer expressions of the Christian life are so much an inevitable phase of our union with Christ that if those outer expressions do not take place as indicatives they then become imperatives.

The indicative and imperative are two sides of the same coin. They maintain an inner unity. Such unity is evident in the area of love. The obligation or imperative to love one another stems from the love we have received from God. It is John who says, ''Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another'' (1 John 4:11), and ''We love, because he first loved us'' (1 John 4:19). Lehmann, who gives primary emphasis to the indicative, suggests that there is ''an imperative pressure exerted by an indicative situation.''[3] Thielicke, somewhat reversing the order, suggests that the imperative is ''a demand that we should attain to that starting point where the automatic process goes into operation.''[4]

The preceding means, among other things, that there should be a growing or maturing experience with, in, and for Christ. We were born babes in Christ, but babies are supposed to grow. Growth is so much the nature of a babe that if he is not growing we know something is wrong. The same is just as true of moral and spiritual babes. We were born babes but babes *in Christ*. The ''in Christ'' means that growth is natural, even inevitable. If growth is not evident we had better examine to see if a birth has taken place.

Unfortunately, entirely too many Christians are satisfied to be ordinary or mediocre. It is Trueblood who says that we are plagued with a mild sort of religiosity. He also suggests that contemporary Christians are equally shocked at hearing the faith denied or seeing it practised. Mediocre Christians, to use a distinction that Kierkegaard makes, may be admirers of Christ but not followers of Him. He suggests that ''a follower is or strives *to be* what he admires; an admirer holds himself person-

(process, passing away)

The more mature we are in _____, the more conscious we are that our union with Him is _____ and _____.

(Christ, imperfect, incomplete)

Write INDICATIVE or IMPERATIVE by the statement that best illustrates the author's use of these words.

We live morally because we want to. _____

We live morally because we are commanded to. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The imperative to love one another stems from the love we have _____ from _____.

(received, God)

There should be a growing or maturing experience _____, _____, and _____ Christ.

(with, in, for)

[3] Paul Lehmann, *Ethics in a Christian Concept*, p. 131.

[4] Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics* (Fortress Press, 1966), I, 93.

ally aloof, consciously or unconsciously, he does not discern that the object of his admiration makes a claim upon him to be or to strive to be the thing he admires."[5]

The ultimate measure of our maturity in and for Christ is how much we are like Him. To the little group of disciples the resurrected Christ said, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21). He was sent not to do His own will but the will of Him that had sent Him. We as His disciples are sent not to do our own will but His will. He was sent to be the redeemer of men; we are sent to be a redeeming influence among men. He was sent to reveal the Father; we are sent to reveal Him. He was God incarnate, God in human flesh; we are to be Christ incarnate, Christ walking among men.

Paul suggested that one purpose of the work of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers was the equipment of God's people for the "building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain . . . to a mature manhood and to a perfect measure of Christ's moral stature" (Eph. 4:12–13, Wm.). How do we measure up when we stand beside the moral stature of Christ? Every one of us surely hangs his head in shame and admits that he falls far short of being what he ought to be. But what about the goal of our lives, what about the deep intentionality of our souls that motivates us and at the same time provides the measuring stick for our lives? It is possible that God judges us far more by the intent of our lives than by their achievement. Kierkegaard concludes that one is not "eternally responsible for whether he reaches his goal within this world of time. But without exception, he is eternally responsible for the kind of measure he uses."[6] He compares the reaching of the goal with hitting the mark, while the means used are comparable to taking aim. He concludes that "the aim is a more reliable indication of the marksman's goal than the spot the shot strikes."[7] The latter may be purely accidental.

In other words, the test of our lives is not so much where we are but where we are going. Have we set for ourselves a worthy goal? The most comprehensive and worthy goal for a child of God is to be like Christ. Are we progressing towards that goal? Are we more like Him today than yesterday, this week than last week, this month than last month, this year than last year? It was Calvin who said, "Our labour is not lost when to-day is better than yesterday."[8]

A few additional statements need to be made concerning the methods for or means of our moral and spiritual maturing. How can we become more like Christ? How can we become a more effective channel through which He can reach out to meet the needs of people around us? We can meet, at least to some degree, certain necessary conditions for spiritual growth such as Bible reading and study, prayer and meditation, worship and

Draw a line under the phrases that best complete the following statement: We as His disciples are sent . . .

To do His will
To be God in human flesh
To reveal the Father
To reveal Christ
To bear redeeming influence
To be a redeemer of men
To be Christ walking among men

(Compare your answers with the text.)

It is possible that God judges us far more by the intent of our lives than by our _____.

(achievement)

The test of our lives is not so much where we are but _____ *we are* _____.

(where, going)

[5] Soren Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, trans. by Walter Lowrie (Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 234.

[6] Soren Kierkegaard, *Purity of Heart*, trans. by Douglas V. Steere (Harper, 1938, 1948), p. 202.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 293.

