

## W. M. U. PROGRAMMES

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UNIT ONE: THE BOOK OF JONAH

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UNIT TWO: WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD

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W. M. U. PROGRAMMES

UNIT ONE: THE BOOK OF JONAH

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**PROGRAMME ONE**

**THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BOOK OF JONAH**

**Theme for Today: JONAH - RUNNING FROM GOD**

**Scripture for a Devotional: Acts 10:15,28**

**Memory Verse:**

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

**PROGRAMME LEADER:**

This month we will study the book of Jonah. The book was written by Jonah, a prophet of God. His name, Jonah, means dove, which we think of as a gentle, loving bird. In our study, we will find that Jonah did not act in his life the meaning of his name all the time.

Jonah was a prophet and understood when God called. In his book, he shows God speaking to him about the task God has for him. Finally, he shows God speaking to him in a way that revealed God's mercy and compassion for all the people in all the world.

**PART ONE: Jonah's Call and Disobedience**

God spoke to Jonah in chapter one, verses 1-3. He told Jonah to go to the great city of Nineveh and speak out against her wickedness. Jonah knew about the city of Nineveh because he lived on the highway of nations and heard news of the city of Nineveh. Jonah knew that it was very big and that all kinds of wicked things were done there.

Jonah did not like the people of Nineveh. He did not want to go to that city and speak out against the wicked things they were doing because he did not want them to repent and be

saved. Jonah decided to run away from God's call. He went to Joppa and got a ticket on a ship going in the opposite direction from Nineveh.

Since the people of Nineveh had been so wicked, Jonah did not think that they deserved an opportunity to be saved. They should be punished for their wickedness. Jonah was not measuring sin the way God measures. For him the person with the "little" sin deserved to have an opportunity to repent, but the person with the "big" sin did not.

Do we, as did Jonah, sometimes forget that all sin, no matter what size, is ugly in God's sight? Is disobeying God a sin? In Luke 19:10, Jesus said, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Everyone deserves the opportunity to hear the good news and be saved.

#### PART TWO: Jonah on the Sea

The ship that Jonah got on was going far away from Niveveh. After the journey began, a terrible storm came on the sea. The captain and his crew were praying to their gods to save them and the ship. Jonah was down in the ship asleep. His disobedience to God's call had made him very tired. The captain and his men rebuked him for being asleep and not praying to his God.

When we disobey God, there is a spiritual dullness in our lives. We try to avoid that which God wants us to do, and we close our mind to spiritual things. We convince ourselves that it involves no one else. But as Jonah's wrong involved the seamen, so do we involve those around us in our disobedience. When a husband and wife decide that they can no longer live together, their decision also involves children, parents and greater family.

Paul reminds us in Romans 14:21, "It is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother

stumble." When you disobey, are you causing someone else to stumble? When you decide to miss worship and go to the market or celebration in the next village or town, are you causing someone in your family or a neighbor to stumble? As we make our decisions every day, we need to think of how each decision will affect those around us.

#### PART THREE: Jonah's Punishment and Deliverance

Beginning with verse 8, the seamen begin to ask Jonah all kinds of questions. In their pagan beliefs, they believed that one guilty man involved those around him in punishment, although they were innocent. The seamen wanted to know who he was, where he was from, and what he had done to cause the evil to come on all of them. Do you remember doing something that caused a problem for another person? That person wants to know why you did what you did? That person also wants to know why you did it without asking first!

Jonah confessed his sin. Even as he made his confession, he was able to witness to the seamen. Jonah knew God's will, that he must be thrown into the sea as punishment for his disobedience. God did not make it easy for Jonah to come back to His will for him. But it was easier than to cause the death of the seamen.

The seamen first tried to get back to land. They soon realized they must throw Jonah overboard. God prepared the big fish to swallow Jonah. As Jonah was in the fish three days and nights and then came salvation, so Jesus Christ was in the earth three days and nights and arose for our salvation through a living Christ. (cf. Matthew 12:39-40)

#### PROGRAMME LEADER:

In our program today we have seen what happens when a person disobeys God. Jonah hated the people of Nineveh and did not want them to be saved. But this is not God's way, the way of hate.

God loves all people of all nations. He wanted to give the people of Nineveh opportunity to repent. God still loved Jonah even when he disobeyed. He punished Jonah, but he helped Jonah to come back to what he should do. Jonah was saved because he repented.

Here are some questions to think of when you pray. Do Christians sometimes hate people because they are from another tribe? Or make more money? Or have less education? Or have more education? Is this God's way?

PROGRAMME TWO

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BOOK OF JONAH

Theme for Today: JONAH - RUNNING WITH GOD

Scripture for a Devotional: Hebrews 12:1, 5-6

Memory Verse:

"Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us."

Hebrews 12:16

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Today we continue to study about Jonah as he has returned to God. Because God loved Jonah, he chastised Jonah. When God disciplines, we should not be discouraged. God disciplines his children because he loves them. He demands our obedience and when we stray, he reminds us that he is paying attention by chastising us.

