

W. M. U. PROGRAMMES

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WRITER: MRS. JAMES WESTMORELAND

UNITS: THE BIBLE, A WONDERFUL BOOK
THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS
THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

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W. M. U. PROGRAMMES

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PROGRAMME ONE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE, A WONDERFUL BOOK

Theme for Today: HOW THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

Scripture for a Devotional: 2 Timothy 3:14-16 or

Memory Verse: "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever". Isaiah 40:8

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Rudo Murapi came running home from school one day. "Mother," she called loudly. "Yes, Rudo, I am here," answered her mother.

"Mother, how is the Bible different from other books?" asked Rudo. "When was the Bible written? Who wrote it? Why do we study it? What is the Bible?"

Mother replied, "Rudo, you know the Bible is the Word of God. We learn from the Bible what God wants us to do and how to follow Him."

"My teacher says the Bible is just like other books," Rudo said. "If the Bible is the Word of God, where did it come from?"

"It came from God," Mother said.

"But how did it come from God?" Rudo questioned. "I do not understand."

Mother was troubled. She did not know how to answer. Do you know where the Bible came from? It is important for us to know about the Word of God. In our programmes the next few weeks we shall learn the answers to these questions about the Bible. Today we shall study how we got our Bible.

PART ONE:

The Bible was given by God. We are told in 2 Timothy 3:16,

"All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." The Bible came from God. Long before the first word was written God our Father was planning that He would give a Book to His children.

Did God write His Book in heaven and send it to us completely finished from Genesis to Revelation? No. God could have done this. But He chose another way to give us His Book, the Bible.

2 Peter 1:21 tells us, "Because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Every word of the Bible was the work of a man and the Holy Spirit, Who is God.

How did the writers know what God wanted them to write? The Holy Spirit told them.. How could the Holy Spirit tell them? The writers were people just like we are. But they lived close to God and sought to know and do His will in their living. God through the Holy Spirit showed these men His thoughts and they were able to write them down.

PART TWO:

We look at our Bibles today and see a black cover and printed pages. The Bible was not like this in the beginning. The Bible has had a wonderful life.

The beginning of the Bible was in the hearts of Jacob and the first people of God. As they sat in their homes, they told to their children the things God had done. Hundreds of years passed.

Then God called Moses to lead His people away from Egypt. God gave the Children of Israel victory that they might conquer their enemies. The Bible tells us in Exodus 17:14 these words: "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this as a memorial in a book...'" So Moses became the first writer of the Bible.

God wrote for Moses one very important part of the Bible. We read in Exodus 31:18, "And he gave to Moses when he had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." We know these were the Ten Commandments.

God gave His Word to Moses. God commanded Moses to write. Moses wrote as God led Him.

PART THREE:

God commanded others to write also. God spoke to farmers and to shepherds, to prophets and to kings. They obeyed. Some of these writers were David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the other prophets.

Moses wrote on tablets made from soft clay. He wrote with a stone. Then one day someone thought of a way to make something else to write on. This was made from the stem of a plant. From this plant paper was later made.

The paper was rolled around sticks. Every book in the Bible was written on paper like this. The rolls were called scrolls. The words on the Old Testament scrolls were written in the Hebrew language. The scrolls were copied and recopied. Finally they were brought together as the Old Testament.

PART FOUR:

After the books of the Old Testament had been written, Jesus came to live on earth. There were so many wonderful things Jesus did that His friends began to write them down. Four men who wrote about the life of Jesus were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Their writings about the life of Jesus are the first four books of the New Testament.

After Jesus went back to Heaven, the Holy Spirit led Luke, Peter, Paul and others to write about the early church. Some of their writings were letters to the early Christians. The Holy Spirit guided these writers and led them to write the words God wanted which would help the Christians. These books and letters were written in the Greek language. They became our New Testament.

Dedicated Christian men worked day after day making copies of the Bible by hand. When the printing press was invented, Bibles began to be printed. The books of the Bible were translated into the Latin language. Later they were translated into English so more people would read them. Today we have Bibles in our own language and in many languages.

PART FIVE:

People have tried to destroy the Bible. They have failed. Those who oppose God have tried to stop people from buying and reading Bibles. They have tried to stop the selling and giving out of Bibles. All have failed.

Some have died while working to give the Word of God to all people. Yet the Word of God is still alive. More Bibles are sold than any other book. People want Bibles because the Bible is the only book that shows us the way to God.

Truly the Bible is a wonderful book!

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Psalm 119:160 says, "...thy word is truth..." Our memory verse today tells us that the Word of God will stand forever.

Let us thank God today for His Word, the Bible. Let us take good care of our Bibles. Let us pray that we will always have freedom to read the Word of God. Let us pray that God will help us to share His Word with others.

PRAYER.

PROGRAMME TWO

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE, A WONDERFUL BOOK

Theme for Today: WHY THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

Scripture for a Devotional: John 20:19-31 or

MEMORY VERSE: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31

PROGRAMME LEADER

There was once a great preacher named D.L. Moody. When he was dying he said in a clear voice, "If this is death, there is no valley. This is glorious. I have been within the gates and I saw the children. Earth is fading away; Heaven is approaching! God is calling me!"

At his funeral the minister said, "We are not here to mourn a defeat; we are here to celebrate a victory."

The Bible was written so that all men may read it and know a faith like that of Mr. Moody. The Bible was written to show us our sin. It was written to show us the way to God and eternal life. It was written to show us the way to live. It was written to show us how to have victory in death.

Today let us ask God to guide us as we study more about His Word. (Lead in prayer for God's guidance today.)

PART ONE:

The Bible was written to show us that we are sinners. In the Old Testament book of 2 Chronicles, chapter 34, we find the story of King Josiah. Josiah became king at a time when the Israelites were far away from God. God's Word had been lost for a long time. The people worshipped idols instead of worshipping God.

Josiah wanted to serve God. He called in workmen to repair the house of God. As they were working they found the Word of God. Immediately King Josiah had the Word of God read to him. "When the king heard the words of the law, he rent his clothes." When the king heard the Word of God, he saw how sinful he was. He saw how sinful his people were. He was filled with sorrow for his sin.

The Bible shows us our sin. Romans 3:23 tells us, "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." As God is revealed to us in His Word, we see ourselves as sinners before Him. We see that our sins separate us from God, Who is holy.