[8] Calvin, *Institutes*, II, 5.

fellowship in the Christian community, service in church and world, and favourable response to what we interpret to be God's will for our lives. We can have and need to have a deepening purpose to move towards conformity to Christ.

The more mature we become, however, the more we will realize that there is comparatively little we can do consciously to become more and more conformed to the image of God in Christ. He is the one who does the "conforming" or changing. Our sanctification as well as our justification is by grace. The main thing we can do is to seek as best we can to let the resurrected Christ live in and express Himself through us. If we will turn Him loose in our lives, He will make us more and more into His image. This is the most effective means for our maturing in Christ. Without this, all of our conscious efforts will be in vain. It is even dangerous for us consciously to strive to make ourselves a saint. Pascal says that he who "would be an angel becomes a beast." At least there are few things more pathetic than a "self-conscious saint." In his self-consciousness he has lost whatever saintness he possessed. The preceding means that growth or maturity in Christ is first inner but is so vitally inner that it inevitably expresses itself outwardly. Here is the real ground or foundation for everyday Christian living.

There is comparatively little we can do consciously to become more and more _____ to the image of God in _____.

It is even dangerous for us consciously to strive to make _____ a _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The Worship Experience

The discussion of the Christian experience as a foundation for the Christian life would not be complete without at least a brief consideration of worship. Worship is an integral part of our union with Christ. The more real and mature the latter is the more important will be the place of worship in our lives. In turn, worship is an important factor in keeping our sense of union with Christ constantly fresh and alive. Worship is essential to growth or maturity in Christ and is also expressive of that maturity.

Worship is an integral part or our _____ with _____.

(union, Christ)

We shall not be concerned here with a discussion of worship in general. We shall restrict our consideration to the relation of worship and service. In other words, we want to seek an answer to the question: How is worship related to everyday Christian living? And by "worship" we mean the normal response of the Christian to the consciousness of the presence of God, when the spirit of man rises to meet the Spirit of the living God. Man is awed by the sense of the Presence of God and cries out, "Here am I, send me." The natural outcome and final objective of worship is action.

Reflection might convince us that we are not as effective in our Christian lives as we should be because worship, in private as well as in the home and at church, has not been given as prominent a place in our lives as it should have. This may be particularly true of many of us who are identified with one of the more activistic Protestant churches and/or denominations. Many individuals and churches need to heed the admonition of the resurrected Christ to His disciples: "Stay ("tarry," KJV) in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Then and then only would the disciples be equipped to be His witnesses in "Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). We need to cultivate the art of tarrying until we are conscious of His presence, until we feel the

We need to cultivate the art of tarrying until we feel the touch of the _____ _____.

touch of the divine Spirit. Our going into the world to witness for Him by the spoken word and by the life we live will be effective to the degree that we have been "clothed with power from on high."

The preceding correctly suggests that worship and service are inextricably linked together. To a considerable degree, they interact on and are dependent on one another. For example, as Bonhoeffer says, "For the Christian, worship cannot be divorced from the service of the brethren. . . . If we despise our brother our worship is insincere,and forfeits every divine promise." Bonhoeffer's conclusion is: "So long as we refuse to love and serve our brother . . . whether we do so individually or as a congregation, our worship . . . will be unacceptable to God."[9] On the other hand, service cannot be divorced from worship. It is doubtful if our service to our fellowman will be acceptable to God unless it stems from and to some degree is accompanied with worship. Many Christians can testify that some of the most meaningful worship experiences they have had have been as they served others in the name of the Lord. They were conscious, to an unusual degree, of His presence with them in the service.

There is a sense, as implied earlier, that worship is preparatory to service. It must not be treated, however, as merely preparatory or it will cease to serve effectively as preparation for service. Genuine worship, as was true of the experience of the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, is a deeply satisfying experience. It can properly be considered an end within itself and not a means to some other end. In actuality, however, it is an end that points to an end beyond itself. We feel impelled by the presence of the Lord to move from the mountain of worship to serve in the valley filled with human need.

Every vision or unusual awareness of the presence of the Lord, recorded in the Scriptures, included a command to do something about the vision. In other words, it was not only a vision of God but also a vision or command of service for God. To Isaiah it was a question: "Who will go for us" (Isa. 6:8); for Paul it was "Rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do" (Acts 9:6). There was something to be done about the vision.[10] We may not have visions comparable to the visions of the saints of God in the past, but any genuine worship experience will include a command to go and do something about the experience we have had in and with the Lord. At least there will be an inner urge to go out from the worship of God and translate the vision of God we have received into reality in our own lives and in the world.

We may thoroughly disagree with John A. T. Robinson's general theological position, but he has an excellent statement concerning the relation of worship and service. It is as follows: "The test of worship is how far it makes us *more sensitive* to 'the

(divine, Spirit)

Worship and service are inextricably _____.