At the time we are being disciplined, it is often hard to think of any good coming from it. It is too painful at the time. Paul says to us in Hebrews 12:11b, "later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

PART ONE: Jonah's Prayer and Deliverance

Can you imagine anyone being happy about being in the stomach of a big fish? Jonah was. He was happy because he had been saved from drowning. He had been chastened to the point of physical death. The result was a renewed spiritual life. Jonah realized that God was in control. He saw the futility of choosing his own way instead of God's way. When he had learned his lesson, he was ready to do God's will.

Jonah not only was three days and three nights in the fish as Christ was in the grave. He, like Christ, gave his life for the people of the world. The seamen (pagans) represented the people of the world. Jonah was the only Jew on board. He saved them by volunteering to be thrown overboard.

A young woman who lived near me at one time had been badly burned. People avoided looking at her, even her young son. In response to my question as to what had happened, another neighbor told her story. When the young son was very small, their home had caught fire. The young mother, just arriving home from getting water, rushed into the house to save her sleeping baby. She protected the baby with her body. As a result she almost died from the burns. The neighbor said most people near by were concerned because the young son laughed at her and was disobedient. Some even asked if his life were worth what she had gone through. The reply from the mother always came quickly, "I would do it again to save my child."

How many of us would volunteer to die for the sake of others? It would probably be easier to give ourselves for those of our family than for another tribe or country. But God is showing us through the story of Jonah and Christ that we should be willing to go to all the people of the world, not for those in our village or town alone.

#### PART TWO: Jonah's Obedience

In Jonah 3:1, God again tells Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach the message God gave to him. Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to the great city of Nineveh. The city was so large that it took three days to travel through the whole of it. After one day of travel in the great city, Jonah began to warn the people that the city would be overthrown in forty days. He was carrying God's message to the people of Nineveh.

Think of the place where it would take you three days walking to arrive. Now think of that entire area as being filled with people. The houses are very close together. This way, you get an idea of how large Nineveh was. Because Jonah obeyed, he was giving the people who filled this city a chance to repent. Are we obeying and warning people of their doom without Jesus as Saviour? Have you refused to go and tell

because all those wicked people deserve to die? Could you sometimes be called a Jonah? When someone is disobeying God, many may die because of that disobedience.

**PART THREE: Nineveh Repents**

The people of Nineveh believed and repented. They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth. Sackcloth was goats' hair worn over the body in time of mourning. When the king heard, he sent out the ruling that neither man nor beast was to eat or drink and that man and beast alike were to put on sackcloth. In this attitude of repentance and humility, maybe God would still spare the city. They based their hope on the fact that God had sent a warning. They were very serious about their repentance. God saw their actions and that they truly repented. God spared Nineveh.

Jonah was only asked to warn the people of Nineveh. The next step was up to the people themselves. They could have chosen not to repent. The choice was theirs, and God accepted their repentance. Our responsibility is to witness. The Holy Spirit saves souls. God may not send us out to a city the way he did Jonah, but he sends us to the people whom we meet every day. If we go to the bank, to the market, to the Post Office, to visit a neighbor, we have an opportunity to witness to someone about Jesus. If we are running with God, we will be trying daily to let someone know the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

**PROGRAMME LEADER:** How wonderful to see the results of a people being warned of their doom! They immediately repented, and God redeemed them. What a joy is ours when we witness to lost persons and see them repent and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

As we have our prayer time, let us list some people and places we know who need to hear about their doom. Let us talk for a few minutes about how they might be warned. If they are

near to us, can we plan how to witness to them? If they are further away, do we have a missionary there to pray for, or do we need to pray for one to be sent there?

Now let us take time to pray for opportunities to witness to others about Jesus. Finally, pray to be bold witnesses for Jesus.

PROGRAMME THREE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: THE BOOK OF JONAH

Theme for Today: JONAH - RUNNING AHEAD OF GOD

Scripture for Devotional: Hosea 12:6

Memory Verse:

"Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Today we are concluding our Bible Study of Jonah. First Jonah tried to run from God and His command. He soon found that you cannot run from God to hide. God is everywhere. After he had repented, God again gave Jonah his task. Finally he was going with God. But today we find in chapter four that Jonah is running ahead of God. Too many times we find ourselves, like Jonah, not running with God, but running ahead of God.

In the book of Hosea we are reminded to wait on the Lord. We find in Hosea 12:6, "So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and WAIT continually for your God." Do not get ahead of Him, but wait for God. Run with God.

Many of us have members of our family, friends, or neighbors whom we would like to see accept Jesus Christ as Saviour. The task would be much easier if we could accept for them. Or if we could force them to come to Jesus. But this is not God's way. Each person must make his or her own choice. Sometimes we want to do things before the time is right. We get ahead of God's plan instead of talking with Him and walking along with Him. We have problems just like Jonah.