PART TWO:

The Bible was written to show us how we can come to God, though we are sinful. From the beginning to the end the Bible tells us of God's plan of salvation. It tells us of God's great love for us. Romans 5:8 says, "But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." God loved us so much that He sent His own Son to earth to die in our place for our sins. This is the message of the Bible. It was written so that we might know the way of salvation and eternal life.

When we know the way, we must accept it. When King Josiah saw his sin, he turned to God and asked for forgiveness. He promised to follow God. The Bible tells us, "And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul..." (2 Chronicles 34:31).

When we see our sin, the Bible shows us the way of salvation through repentance from sin and faith in Christ. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

PART THREE:

2 Timothy 3:16,17 tells us: "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." The Bible was written for our teaching. We should look to the Bible every day for guidance.

One young girl wrote the following words about her Bible: "When I think of what my Bible means to me, I think of the many things that I can use it for. When I am in trouble, in sorrow or any discomfort, I can go to my Bible and feel sure that it will help me. I can also read it at anytime to learn more things about the way that I should live."

The writer of Psalms said, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). The Bible will always show us the right way. One mother came to the church to talk to the pastor because her firstborn son was in trouble. He and some friends were caught stealing some clothes from a shop. This mother realised too late that she should have been teaching her son the Word of God all his life.

Let us take God's Word as the guide for our lives. Let us teach God's Word to our children and teach them to follow the way of the Bible.

PART FOUR:

The Word of God must be obeyed. It was written to teach us, but it must be obeyed before our faith has meaning. James wrote: "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

Even after we have become Christians, we still have a choice as to whether we will obey the Word of God or not. Obedience to God brings life and blessing; disobedience brings sorrow and trouble. We should obey God because He knows what is best for us. In order to find the best life, we must do His will.

Jesus gave us a story about this in Matthew 7:24-27. (Read these verses about the wise man who built his house on a rock.) The person who obeys the commands of Jesus is foolish.

PART FIVE:

The Bible was written to bring us victory and blessing in life and in death. The result of believing in Jesus, knowing His commands and obeying them is blessing and joy. The writer of Psalms said, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

He also wrote some beautiful verses about God's Word in Psalm 19:7-10.

He said;

"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
 The ordinances of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.
 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;
 Sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb."

If we will read the Bible and obey its teachings, we will find great joy and strength and blessing. And when we come to the end of our lives on earth, we can say as Paul did, "...to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21).

PROGRAMME LEADER:

(Give the women a time to testify as to what the Bible means to them.)

PRAYER

Programme three

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE, A WONDERFUL BOOK

Theme for Today: USING OUR BIBLE

Scripture for a Devotional: Psalm 119:11-16 or

Memory Verse: "I will delight in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word." Psalm 119:16

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Four young girls were sitting together in the meeting one Sunday morning. The pastor said, "We will read Psalm 95." Immediately the girls opened their Bibles and quickly found the Psalm. A man across the way picked up his Bible, too. He looked in the front of his Bible; he looked near the end. He turned the pages, but he could not find the right place. At the close of the meeting the man said to the girls, "Tell me, how did you find the Bible verses so quickly? Did you just happen to open your Bibles to the right place?"

"No, sir," one girl said. "We knew that by opening our Bibles in the middle we would find the book of Psalms."

"Oh, I see," said the man. "I wish I knew these things. I did not learn about the Bible when I was a young boy. Am I too old now?"

"No, no. We will teach you," the girls said.

Our Bibles are not worth as much to us if we cannot use them. Today we shall learn some things about using our Bibles.

PART ONE:

One thing which will help us very much to use our Bibles is to learn the books of the Bible in the order they come. The Bible has 66 books. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament. In Sunday School and G.A. our children learn to say the books of the Bible. But some of us have never learned this. We are not too old. We need to learn it now.

How many are here today who can say all the books of the Bible? (Ask one woman to say the names of the Old Testament books. Ask another to say the names of the New Testament books. If no one can do this, perhaps you may be able to do it.)

At the end of this programme there is a page which lists the books of the Bible. Let us all look at it now and read them together. (Have all the women turn to the page and read the names of the books together.)

Now let us see who can learn these this week.

PART TWO:

We have already heard that by opening our Bibles in the middle we will find Psalms. When we learn all the books of the Bible, we will know that Job comes just before Psalms. We will know that Proverbs comes just after Psalms. So we can then find these books.

We will know that the books of the Old Testament prophets came after Psalms. We will know that Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. We will know that Genesis is the first book. So you see this is why we learn the names of the books of the Bible in the order in which they come.

We can also learn some other ways of finding Bible verses. Let us try. Open your Bibles to Psalms. (Wait until each woman has opened her Bible in the middle and found Psalms.)

Now take the last half or the right hand part of your Bible. Open it again in the middle. You should have the beginning of the New Testament or Matthew. (Let the women try this.)

Now open the first half in the middle. You should find the book of First Samuel. (Let the women try this also.)

The more we use our Bibles the more we will learn about them. Let us all determine to learn all we can about our Bibles.

PART THREE:

We know that our Bibles are divided into two main parts. We know that these are the Old Testament and the New Testament. Do you know why they are called this? The word testament means covenant. A covenant is an agreement between two or more people. The Old Testament means the covenant of God with His people before Christ. The Old Testament begins with the story of the creation of the world and of man. It ends with the time just before the birth of Jesus.

The New Testament means the new covenant between God and man. This new covenant is made possible by Christ, the Son of God. The New Testament begins with things connected with the birth of Jesus. It tells us about the beginning of the church. It ends about 100 years later.

PART FOUR:

All the books of the Bible are divided into chapters and verses. This makes it easier for us to read. As we learn more about our Bibles, we shall find many interesting things.

Did you know that Psalms is the longest book of the Bible? Psalms was the hymn book of the Children of Israel. The word "psalm" means "praise" or "song of praise." In Psalms we also find the longest chapter in the Bible and the shortest chapter in the Bible. Does anyone know what these are? (Wait to see if anyone can answer.) Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter.

The first four books of the New Testament tell us about the life of Jesus. These four books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are called the gospels. The Acts of the Apostles tells us about the early church and how it grew. It tells the story of how the gospel was taken to the Gentiles and of the first missionaries.