Service cannot be divorced from _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

If worship is treated as merely preparatory, it will cease to serve effectively as _____ *for* _____.

(preparation, service)

Every vision in the Scriptures was not only a vision of God but also a vision or _____ *of* _____ *for God.*

Any genuine worship experience will include a command to go and do something about _____.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

[9] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The cost of Discipleship*, trans. by R. H. Fuller (SCM Press, 1948), p. 111.

[10] For other visions that included a command to do something for God and His people, see Ex. 3:1–12 (Moses), 1 Sam. 3:1–14 (Samuel), 1 Kings 19:1–18 (Elijah), and Acts 10:1–48 (Peter).

beyond in our midst,' to the Christ in the hungry, the naked, the homeless and the prisoner. Only if we are *more likely* to recognize him there after attending an act of worship is that worship Christian rather than a piece of religiosity in Christian dress."[11]

A church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, has two stained glass windows that symbolize the proper relation of worship and service. One of those windows, or something comparable to it, is seen in many churches. The other window is unusual. As the people come into the sanctuary they face a cross in the window back of the pulpit. This symbolizes the purpose of the people coming into the sanctuary: they come to worship God. After the worship service, as they turn to leave the church building they face another stained glass window. The most prominent symbol in this window is a yoke. Christians leave the house of God yoked together with one another and with their risen Lord to serve people in His name.

Christians leave the house of God _____ *together with one another and with their risen Lord to serve* _____ *in* _____.
(yoked, people, His name)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. List the three foundations for everyday Christian living which we have studied to this point: _____

2. To what does the author compare the vital union of the believer and Christ? _____

3. List four expressions concerning the believer's union with Christ (other than "in Christ") which Paul used: _____

4. What two things must a person experience to be in union with Christ? _____

5. How may one believe correctly and still be unchristian? _____

6. As the Christian matures in Christ, what happens to his conscious efforts to impress others with his life? _____

7. What purpose does salvation have beyond the experience itself? _____

[11] John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (Westminster Press, 1963), p.90.

8. What must the believer do if he is to bear fruit? _____

_____

9. In explaining our salvation in Christ in past, present, and future tenses, the author gives three terms which summarize the blessings that come to us as a result of our union with Christ. List the three terms. _____

_____

_____

10. What paradox does the author say exists in the Christian life? _____

_____

_____

11. The author states that there shall be a growing "with, in, and for Christ." What does he suggest if no growth is evident? _____

_____

_____

12. List three things Christians are sent to do: _____

_____

_____

_____

13. If the test of our lives is not so much where we are but where we are going, what is the most comprehensive and worthy goal for a child of God? _____

_____

_____

14. How important is worship to the Christian? _____

_____

15. Why does the author suggest that "we need to cultivate the art of tarrying"? _____

_____

_____

16. What is the relationship of service and worship? _____

_____

17. What will any genuine worship experience include? _____

_____

18. How should Christians leave the place of worship? _____

_____

_____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3). The following activities are based on the study guide text.

1. Write a paragraph that shows the richness of life a child of God can have in union with Christ ("in Christ").

2. Explain the author's statement: "It is easier to believe than to practise."
3. Explain why the author says it is wrong to consider a person a "good Christian" using standards such as adherence to particular doctrines, absence of certain vices, and the claim to a particular virtue.
4. What is the meaning of John 15:16 and Ephesians 2:8-10? Write at least one paragraph explaining each passage.
5. Outline the author's discussion on The Maturing Experience.
6. What is the meaning of this statement by the author: "At least there are few things more pathetic than a 'self-conscious saint'."
7. Apply the terms indicative and imperative to the Christian life.
8. What does the symbol of the stained glass window mentioned by the author suggest to you?

Advanced activity (Level 3). The following activities are based on the study guide text.

1. Using 1 John 2:6 and 3:24, write a paper of not more than two pages on this subject: "A Test of Discipleship."
2. Prepare a sermon outline on the subject: "Saved - Past, Present, and Future." Be prepared to share the outline with your seminar group. (Students who are not pastors or studying to be pastors may prepare a Bible lesson instead.)
3. In what ways does life in Christ bring real freedom?
4. How does our worship express our spiritual maturity?
5. The author indicates that worship may not have the prominent place in our lives that it should. Do you agree or disagree? Write a supporting statement for your position.

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the importance of Paul's "in Christ" teachings. Compare with the "abiding" emphasis found in John 15.
2. Level 3 students should share the sermons they have prepared. The seminar leader should lead a discussion of the content of the sermons.
3. Are the paradoxes mentioned by the author valid? Discuss the meaning for one's Christian life.
4. What can one do to become more and more conformed to the image of God in Christ?
5. What does the author mean by worship? How does worship and service relate?
6. Do the churches and missions in your country properly relate worship and service? If not, what can be done to lead churches to relate these two important aspects of a church's life?