PART ONE: Jonah's Despleasure

My, oh my, but Jonah was unhappy! His anger had him burning from his head to his feet. His pride was hurt because he had been made to look a false prophet. He was not concerned about God's honour. He was concerned about his own honour. He talked to God about the situation. He says, "Now Lord, this is the

reason I ran off in the first place. I knew you would have mercy on these evil people. Now you have made a fool of me. They will laugh at me and call me a false prophet. It is better for me to die." Jonah was so concerned about his honour as a prophet, that he missed the joy of the people because they had been warned.

There may be times when we hesitate to witness to a group or an individual because we are afraid they will laugh at us. We know they need to hear, but we do not want to be mocked. We may hesitate to try to use the language of another people or tribe because they might laugh at our pronunciation. We need to remember that Jesus was mocked. They laughed at him and beat him. But, Praise His Name, Jesus died and rose again that we might have eternal life.

#### PART TWO: Jonah and the Gourd Vine

When the Lord heard Jonah say it would be better for Jonah to die than to live, the Lord asked Jonah what right he had to be so angry. Jonah went outside the city, made himself a shelter, and sat down under the shelter to wait to see what would happen. While he was sitting there sulking, God caused a plant to grow up over Jonah to give him some shade and make him more comfortable. Jonah was pleased with the shade. He was like a young boy who went out to sit down and sulk because he could not go to the house of a friend. Then his mother came to give him a cool drink. He was happy to get the drink, but then he accidentally spilled the drink. Then he was angry again. A worm came along and caused the gourd vine to die. Then Jonah was angry and ready to die again. The wind was hot and the sun was hot. Jonah was about to faint. So he felt that it was better for him to die.

Jonah was acting like a child and thinking only of himself. Have we acted like Jonah sometimes? When a program is not done the way we want it done, do we sulk and refuse to participate? In the book of Ephesians, Paul reminds us that we cannot remain as spiritual children, but must grow like Christ and glorify

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Christ. (Read Ephesians 4:14-16). We cannot continue to think of self only. We should be growing to be like Christ and living our lives each day so that others will know that Jesus is the Lord of our lives.

#### PART THREE: Jonah Learns About God's Mercy

Jonah 4:9 shows God again asking Jonah what right he has to be angry. God rebuked Jonah and showed him what should be first. He reminded Jonah that he had pity for a plant that he did not even put out labor on or help to grow. God said to Jonah that he was angry over a plant that came up in a day and also perished in a day, but God had pity and mercy for one hundred twenty thousand persons and much cattle in Nineveh. Why was Jonah so concerned over one plant and had no pity for all those in the city? Was a shade for Jonah more important than the lives of all those in the city of Nineveh? God was also reminding or showing Jonah that he loves all creatures.

Not just people, but the cattle as well! And God only numbered the people or children who could not help themselves, not including those who knew right hand from left hand.

God created all things and has pity on animals as he does for people. If we are to grow to be like Christ, we must love all things as God loves all things. We must have mercy on the people and warn them. We must remember the children who do not know how to do what is right until we teach them. We must care for and love the dumb animals. We must learn God's love.

#### PROGRAMME LEADER:

So much to learn from Jonah's story! As we come to the close of the book, we again see a comparison to our Lord Jesus. God shows Jonah that He loves all people. The tribe or color makes no difference. Jesus directs us to go into all the cities of the world and tell them the good news of salvation. When one group has accepted, we teach and make disciples (Matt. 28:19-20). When they refuse, we shake the

dust off our feet and go give another group the opportunity to hear the gospel.

As we close our study of Jonah, let us take time to pray for ourselves. 1.) That we might not show prejudice in witnessing for our Lord Jesus. 2) That we might have opportunity each week to lead someone to Jesus. That would be 52 people in a year!

PROGRAMME FOUR

THEME FOR THE UNIT: WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Theme for Today: FACING DEATH WITHOUT FEAR

Scripture for a Devotional: Romans 8:33-39

Memory Verse:

"And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

John 14:3

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Why do people fear death? (You should ask this question now to the group in such a way as to lead them to give answers so that you can lead them in a discussion on the subject). It is human to be anxious about what is unknown to us in this life. An example is in preparing to go on a long journey by public transport for the first time to a place you have never been. Will my bus arrive in this certain town in time for me to catch the train that leaves at a certain hour? What will I do if I miss the train because there is not another one until Thursday? Or what will I do if the bus or train breaks down on the road? You are anxious about the journey because you do not know what it will be like. Neither do we know what death will be like. The Bible has many references to death and to life after death for those who believe in Him.

PART ONE: What is Death?

Death is life leaving the body. With death the body is of no more use or value in the world. It must be disposed of. But the body is not the person. It is what the person lived in while he was alive. Every person is a spirit who continues to be after death. Christians believe and know in their hearts that death is the door which leads them to God and to a fellowship with Him in a different way. Therefore should there be fear of death for ourselves or for those we love?