A large part of the New Testament is made up of letters to the early Christians. Most of these letters were written by Paul.

The last book of the Bible, Revelation, is a book of prophecy. This means it is about things to come in the future.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

One day many years ago the officers of the army who were at a place in America called Saint Louis were very surprised to see four Indian men coming. When they entered, they were very tired and dirty.

The officers were even more surprised to hear that the Indians had travelled for 2000 (two thousand) miles by foot from the west country. They said, "We came for the white man's Book-- the Book of Life."

They meant the Bible. Truly it is the only book in the world that tells us how to have life, everlasting life, It is the only book that tells us how to get to Heaven. Is it any wonder that men would walk 2000 miles to get the book that tells how to have eternal life? The Bible is a precious Book.

This is the reason we want to learn all we can about our Bibles. It is the reason we must learn to use our Bibles. Let us all try this week to learn the books of the Bible so that we can use it better. Next week we shall see who can say these books.

Now let us thank God for His Word and for all we have learned today.

PRAYER

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis	Esther	Nahum	Galatians
Exodus	Job, Psalms	Habakkuk	Ephesians
Leviticus	Proverbs	Zephaniah	Philippians
Numbers	Ecclesiastes	Haggai	Colossians
Deuteronomy	Song of Solomon	Zechariah	1 Thessalonians
Joshua	Isaiah	Malachi	2 Thessalonians
Judges	Jeremiah	<u>NEW TESTAMENT</u>	1 Timothy
Ruth	Lamentations	Matthew	2 Timothy
1 Samuel	Ezekiel	Mark	Titus
2 Samuel	Daniel	Luke	Philemon
1 Kings	Hosea	John	Hebrews
2 Kings	Joel	Acts	James
1 Chronicles	Amos	Romans	1 and 2 Peter
2 Chronicles	Obadiah	1 Corinthians	1, 2, and 3 John
Ezra	Jonah	2 Corinthians	Jude
Nehemiah	Micah		Revelation

PROGRAMME FOUR

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE, A WONDERFUL BOOK

Theme for Today: STUDYING OUR BIBLES

Scripture for a Devotional: Psalm 119:1-10 or

Memory Verse: "Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart." Psalm 11:2

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Christians have been called "people of the Book." In some places Baptists have been called "the church with the Book." This is because our message and all we believe and practise comes from this one Book, the Bible, the Word of God.

Could people call you a "woman of the Book"? They could if you are one who reads and studies and lives by the Bible. We must study our Bibles if we are to grow as Christians and know how God wants us to live. Today we shall think about "STUDYING OUR BIBLES."

PART ONE:

At one time priests were the only people who were allowed to read the Bible. Bibles were kept chained to pulpits in churches. They were written in a language which could be read by only a few people.

A young man named Martin Luther was very troubled by this. He began to hide in the church and read the Bible. One day he read some words which changed his life. He read the words of Paul in Romans 1:16-17. (Read these verses from your Bible to the women.)

Mr Luther had been taught that he would be saved by works. Now he saw that the Bible said salvation was by faith in Christ. He saw that his church was not teaching the right way. He could not keep quiet. He began to write papers about what the Bible said. He said the people must be allowed to read the Bible so they could know the truth.

The church leaders wanted to kill Mr. Luther, but his friends hid him. For ten years he worked to translate the Bible into his own German language so all his people could read it for themselves.

Mr Luther began giving Bibles to people. A great revival came as people began to read and follow the Word of God.

Christians today are thankful to Martin Luther. He had great courage. Now we are free to read the Bible and to know its teachings.

PART TWO:

In our churches we study the Bible. We should all bring our Bibles to church every time we come. Our pastor preaches from the Bible. We should open our Bibles and read the words silently as our pastor reads them to us.

In Sunday School we study the Bible. We should all be members of the Sunday School. We should study our lessons at home. In this way we prepare for the class time on Sunday morning. We will learn much as we study and prepare our Sunday School lessons. Then we will learn better as we listen to our teacher on Sunday morning.

In W.M.U. we have Bible studies. Some churches have prayer meetings and Bible study times in the middle of the week. As we attend all the meetings of our church, we study the Word of God. We grow in our knowledge of the Bible. Let us be faithful to our church. We will learn and grow as we study the Bible with other Christians.

PART THREE:

We must study the Bible every day. If we ate only once or twice a week, we would be hungry. The Bible is our spiritual food. We must read it each day if we want to grow spiritually. It is good to try to keep the same time each day to read the Bible and pray.

Some people just open the Bible and begin to read. This is not the best way. The best way is to choose one book and read a few verses or a chapter each day until you have finished that book. Then you can begin to read another book. The gospel of John, Psalms and Acts are good books to begin with if you have never read the Bible very much. But in all the Bible God speaks to us.

Some say they cannot understand the Bible when they read it. We must pray as we study, asking God to show us the meaning of the verses. If you truly want God to speak to you, the Holy Spirit

will take the Word and make it a real message to your heart.

PART FOUR:

The Bible says about God's Word: "For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12.

The Word of God is sharp as a knife and full of power. It will cause us to see our sin. Then we must be willing to get the sin out of our lives. The Holy Spirit will show us what to do as we study the Word of God. We must then do whatever God says for us to do.

As we follow the teachings of the Bible, we will understand more and more about God. We will understand Who He is. We will understand what we must do to be His followers. As we live the truths of the Bible, it truly becomes the living Word of God to us.

The Bible will be our guide through all our lives. It will be a light to our paths. It will keep us from sin.

PART FIVE:

Talking about the Bible and telling someone else about the Word of God will make it more real. As we talk about the Bible with others, it will become more precious to us. We should all read God's Word with our families every day. We must teach our children to love and read the Bible.

Some have a Daily Bible Reading Booklet. This is a book with certain verses to read each day. It is a good book to use for your family worship time. There are other books also which tell us a few verses to read each day. Or we can read through a book of the Bible as we do in our own time of Bible study when we are alone. We should be sure we help our children to understand the verses we read.

We should also talk to others about the Bible. It is good to learn Bible verses by heart as we do our memory verse in W.M.U. and Sunday School. God uses these verses which we put in our hearts to speak to us in times of need. He also gives us times to use the verses we have learned as we talk and witness to other people.