## PART TWO: Facing Death, You Yourself

Many people, even Christians, do not want to think or talk of dying, but it is something that we all will come to, some when we are very young, some in middle age, and some in old age. Since death is inevitable for us all, then it is good that we should give some serious thought to it and to our feelings about it.

Stephen was stoned and he knew that he was going to die. How did he face dying? Read Acts 7:55-60. Did Stephen fear dying? His concern was for others, even those who were causing his death.

It seems that the Apostle Paul even looked forward to the time of his death with joy, because it was his opportunity to be present with Christ. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better" (Philippians 1:21-23).

These two men did not fear death because of their faith in God. They accepted and believed the promise of Christ that they would be with Him. Read John 14:1-3.

## PART THREE: Accepting the Death of a Loved One

Death of a loved one brings sadness for those of us who are left because it means that we will not be able to be with this one anymore here on earth. It is natural to be sad and to even shed tears because of our sadness. If this one who died was a Christian, then we can also thank God for the assurance He has given us that that one is with Christ eternally.

"Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

#### PART FOUR: Helping Other Who Are Saddened by Death

As Christians we can be led by God to witness to a family who has lost a loved one. It is not always easy to witness at a time like this. With some it is the custom to wail and cry loudly when there is a death. The Christian would sympathize with the bereaved but without taking part in these practices. At the right time when the family has calmed down then a Christian can share with them concerning her hope in Jesus Christ. If the bereaved family is Christian, then fellow Christians can be a real comfort and strength during this time. In a time of sharing as believers in Christ, strength can come and real blessings can be experienced even in a time of grief.

LEADER: Through our discussion today we can see that death is a very natural and expected part of our life here on earth. If you find that you fear dying yourself and fear death for your family, try to think about it and come to understand the reason for this fear. Read again these verses of Scripture concerning death. In these verses look for the promises of life after death. Ask yourself these questions. Do I really trust and believe in an all-powerful God? Is God really able to give eternal life? Did Christ really give His life for me that I might not have to die in sin? If you do not know how to answer these questions, then ask your pastor to talk with you about them.

Pray that God will remove from us all fear of death that we might have full hope of eternal life in Him. Let us say with Paul, "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

PROGRAMME FIVE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

Theme for Today: DISAPPOINTMENT IN A FAMILY BECAUSE OF NOT  
BEARING CHILDREN OF HAVING CHILDREN JUST OF ONE  
SEX

Scripture for Devotional: Romans 5:1-5

Memory Verse:

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made  
perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:9a

PROGRAMME LEADER:

When a man and woman fall in love and marry the natural thing is to want children to be born of this union. Children do bring happiness into a home, and they are recognized as blessings from God. But what if no children are born? Does this mean that God does not look with favor on this marriage? Absolutely not. Does this mean that it is not a real marriage and that in the sight of God they can separate and remarry? Again, this is not what it means. Let us see if we agree with what our program writer has to say.

PART ONE: Marriage Without Children

When no children are born into a home, there is usually disappointment for the wife and the husband. With some couples the wife gets pregnant immediately, but for some it takes longer. It is good if the husband and wife talk about their desire for a child to be born. Going to a family planning clinic or to a doctor many times will help to find out if there is a physical problem. Usually they will advise that the husband come also because childlessness can be due to the husband or to the wife. Along with trying to get medical help, also pray asking God to bless you with children if it is His will. Remember how Sarah and Hannah in the Bible were given children after years of waiting and prayer.

## PART TWO: Blessings even Without Children

Jesus said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two, but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:5-6).

Today many husbands start thinking of getting another wife if the first has not born him a child. Even though he loves his wife the desire for a child becomes stronger than his love for her. This is against the teachings of Christ. He said, "and the two shall become one." He did not say, "If they have a child, they shall be one flesh." Husband and wife are one flesh, whether children are born or not. A husband and wife can be happy together even if there are no children. There will not be the fulfillment without children that there would be with children, but God can bless this home also. A wife should thank God for her union with her husband and ask Him to help her to be a good wife to him. The wife should not blame the husband if no children are born and, like wise, the husband should not blame the wife.

## PART THREE: Accepting Those Things We Cannot Change

In Africa today many childless couples are adopting children who do not have living parents or whose parents cannot provide for them. This is very helpful to them and to the child if the husband and wife agree to do this together. They can take this baby or child and love him as their very own. But even if they do not or cannot adopt a child, this couple can still be respected and useful in their village and church. This is not possible though if they just stay at home and live in their disappointment because of not having a child. If they do this and continue to feel sorry for themselves, they will not be happy and cannot fulfill the will of God for their lives.

A very fine Christian woman who did not have children told how she wanted children in her home very much. She said that during the first years of their marriage she and her husband kept waiting and hoping for children. She cried many tears because nothing happened. Then she said she asked God to use her life in His service. Her testimony is that God led her into the schools in their city to teach Scripture which she did for many years. In this way she helped many boys and girls to know Christ as Saviour and Lord of their lives. She said that in this way she had hundreds of children instead of just a few. Their Christian home was a home for many students who were away from their own homes and villages.

Couples without children should learn to accept their childlessness, not as a curse, but as a call. They should take it as guidance from God. God has chosen them for some special purpose which they can fulfill better without children of their own. If this is God's will, he will bless without measure.

#### PART FOUR: Having Just Boys or Just Girls

Most husbands and wives want their children to be boys and girls, not just boys and not just girls. And it is very good when they are able to have both, but if you have only boys or only girls, then do not forget to thank God for them and for His blessings in giving them to you. Love each one as an individual and know that God has a purpose for that life.

Most important is to pray to God to help you and your husband to be good parents. Ask God to lead you in teaching your boys and girls the teachings of the Bible and how they should follow them throughout their lives.

#### LEADER:

The Apostle Paul said that there is not anything in all creation that can separate us from the love of Christ, not even disappointment because of not having children. God is so good

to us in giving us life, health, homes, food, love, salvation and many more blessings all of which we cannot name. It behooves all of us to continually thank him for these blessings rather than to think about what we do not have that we think we ought to have. Maybe it is through his goodness that he does not give them to us.

## PROGRAMME SIX

THEME FOR THE UNIT: WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Theme for Today: STANDING FIRM IN FAITH THROUGH TRIALS (SUCH AS  
POOR HEALTH, DEFORMITY OF A CHILD, BODILY DEFECTS,  
EPILEPSY, MENTAL DISORDERS)

Scripture for a Devotional: Romans 12:1-2

Memory Verse:

"Not that I complain of want; for I have learned in whatever  
state I am, to be content."

Philippians 4:13

### PROGRAMME LEADER:

All of us who are well with good health tend to take it for granted without giving much thought to what a blessing this is. We who have good health many times fret about minor things of life such as not having all the things we want, such as, more money, clothes, a better house, a radio, car, television set and other things. When these trials come to us such as poor health, sickness, a deformed child, disability, epilepsy, or mental disorder for ourselves or some member of our family, how do we react to them? As Christians how should we react to them? Does our faith remain sound or do we begin to doubt God's existence and his promises to us? Right now let each one of us think about this and answer these questions for ourselves.

### PART ONE: Accepting Trials in Faith

Read Philippians 4:11-13. As the trials of life come to us, no matter what they are, we should be ready to accept them in faith. Let us remember Job and the many trials he had, but he remained faithful to God. We should believe that in sickness our Heavenly Father will be with us whether we get well very quickly or whether it is an illness we will have to endure for a while. The Apostle Paul said, "for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content." Where was Paul when he wrote these

words? He was in Rome in prison, but he was not unhappy. He had accepted his imprisonment and was concerned with witnessing to the guards and to writing and helping his friends in Philippi. If you read all of the letter to the Philippians, you will notice how many times he writes about rejoicing and about his own joy in the Lord. Paul was able to accept and be happy in his state because of his faith in God. He committed all of his life unto him knowing that he would not forsake him but would be with him.

#### PART TWO: Rejoicing in Our Sufferings in Faith

It is not foolish to say that we should even rejoice in our sufferings. Paul says in Romans 5:3-5, "rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."

When there is sickness or a deformity, it is not to say that we should accept it and rejoice in it without seeing a doctor or getting all the medical advice and help we can. No, not at all. We should use all the intelligence God has given us to bring wholeness to ourselves and to our family. The woman in the Bible who had the flow of blood for twelve years had been to many doctors and was not better. She had faith that if she could just touch Jesus' garment she would be made well. Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease" (Mark 5:34).

#### PART THREE: Loving and Helping Others Through Trials

Today as we walk in town or through a village we may see those who are crippled, or those who are deformed in some other way, who have epilepsy, who have mental disorders. We may even have someone in our own family who has one of these problems. What is our reaction to them? Do we run from them, stare at them, talk about them so that they can hear? Or do we try to understand their problem and seek to help them?

One Sunday morning in a Baptist Church while the pastor was preaching, a young boy about twelve years of age started jerking with an epileptic seizure. In the area where he was sitting all the people started moving away from the boy leaving him to possibly fall on the floor and hurt himself. Finally a man from the other side of the building came and helped him to go outside where he could lie down. How much better it would have been if those who were sitting near him could have offered him help immediately instead of causing a disturbance by moving away.

Epilepsy is a sickness, and a person afflicted with it is not to be feared anymore than a person with malaria is to be feared. If it is feared, then usually it is because it is not understood. We, as Christians, should learn about these things we do not understand so that we will not fear them and run away from them causing embarrassment to the person having the illness.

#### PART FOUR: Jesus Had Compassion on Them

In the Gospels we see the example of Jesus as he met people having the same kinds of problems. In every case Jesus had love and compassion for them, and he healed them. We should follow the example of Jesus. Of course we do not have the power to heal, but we can love and offer help.

Many times within a family the child who is different because of one of these defects or disabilities is not loved and cared for as the other children are. Sometimes the family is embarrassed because of this difficulty. Because of the defect or disability the child or person probably needs our love and concern more than the others who are well.