It may be we could read the Bible to someone who is old or blind or who cannot read for themselves. Many are hungry to hear the Word of God. We will be blessed as we share the Bible with these.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

As we grow to love the Bible more, we will love Jesus more. Jesus alone is at the center of the Bible. The message of God to man through the Bible is of His Son, Jesus, the Saviour.

Let us study the Word of God. It will make us more like Jesus. Let us also share God's Word with others. It has great power to change lives.

PRAYER

(Today ask if anyone has learned the Books of the Bible. Let the women say them aloud.)

PROGRAMME FIVE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS

Theme for Today: IS GOD REAL?

Scripture for a Devotional: Psalm 139:14 or

Memory Verse: "And without faith it is impossible to please him..."
Hebrews 11:6

PROGRAMME LEADER:

All people have questions. Those who are not Christians often question many things about God and the Bible and Christian beliefs. Satan tries to trap Christians by making us doubt God and His promises. This is how he tricked Eve in the Garden of Eden and caused her to sin.

For the next few weeks we shall try to find the answers to the questions which most often cause people to doubt. Our answers will come from the Bible.

Some people say, "How can I know there really is a God? I do not see Him. Is He real?" Today we shall think about the answer to this question.

PART ONE:

(Read from your Bible Hebrews 11:1-3,6.)

God is known through faith. We cannot prove there is a God in the same way we can prove some things. You may say to your friend, "I have two dollars." Your friend may reply, "How do I know you have two dollars?" When you hold the two dollars in your hand for your friend to see, you have proved you have the money. We cannot prove there is a God in this way because God is Spirit. We cannot see or touch Him.

You may say to your friend, "I love you." You cannot hold love in your hand and show it to your friend. Your friend cannot see your love. You cannot prove you have love in the same way you proved you had two dollars. Yet love is real.

Even though we cannot see God, He is real. The Bible tells us that God is known through faith. We read, "...For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." As we believe, we know God is real. As our faith grows, our knowledge of God grows.

PART TWO:

The things we see around us teach us that there is a real God Who created the world. When we look at a house, we know that house did not build itself. The foundation cannot dig itself. The bricks, doors and windows cannot find their places by their own cleverness. No! When we see a house, we know there was a builder.

In Psalm 19:1 we read these words: "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork." This means that when we look at the world and all that is in it, we know there is a God Who planned and made it all. The sun, moon and stars did not just happen to be in the sky. The flowers and trees and animals did not just suddenly appear. They were created by God. Even more wonderful is the human body with all its parts. Have you ever looked at a baby and thought how wonderful that a man or woman could be in that small body? This did not just happen by chance. God, the Creator, planned it all.

Romans 1:19-20 tells us, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal

power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made..." All the world God has made shows us that He is real.

PART THREE:

The works and words of Jesus tell us that God is real. Many years before Jesus came the prophets said that God would send His Son. Jesus came to earth just as they had said He would. How did the prophets know about Jesus? God told them.

No man could ever do the great miracles that Jesus did when He was on earth. He healed the sick, raised the dead and cast out demons. He said He did this by the power of God. Jesus said, "Believe me that I am in the Father and Father in me; or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves." John 14:11.

Jesus lived a life without sin; yet He died the death of a sinner on the Cross. He told His disciples that He would die and that He would rise again. Three days after He was crucified Jesus rose from the dead as He said He would. The resurrection of Jesus proves that He was not just a man. No man has the power to come back from the dead. Only God has power over life and death. This makes us know God is real.

PART FOUR:

Our own experiences cause us to know there is a God. God has made us with a desire to know Him. He has given us deep inside ourselves a feeling that He is real.

When we sin, what causes us to feel guilty and to know we have done wrong? God puts this knowledge in our hearts. We are afraid because we have not kept the commandments of God. It is because God is real that we feel fear and shame when we sin. We know we deserve to be punished because of our sins.

Some people try to forget about God. They try to leave Him out of their lives and never think about Him. They may live wicked lives and do all kinds of wrong things. They may live for pleasure or for power. But they always find they can never get away from God.

It is like the Bible says in Psalm 139:7-10: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"

If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Wherever we go, we feel that God is there. We know He is real.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

We cannot see the wind. But we can feel it on our faces. We can see the branches of the trees bend as the wind blows. We know wind is real.

It is the same with knowing God. When we repent of our sins and trust Jesus as our Saviour, the Holy Spirit of God enters our hearts. He changes our lives. He makes us a new person. We feel His work in our hearts. We know His presence in our lives. We know God is real.

Jesus told His disciples, "Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (John 14:19-20).

Today let us praise God because we know Him! Let us thank Him because He has made Himself known to man. Let us pray that each of our lives will testify that God is real

PRAYER

PROGRAMME SIX

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS

Theme for Today: WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

Scripture for a Devotional: John 3:1-7; 14-18 or

Memory Verse: "And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.'" Acts 16:31

PROGRAMME LEADER

A teacher asked his class to write their answers to the question, "Who is a Christian?" He received many different answers. Some said, "A Christian is a church member." Some said, "A Christian is someone who has been baptised." Some

said, "A Christian is one who obeys the Ten Commandments." Others said, "A Christian is one who believes in God."

Were their answers correct? Who is a Christian? How would you answer? Today we shall see what the Bible says about this question.

PART ONE:

Are people Christians because their parents are Christians? Are our children Christians because we are Christians? Some people think they are Christians because they were born in a Christian home. Is this true? No. But why are people not Christians if they are born of Christian parents?

There are some things we inherit from our parents. One thing is our citizenship. If a child's parents are citizens of a certain country, that child is also a citizen from birth. This is not true of all things, however. A child is not born with an education because his parents have a good education. The child must attend school and learn for himself.

It is the same with being a Christian. No one is a Christian when he is born. Every person must decide for himself to become a Christian. This is because every person is a sinner. The Bible says, "Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Every person is separated from God because of his own sins. The Bible tells us, "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). "...The soul that sins shall die" (Ezekial 18:4). Every person is guilty before God. Every one must answer for himself. No one else can do it for us.

PART TWO:

Mrs. Moyo was always helping others. Always she was the first person to arrive when someone died. She was kind and good to her neighbours. She was quick to give food to one who was hungry. Every one said, "Mrs. Moyo is such a good woman."