#### PROGRAMME LEADER:

Through this program today we have been reminded again that in every trial of life we should realize just how many blessings of health, joy, peace and happiness because of his love in our hearts. (Give others opportunity to name other

blessings). Let us ask God to lead us through the trials of life and to teach us to depend upon him more. Ask God to help us to grow in him because of these trials.

PROGRAMME SEVEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Theme for Today: FACING DISAPPOINTMENTS WITH FAITH (LOSING JOB,  
LACK OF EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN, CHILD GOING  
ASTRAY)

Scripture for a Devotional: Matthew 6:25-33

Memory Verse:

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will  
give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

PROGRAMME LEADER: In our programmes for this unit we are  
thinking about those things that sometimes tend to weaken our  
faith and separate us from the love of Christ. In our lives  
there are many problems, trials and disappointments. We, as  
Christians, should strive to be stronger Christians because  
of these instead of letting them separate us from the love of  
Christ. How can we do this?

PART ONE: All Things Come from God

When a husband and father loses his job this brings many  
problems to the whole family. In the towns and cities where  
is the food to come from? How will the rent be paid? School  
fees? And many other things? God knows and cares about all  
these things that concern us. Can we really trust these kinds of  
needs to God's care and depend upon Him? Paul said, "Now to  
him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more  
abundantly than all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20).  
He was referring to God who is all powerful and loving. Jesus  
said, "Ask and it will be given you; seek, and you will find;  
knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks  
receives, and he who seeks, finds, and to him who knocks it  
will be opened. Or what man of you, if his son asks him for  
bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will

give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:7-11). So if we believe that God loves us and cares for us, we will pray asking him to supply our needs. Then completely trust him to do it. This does not mean that we should sit down and wait for God to put the food before us on a plate ready to be eaten. No, we should do what we are capable of doing to meet the needs of our family. I, as a wife and mother, may be able to get work part time to help out with the family's needs. Or the family may need to go back to live on the farm until the husband can get another job. God can and will lead us in times like these if we will only trust him and wait for him to show us what we should do.

#### PART TWO: Education for Our Children is Important

All Christian parents want to see their children get as much education as possible. This is good and we as parents should do all that we can to help them get an education. But this is certainly not the most important thing always. The most important thing is teaching them the way of Christ. It is true, we can do that and still help them to get an education. It is not possible for all children to complete standard seven, then form four, then form six and to go on to the university. All children are not intellectually capable of finishing these studies. And there are not enough schools for all of them to do this. If we have done all we possibly can under God's leadership to get our children into schools and still we fail in this, we should be thankful for the knowledge they have gained and the education they have received. They can read, they can write, and they can work numbers. If we can help to get some books for them, they can continue to practice their reading, writing and numbers and continue to be alert. On the farms the boys can learn about the farm work and the girls will be interested in cooking and sewing. An important

thing is to keep them busy and interested in learning new things. Ask for God's help and leadership in this.

### PART THREE: Some Children go Astray

Even when Christian parents teach their children about the love and salvation of Christ some think they know a better way, which is the way of the world. In the story that Jesus told which we know as the Prodigal Son, the Father never lost hope that his son would return. Even when a child who has grown up and leaves home as though he does not love his family anymore, we should never stop loving him and praying for him. We continue to love the child even though we do not approve of or like the things he does.

As parents with small children let us realize that these small ones are going to grow up to be big children. How can we teach them to follow the way of Christ? Begin teaching them when they are very small. Tell them stories from the Bible. Read the Bible to them. Teach them short verses from the Bible. Sing Christian songs with them. Go to church and Sunday school with them. Correct them when they do wrong. Let them know that you love them. Punish them when they disobey. Make the home a happy place. All of this will help the child to grow up loving and respecting his parents as you have loved and cared for him.

### PROGRAMME LEADER:

In these last four programmes we have talked about many of the trials which come to us in life. Can these separate us from the love of Christ? Not if we continue to put our faith in Christ. In these discussions we have seen how even these trials can increase our faith and make us stronger in the Lord. None of us would invite or welcome any of these trials into our lives, but, if and when they do come, let us grow in faith because of them. Nowhere has Christ promised that the Christian life would be an easy life. He did promise to be with us. The Apostle

Paul said, "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). If we have faith, as the Apostle Paul had, then we, too, can say these same words and mean them, that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. The Lord be praised.

## PROGRAMME EIGHT

THEME FOR THE UNIT: PROMISES OF GOD

Theme for Today: PROMISES OF ETERNAL LIFE

Scripture for A Devotional: 2 Peter 1:4-11

Memory Verse:

"He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world of passion and become partakers of the divine nature."

2 Peter 1:4

PROGRAMME LEADER:

When you make a promise, you give your word that you will do something. God gives his word that He will do many things for us. His promises are always true.

We can read his promises in the Bible. But just reading them is not enough. We must believe them and claim them and do something first. A mother tells her small child, "If you are good, you will get something special." The child receives the gift if he is good. God promises us certain things if we believe. He makes promises to us concerning prayer, but first we must pray. God's promises are for his children.

PART ONE: Why God Gives Us Promises

God has given us many promises so that we may share in all things in the family of God. You were born into a family. As a member of that family you have shared in the food of the family. You have had a house to sleep in and clothes to wear. You have shared in the blessings and sorrows of the family. You have also shared the nature of your parents. Perhaps your face is like your mother's, but your ways are like your father. However it is, you share in the characteristics of your family because you are a part of that family. When you become a Christian, you were born into the family of God. God wants you to have a share in his family, too. He wants you to have

the blessings that are available to his children. It is possible that you will have to suffer also as his Son Jesus Christ did. God wants you to share in his nature, to be like him. For these reasons he has given us promises that we may share his nature and grow to be like Him.

#### PART TWO: Life Depends on Belief

Today we will think of his promises concerning eternal life.

Read John 3:16. Every person who believes on Jesus Christ can have eternal life. This is the promise of God and it is true. He gave His Son for our sakes because he loved us. He loves us even though we have sinned and lived lives that bring dishonour to his name. If we believe on him, we will have eternal life. This promise is for every person who believes.

#### PART THREE: Eternal Life Now

Read John 3:36. Jesus says in this verse that the person who believes in him "has eternal life." The new life begins the minute he believes in Jesus Christ. Some people think "eternal life" will begin when our lives on this earth are finished, but this is not what the Bible says. It says a person who believes has eternal life.

The last part of this verse is a promise to people who do not believe on Jesus. They will not have life, but will have the wrath of God.

#### PART FOUR: A New Creature

Read 2 Cor. 5:17. God promises that if a person is "in Christ", he has become a new creature. The life in Jesus Christ is a new life. When a person believes in him, the Bible says he is "born again." The first time a person is born, he comes into the world as a tiny baby with a body of flesh and blood. The body does not remain small; it grows and changes in many ways.

But it is still the same body. When a person is "born again" in Jesus Christ, he is born of the spirit. He becomes a new creature. His old life of sin is exchanged for the righteousness of God.

#### PART FIVE: A Satisfying Life

Jesus talked with a sinful woman at the well. She had come to draw water. Jesus told her he could give her living water. If a person drank the water of the well, he would be thirsty again. But if he drank the water which Jesus gives, he would never be thirsty again. She would be satisfied. He was talking about the water of life which is Jesus himself. We take this water when we believe on him. Read John 4:14. A person who has eternal life has an abundant life. He is satisfied. He does not need to run here and there seeking pleasures. The water of life quenches his thirst. He is able to be content and happy. If we drink the water of life, Jesus promises, we will be satisfied.

#### PART SIX: Life Preserved by God

Read John 10:28. If a person has believed in Jesus Christ, he promises to keep him forever. He says no one can snatch him out of the hand of his Father. Some Christians are afraid when they have done wrong. They think they will lose their eternal life. This is not possible because God will keep them forever. A Christian wants to do right. He tries to do right. He is unhappy if he sins, because sin separates him from God, but if he has truly been saved, he does not lose his salvation. This is a promise of God. We can be sure it is true.

Conclusion: These are some of God's promises about eternal life:

1. A person who believes will have eternal life. John 3:16
2. A person who believes will have life now. John 3:36
3. A person who does not believe will not have life.

John 3:36

4. The person who believes in Jesus is a new creature.

2 Corinthians 5:17

5. The life that Jesus gives satisfies. John 4:14

6. God will keep the believer forever. John 10:28

Have you believed in Jesus Christ? If not, will you believe today? If you have, thank him for his wonderful promises.

#### PRAYER

PROGRAMME NINE

THEME FOR THE UNIT: PROMISES OF GOD

Theme for Today: PROMISES ABOUT PRAYER

Scripture for a Devotional: John 15:1-7

Memory Verse:

"The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects."

James 5:16b

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Today we shall think about promises about prayer. Praying is our way of talking with God. From the beginning of time men have brought their requests to God. Some people take their requests to gods of stone or other images. These gods cannot hear and answer their prayers. Can God hear your prayers? Will He answer?

PART ONE: You Must Ask

God can hear your prayers if you pray. If you never pray, the promises about prayer cannot be yours. Jesus says, "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). If your child asks you to give him a drink of water, you give it to him. If he does not ask, you do not give it to although water is available. It is his if he asks. God loves us. We are his children and He wants to give us good things. He is ready to hear if we will ask.