But do all good works make Mrs. Moyo a Christian? Are we Christians because we do good works or because we obey the Ten Commandments? If we do more good things than we do bad things, are we Christians? Some people think this is true, but the Bible says, "No."

Good works do not make us Christians. We may be very good people, but good works will never get us to Heaven. We cannot do enough good works to remove or to cover up the sin in our lives.

Jesus once told a very good man named Nicodemus that he must be born again. All his good works could not make Nicodemus a Christian. We needed a new heart and a new life. He needed forgiveness for his sins. A new life comes only by faith in Jesus, not by living a good life.

In Ephesians 2:8-9 we read, "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 man should boast."

PART THREE:

"I am a member of a church. Doesn't that make me a Christian?" "I was baptised when I was a baby. Therefore, I am a Christian." Often we hear people talk like this. Are they right? Are they Christians because they are church members or because they were baptised when they were babies? No.

What makes a person a Christian? Listen to these verses from the Word of God. "I tell you, No: but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household'" (Acts 16:31).

A person becomes a Christian when he repents of his sin and believes in Jesus as His Saviour. What does this mean? To repent means to change your thinking about sin and God. It means to feel sorrow for your sins and to turn away from your sins. To believe in Jesus means to believe He died on the Cross for **you**. But it is more than just believing that Jesus died on the Cross. You must receive Jesus as your own personal Saviour. You must give yourself to Him and receive the eternal life He gives.

John 3:18 tells us, "He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." Being a church member or being baptised does not make one a Christian. When a person repents of his sin and receives Jesus, he becomes a Christian. No one is a Christian unless he has done these two

things. The Bible teaches that only those who have become Christians already should be baptised. This is why Baptists do not baptise babies. Babies cannot repent and believe for themselves.

PART FOUR:

Is repentance and faith all there is to being a Christian? Through repentance and faith we become Christians; we are saved. But living the Christian life is then much more. When we are saved, we should confess Christ openly before others. We should not be ashamed to stand up before others and say that we are following Christ. (Read Matthew 10:32-33).

One way we confess Christ before others is by following Jesus in baptism. Baptism does not make us Christians. But one who has become a Christian will want to confess openly in this way before others that he has been saved.

Another way we confess before the world that we are Christians is by our daily living. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15). Good works do not make us Christians. However, if we have become Christians, we will do good works. We will live in a way that will glorify Jesus. We will obey the Word of God. James wrote, "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26).

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Today have we seen who a Christian is? (Let the women answer. Be sure all understand that a Christian is one who has himself repented of his sin and received Jesus as his Saviour.)

Perhaps we have friends or relatives who believe they are Christians because they are members of some church or because they are good people. We must witness to them about the only way of salvation. If they have never repented and received Christ, they are lost.

Many of us are Christian mothers. We must teach our children the way of salvation. We must help them to know that they are not Christians because their mothers are Christians. We have a great responsibility to lead our children to accept

Christ for themselves.

Today let us ask God to help us to bring those who are lost to Jesus. He is the only way of salvation.

PRAYER

PROGRAMME SEVEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS

Theme for Today: HOW CAN I KNOW I AM SAVED?

Scripture for a Devotional: Romans 8:31-38 or

Memory Verse: "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God." John 1:12

PROGRAMME LEADER:

One day Mrs. Mwasi came to talk to her pastor. She was troubled. She said, "When I first trusted Jesus as my Saviour, I was happy. I felt good all over. But now I do not feel the same way. Sometimes I do not think I am even saved. What is the matter with me? How can I know if I am saved or not?"

Her pastor said, "Satan tries very hard to get a child of God to doubt his salvation. Many people often do not understand this. All of us become discouraged at times. We do not understand all the things that happen to us. We do not always feel the same way we felt when we first become Christians. But we can know we are saved. We can know we are saved right now. We can know we are saved forever. I will tell you how."

We shall see in our programme today the things Mrs. Mwasi was told by her pastor.

PART ONE:

The Bible says in 1 John 5:13, "I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." This verse tells us that we can know we are saved.

The Word of God is true. Let us say together John 3:16. All the women should say this verse together.) This verse tells us that whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life. Have you believed in Jesus? If your answer is "Yes," then you know you

have eternal life because the Bible tells us that whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life. It does not say, "Perhaps you have eternal life." It is a sure fact that whoever truly believes in Jesus has eternal life.

You may think, "But how can I know I have truly believed?" Jesus said, "...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Have you come to Jesus? If you have, He said He would not cast you out. If He has not cast you out, then He has received you.

Because the Word of God is true we can know we are saved.

PART TWO:

1 John 4:13 tells us, "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit." Another way we know we are saved is because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. He assures us that we belong to Jesus.

Perhaps we may wonder how we can be sure the Holy Spirit is in our hearts. The Bible tells us of many things the Holy Spirit does in our hearts. He teaches us the ways of God. He gives us power to do the will of God. He works to make us like Jesus. When we find these things being done in our hearts, we know the Holy Spirit is at work there.

The Holy Spirit makes us more and more aware of sin in our lives. He shows us our sin. He convicts us of unconfessed sin. He causes us to love the things of God where once we loved the things of the world.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts assures us of our salvation.

PART THREE:

Sometimes it is temptation and sin in our lives which causes us to doubt our salvation. Satan even tempted Jesus so we should not be surprised when we are tempted to do wrong. Jesus did not sin, but we do. Then we may wonder if we are really saved.

When a Christian sins, does it mean he is lost again? No! Jesus said in John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Satan may tempt us and cause us to sin, but he can never snatch us out of our Father's hand. Jesus has given eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Another way in which we know this is that the Bible says we become children of God when we receive Jesus. Let us say our memory verse again. (All the women should say together John 1:12.) When your children disobey you, are they still your children? Yes, of course they are your children because they were born to you. Even though they disobey you, nothing changes their birth. When we disobey God, are we still His children? Yes, of course we are still His children. God keeps us and nothing can separate us from His love. Nothing can take us away from Him.

PART FOUR:

When a Christian sins, what should he do? We are told in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Our loving Heavenly Father forgives our sins when we confess them to Him. As soon as we know we have sinned, we must confess our sin to God and receive His forgiveness.

Sometimes Christians find it hard to believe God has really forgiven them. Sometimes it is hard to forgive ourselves when we do wrong. Because of our feelings of guilt we feel God will not forgive us. But we must believe His Word. He does forgive us when we confess our sins. The Bible also says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). God forgives us and He removes our sins far from us.

PART FIVE:

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." We can know we are saved because of the change in our hearts. When we are saved, we become a new person. We want to leave the ways of sin. We want to walk in the will of God.

To do this we must always stay close to Jesus. We keep close to Him through praying and reading our Bibles every day.

God's Word will keep us from sin. Psalm 119:11 tells us, "I have laid up thy Word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."

As we live close to Jesus, we will have more and more assurance in our hearts that we are truly saved.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Have you come to Jesus, repenting of your sin and receiving Him by faith? Then you can say "I know I am saved now. I know I will still be saved tomorrow. I know I am saved forever." We can say this, not because of anything we have done ourselves, but because God is faithful. Therefore, "...He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

Let us praise God today for His wonderful salvation.

PRAYER.

PROGRAMME EIGHT

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS

Theme for Today: WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I DIE?

Scripture for a Devotional: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26 or

Memory Verse: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.'"

John 11:25

PROGRAMME LEADER:

What will happen to me when I die? This question has been asked by all people of all times. There is much fear of death, although we know that all people die. Our fear of death is because we do not know what is after death. We wonder what is on the other side of death.

The Bible answers our questions about death. The Bible tells us that death is not the end. The Bible tells us that Christians have victory over death because Jesus had victory over death. Because Jesus is alive today, Christians know that death is only the doorway to life which will be lived with Jesus forever in heaven.

Today we shall study what the Bible says about death.

PART ONE:

Physical death comes to all. What is physical death? It is the death of the body. One dies when his body ceases to function. The heart stops beating, the lungs no longer bring air into the body. The hand is still there, but it cannot grasp anything. The ears can not hear. The eyes cannot see.

At the time of the death of the body the spirit leaves the body. The physical body begins to decompose. After a period of time, it goes back to the soil from which it came. Physical death is one result of sin. God said to Adam in the Garden of Eden after he had sinned, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Genesis 3:19.

Some say the death of the body is the end. This is not true. Those who have a personal faith in Christ and who believe the Word of God know that death is not the end. We know that there is life after death. Jesus said, "Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:26). In John, chapter 11 we are told the wonderful story of how Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. (Read this story at home in John 11:1-44. Tell the women about the raising of Lazarus.)

PART TWO:

After the body dies, what happens to the spirit? It lives on in a spiritual state. It is conscious. It has its own personality just as it did when it was in the body.

Let us read Luke 16:19-31. (You should read these verses at home so you will understand them. You should read them now to the women or ask someone who reads well to read them now.)

The soul of the rich man who had not repented and believed in God was in Hades. The soul of Lazarus who believed in God was taken by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The soul of our friends and relatives who have died are not lying senseless in the grave. Those who have received Jesus as their personal Saviour live with God. Jesus gave them eternal life at the very time they received Him as their Saviour and Lord.

Do you remember what Jesus said to the thief on the cross who repented? He said, "...Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

PART THREE:

At the time of physical death the body is buried in the earth. This old body will never live again, but in its place we will one day have a new spiritual body. This will happen when Christ returns to the earth.

Let us see what Paul said about this. "Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

It is at this time the spirits will be clothed with new bodies. The body will not be the same as the old body, but in some ways it will resemble the old body. Paul says it is like planting a seed. The planted seed dies and from it comes up a new plant which resembles the old.

We do not understand all about these new bodies but the Bible tells us some things about them. (Read at home 1 Corinthians 15:42-50 so you can understand this.) Our new bodies will not get sick. They will not die. They will be enough like our old bodies so we will know each other. After His resurrection Jesus was known by His disciples. They even saw the prints of the nails in His hands. Yet He had a spiritual body. He appeared through a closed door. Our new bodies will be spiritual.

PART FOUR:

Following the resurrection of the dead will come the final judgment. Jesus will be the judge. Each person will be judged concerning two things; his relationship to God and his relationship to his fellow-man.

Those who have accepted the death of Jesus on the cross as an atonement for their sins are acceptable to God. Waiting for them is everlasting life of peace and happiness with God in Heaven.

Those who have refused to accept Christ as their Saviour have to bear all the consequences of their sin. The Bible says,

"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). Those who refused Christ on earth will suffer everlasting punishment and suffering in hell. They will live forever separated from God and all that is good.

If you have repented of your sin and trusted Jesus as your Saviour, you have eternal life. You will go to Heaven. But not all Christians will receive the same rewards in Heaven. One's reward is determined by his service here on earth and his faithfulness in living for Christ and obeying His commandments.

All people will not be punished alike either. Those who have heard the gospel over and over and have continued to refuse Jesus will have greater punishment than those who have never heard the Word of God.

PART FIVE:

In the book of Revelation John looked into Heaven. There he saw the saved and heard them praising the Lord. He said in Revelation 7:9-10, "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!'"

In Heaven the saved were one in Christ. They were clothed with white robes of victory. They were singing praises to the Lord. John said, "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 7:15-17).

Heaven is a wonderful place. We need not fear death if we belong to Jesus because we shall live in Heaven forever with our Lord.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Eternal life is ours right now if we have been saved. We do not need to fear death. Paul wrote in Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Let us rejoice today! Because Jesus is alive we have victory over death. "To die is gain."

Let us thank God for the gift of His Son. Let us **thank** Him for the assurance of everlasting life.

PRAYER

PROGRAMME NINE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BIBLE ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS

Theme for Today: SHOULD A CHRISTIAN GO TO A WITCHDOCTOR?

Scripture for a Devotional: Acts 19:11-20 or

Memory Verse: "Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:31.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

A question which many of us ask is "Should a Christian go to a witchdoctor?" Today we shall think about the answer to this question.

Let us think about the witchdoctors we have known in the past or those whom our families or friends have consulted. Do you know anyone who has been deceived by them? Do you know anyone who has died as a result of their medicine? Do you know anyone who has paid much money to these who call themselves doctors?

What does God have to say about sorcery and witchcraft?

PART ONE:

When a person goes to a witchdoctor, the witchdoctor must first talk to the spirits of the dead. The person who consults a witchdoctor must pay him something which pleases him. He sometimes charges a large amount of money or a cow or a goat. He often instructs people to make sacrifices to appease the angry spirit. People will do what the witchdoctor tells them to do because they are afraid.

The witchdoctor uses this fear to cheat the people and deceive them into trusting him. We read in the Word of God in

2 Timothy 1:7, "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control." We can see from this verse that any time we fear man this fear comes from Satan. God does not give us a spirit of fear.

If we belong to Christ, the witchdoctor has no power over us. God has given us a spirit of power. The power of God is greater than the power of Satan. However, if we are not truly children of God, then the witchdoctor may succeed in deceiving us.

PART TWO:

In our culture for many years people have believed that all illnesses and trouble are caused by evil spirits or by angry family spirits who have withdrawn their protection from the family. Convulsions, swelling of the legs and any disease which causes loss of weight are especially attributed to witchcraft.

These days doctors have learned that worms, mosquitoes, germs, lack of proper food and many other things are the cause of diseases. Doctors and nurses have studied the human body in order to find out the causes of diseases. They have studied the way to treat diseases. Christians should go to doctors and nurses who have studied how to treat illnesses. God has helped them to learn the best way to treat people who are sick.

God hates sorcery. From the beginning God forbade His people to consult such persons. The Word of God is clear. It says, "There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord..."

(Deuteronomy 18:10-12).

PART THREE:

Some people say they do not see anything wrong with going to a witchdoctor. They say witchdoctors can help to cure diseases. In some cases witchdoctors may do this. The witchdoctors often have knowledge of herbs and plants which do help in some kinds of illnesses. Many of the herbs he uses are also found in the medicines that are given in hospitals by medical doctors.

Then what is wrong with going to the witchdoctor? The witchdoctors attribute their ability to cure diseases to the spirits of the dead. They also glorify themselves. They usually threaten to harm by magic the patients who do not pay their fees.

The witchdoctor's belief in witchcraft, his use of other substances in preparing his medicines and his lack of accurate methods to measure amounts of medicine make him a dangerous person. A young boy had been sick for some time when his family took him to the witchdoctor. The witchdoctor put some cuts on his body, gave him medicine and sent him home. The boy became unconscious. Then his family took him to the hospital. The doctor found he was unconscious because of a large dose of medicine the witchdoctor had given him. The boy had malaria. He could have been cured, but he died from the medicine the witchdoctor gave him.

Our memory verse warns us against going to get help from witchdoctors. "Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God."

PART FOUR:

The witchdoctor often accuses innocent people of having caused illness, causing arguments and hatred among neighbours. A young girl named Roda became ill with swelling of the legs. She was a Christian and she asked her parents to take her to the hospital, but they refused. They persuaded her to go to the witchdoctor and she agreed. The witchdoctor told her she had been bewitched by her neighbour. He gave her a charm to wear around her waist.

The witchdoctor used the fear and superstition of this family to cause trouble among neighbours. The neighbours were innocent. The neighbours were not the cause of the girl's illness, but the family believed the witchdoctor. God says, "...You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 19:19). A Christian disobeys God when he does not keep this commandment.

PART FIVE:

Do we really trust God and believe Him? His Word commands us not to turn to witchcraft. Jesus said, "...All authority in

heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). We are weak Christians because we are not trusting God for all our needs.

A strong Christian will stand up under testing. A Christian should not fear any man. God has power over evil. He has power over evil spirits and Satan. Christians have God's Spirit in us. When we go to the witchdoctor, we are taking ourselves out of God's hands. We are putting ourselves into the hands of evil spirits.

(Read 1 John 4:1-4). Verse 4 tells us, "...he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." God will give us victory because the Spirit of Christ in us is greater than all other spirits. Our part is to have faith and trust God.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Others are watching us to see if we truly believe our God is great. Our testimony is hurt greatly when we go to the witchdoctor. People who see us will say we do not really trust God to care for us.

Matthew 5:16 tells us, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Let us examine ourselves today and see if we are obeying God in this matter of going to the witchdoctors. Let us ask God to lead us and give us His strength for our weakness. Then let us believe God and stand firm for Him.

PRAYER

PROGRAMME TEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Theme for Today: THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

Scripture for a Devotional: 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13 or

Memory Verse: "So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13

PROGRAMME LEADER:

What is the greatest need in our churches today? Our

greatest need is for members who are truly filled with the Holy Spirit. It is for Christians whose lives show forth the fruit of the Spirit. What is the fruit of the Spirit? The Bible tells us in Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law."

If we are filled with God's Spirit, we will have these qualities in our lives. As we study the fruit of the Spirit these next two weeks, let us each one examine our own lives to see what is there.

The first fruit which is named is love. The Bible speaks much about love. In 1 Corinthians Paul said if we do not have love, we are nothing. Today we shall study about the love that Christians must have in their lives.

PART ONE:

Love is the greatest characteristic of a Christian. It is what makes Christians different from the world. Jesus said to his disciples, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).

1 John 4:7-8 tells us, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love." And again in verse 21, "And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also."

Talking about the love of God is easy, but talk does not convince the world that God is love. What does show people that God is love is when His children show that love by their lives. People cannot see God. They must see His love in us. Love should control all our lives. There is no greater evidence that we are Christians. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." This is what Jesus is saying to us today.

PART TWO:

The love which is the fruit of the Spirit is love for all

people. God loved us when we were His enemies, while we were sinners. (Read Romans 5:8-10.) Jesus associated with outcasts, prostitutes, publicans and sinners. He loved all of them with the love of God. On the cross Jesus prayed for those who hated Him. He asked forgiveness for those who crucified Him.

Some people are hard to love. some people are our enemies. Some people do not treat us in the right way. Some people may try to hurt us. Jesus said, "...Love your enemies...if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them" (Luke 6:27,32).

We must love all people just as they are, whoever they are. We must love those who love us, those who do not love us, those who are of our race or tribe or colour, and those of other races or tribes or colours. We must love all people, not because of what they are, but because the Spirit of Christ lives in us and His nature is love.

PART THREE:

Love overcomes evil with good. Jesus knew we can never defeat evil by using the weapons of evil. To fight evil with evil is the way of the world. The one who is filled with the Holy Spirit will return good for evil. This shows that love lives in that person.

Jesus told us what to do: "But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well. Give to every one who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods, do not ask them again" (Luke 6:27-30).

Christian love is more powerful than swords or guns. What if people do not want our love? What if they reject us? Do we give up? No, we continue to love them. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:7-8, "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

Even if we cannot see any results of our love, we must keep

on loving. We must never give up. We must continue to believe as the Bible says that love is the greatest thing.

PART FOUR:

Love means action. We cannot sit in our houses and never do anything and say, "I love people." Jesus said, "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (Luke 6:31).

To obey Jesus we have to walk as He walked. He looked for people who needed Him. Everywhere He went He was aware of those who were sick or crippled or blind or in need. We must reach out in love to others just as Jesus did. We must be quick to see the needs of those around us.

It is easy for us to be so concerned with our own families and friends that we do not care about others. Many people in this world need a friend. They need someone to talk to. They need someone to share their troubles and sorrows. They need someone to help them. Are we looking for ways to help others?

One day a man passed a little girl in the road. She was carrying her small brother on her back. In her hands she held some bread and tea and sugar which she had just bought for her mother at the shop. The man heard a sudden noise. When he looked back, he saw that the girl had dropped the things she was carrying. He stopped, went back to the child and helped her pick up her things. The little girl looked up at him and said, "Mister, are you Jesus?"

We show our love for Jesus as we show love to other people. "Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

PROGRAMME LEADER:

The first Christians were known for their love for one another. Do we have love in our hearts and lives? Love is a fruit of the Spirit. God gives us His love as we are filled with His Spirit.

How can we be filled with His Spirit? We must realise that we are nothing in ourselves. We can do nothing in ourselves. We must come to God, confessing all our sin, asking His forgiveness

and giving ourselves completely to Him. We must ask God to fill us with His Spirit. Then we must believe that He has done this.

Then every day as we surrender ourselves completely to the Lord we will see the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

PRAYER

PROGRAMME ELEVEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Theme for Today: Walking By the Spirit

Scripture for a Devotional: Galatians 5:16-25 or

Memory Verse: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." Galatians 5:25

PROGRAMME LEADER:

The Holy Spirit is the gift of God to those who have received Jesus as their Saviour. All Christians have the Holy Spirit. However, all Christians are not filled with the Holy Spirit. All Christians do not have the fullness and power of the Spirit.

What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? It means that the Holy Spirit is in control of your life completely. As we learned last week, we must confess all sin in our lives and receive forgiveness. Day by day we must surrender ourselves to God. We must obey Him in every thing.

When we are filled with the Spirit, the Bible says that we will have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Last week we learned that the first fruit of the Spirit is love. Today we shall study about other characteristics which are in the life of one who is living and walking by the Spirit.

PART ONE:

(Read Galatians 5:22-23).

Next to love, these verses tell us that the fruit of the Spirit is joy. Paul wrote, "Rejoice always" (1 Thesalonians 5:16). Jesus said, "These things have I spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). All the commandments in the Word of God are given to us so that we might

have the fullness of joy as we love and obey God.

Before Paul met Jesus he was a rich man. He had an important position. He had money and many things. After he became a Christian, Paul was often beaten. He was often put in prison. He wrote that his body showed the scars of chains and beatings which he had suffered for Christ. Yet his heart was so full of joy that even in prison he could sing praises to God. In prison he wrote these words, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4).

The Holy Spirit living within us gives us wonderful joy even if we have pain, sorrow, burdens, troubles or suffering. Whatever happens, can you rejoice because you are a child of God? Can you rejoice because you know God loves and cares for you in every situation? The fruit of the Spirit is joy.

PART TWO:

The next fruit of the Spirit is peace. People are searching for peace. Yet in our world today there is no peace.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27). There may be no peace in the world, but we can have peace in our hearts. If the Holy Spirit is ruling in our lives, we will have peace. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit.

One woman was always nervous and worried about everything. She said she had the Holy Spirit. But when people saw her anxious and worried, they could see she did not have peace.

Another woman had two children who became ill with whooping cough. Both children die. The mother was very sad; yet she said, "I have peace in my heart. I know I will see my children again one day in Heaven." God gave her real peace. The Holy Spirit in her was her Comforter.

God can give peace. If we trust Him and let Him fill us with His Spirit, we will have His peace in our hearts whatever may come in our lives.

PART THREE:

The fruit of the Spirit in the life of a Christian is also

longsuffering, kindness and goodness. Longsuffering means waiting without losing our patience. The Bible says that God is longsuffering with us. Even when we do not love Him as we should, when we do not follow His ways and obey His commandments, He continues to be longsuffering toward us. In our natural body we do not like to wait. We become impatient. At times in doing the work of God we become impatient. Then we are ready to give up. The Bible says, "And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" Gal. 6:9.

Kindness and goodness mean having a spirit of concern for others and of service to others. It means thinking of others first. Paul wrote in Galatians 5:26, "Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another." He also said in Galatians 6:2, "Bear one another's burdens..."

If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will be patient, kind and good.

PART FOUR:

Faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are the other fruit of the Spirit in the life of a Christian who is filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

A faithful person is one who can be depended on to do what he says he will do and to keep his word. He can be trusted. He is also faithful to Jesus all the time, every day of the week, wherever he is.

Gentleness means humility. One who is filled with the Spirit will never put himself above others. He will not have a spirit of pride. Humility is a fruit of the Spirit. The Bible tells us, "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honour and life". (Proverbs 22:4).

Selfcontrol means having control of our bodies and all their desires and passions. In our own power we cannot do this. That is why self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. As the Holy Spirit controls us, we are able to live in the world and keep ourselves from the sin of the world. 2 Corinthians 6:17 tells us, "Therefore come out from them, and be separated from them says the

Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Self-control also means controlling our tempers, not becoming angry. It means controlling our tongues and every part of our bodies. We can do this only as Christ controls every part of us.

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Let us look into our lives. Do we see in ourselves the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Is the Holy Spirit living in us? Is He filling us? Is He ruling in our lives? Are we allowing Him to use us for glory of God?

As we go to our homes today, let us think about these things. Let us kneel before the Lord, alone, and confess our sins and receive the forgiveness and power of God. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to completely control our lives day by day.

PRAYER