PART TWO: Abide in Him

In John 15:1-7 Jesus compares himself with a vine. He says his followers are like the branches of that vine. If the branches are cut off from the vine, they wither. They have no life apart from the vine. They cannot bear fruit. They are not good for anything. Christians who are separated from Jesus Christ are like this. If they are cut off from him, their lives

are worthless. When they witness, they speak with empty words. Their words have no power because they are cut off from the source of power. But if the branches are connected with the vine, the strength from the vine flows to every branch. Each branch shares in the strength of the vine. Each branch can bear fruit. A person who stays close to Jesus Christ is like this. He has abundant life. He receives his strength from Jesus. He shares in His strength. He can ask what he wants and it will be done. He can witness with power. He will bear fruit. By himself, he is nothing. If he is connected with the vine, Jesus Christ, he can do all things. Prayer connects us with Jesus Christ.

#### PART THREE: Ask What You Will

Read John 15:7. God promises if we abide in him and his word abides in us, he will give us anything we ask. What is the meaning of this? Can we really receive anything we ask? Yes, if we abide in him and his word in us. If we abide in him, we will not ask for things that are for our own honor and glory. We will not ask for things that will harm our Christian witness nor for things that will hinder the work of God's people. If his word abides in us, we will pray only for those things that are in harmony with his word. So God is ready to give us anything we ask for. In other places in the Bible we are told to pray "in his name" and we will be given the things we pray for. This does not mean that we should say these words in every prayer. It means that we should pray only for those things that are God's will, the things that Jesus himself would pray for.

#### PART FOUR: Pray Believing

One morning Jesus and his disciples were hungry. They saw a fig tree with only leaves although it was the season for fruit. Jesus said, "From this day this tree shall have no fruit." When he spoke, the tree withered. The disciples were amazed, but Jesus told them not to wonder over it. He said this was just a little

thing, but if they had faith, they could even move mountains. He said, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask, in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). God has promised to do things that people think are impossible if we pray in faith.

#### **PART FIVE: Forgive and Seek Forgiveness**

Read Mark 11:25,26. Before God can hear our prayers, we must forgive others. If we do not forgive others, God cannot forgive us. Hatred and arguing block our access to God. Forgiveness removes the things that block the way. We must also ask God to forgive us for our sins. Our own sins can also stand between us and God. Let us forgive others for the wrong things they have done to us. Let us ask others to forgive us if we have sinned against them. Let us ask God to forgive us.

#### **PART SIX: Pray with Humility.**

Read Matthew 6:6 There were people when Jesus was on earth who wanted other people to think they were good even though they were not. So they would stand in a place where many people could see them and pray with a loud voice. Jesus said the people who did this got what they wanted. They wanted people to see them and praise them. He told his followers not to do this. If you really want to pray to God, it does not matter whether anyone sees you or not. He said you should go to a quiet place where you can pray privately. Then God will hear and he will answer. God also promises to be with a group of people when they pray even though there may only be few of them. Read Matthew 18:20.

#### **PART SEVEN: The Holy Spirit will Help**

Sometimes a woman wants to pray to God, but she does not know what to say. Her heart is so heavy that she cannot find words to explain to God her needs. God promises us the help of the Holy Spirit when we do not know how to pray. Read Romans 8:26,27.

REVISION: Can you explain the meaning of the following verses?

1. You must ask. Matthew 7:7
2. Abide in Him. John 15:7
3. Pray believing. Matthew 21:22
4. Forgive and seek forgiveness. Mark 11:25,26
5. Pray in secret. Matthew 6:6
6. Pray with others. Matthew 18:20
7. The Holy Spirit will help. Romans 8:26,27

PRAYER

PROGRAMME TEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: PROMISES OF GOD

Theme for Today: PROMISES CONCERNING WORRY AND TEMPTATION

Scripture for a Devotional: Psalm 23

Memory Verse:

"Cast all your anxieties on him for he cares about you."

1 Peter 5:7

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Many Christians find it hard to understand when they have heavy burdens to bear. It is especially hard when they have neighbors who are not Christians prospering in everything they do. Even David had this problem. He says, "I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." Psalms 73:3. God gives many promises to his children about worry and troubles which they have here on earth. Let us look at some of these problems today.

PART ONE: He will provide our Needs

Read Matthew 6:33. Have you ever worried about food for your family? Have you ever worried because you did not have good clothes to wear? Jesus teaches us that God provides all our needs. The heavenly Father feeds the birds. Are you not worth more than they? And why worry about clothes? God makes the flowers and they are more beautiful than the garments of kings. Jesus said to seek spiritual things first and God will look after our needs. He does not mean for us to be lazy and to expect God to give us food and clothes even when we do not work. He wants us to have faith in him and not spend all our time worrying about money and things. Many people are never happy. They spend all their time and strength worrying about getting food and clothes for the next day. Let us thank God each day for the things we have. Let us work hard; then trust him for the things of tomorrow..

#### PART TWO: He will Bear Our Burdens

Read Matthew 11:28-30. Some Christians have very heavy burdens to carry. A woman whose husband has died has the responsibility of raising her children. Other women have husbands who beat them. Some women must work hard even when their health is not good. Some people are afraid of dying. These are heavy burdens to bear. Jesus calls everyone to him who bears a heavy load. He promises to give him rest. He says to take his yoke. It is light and easy to bear. In 1 Peter 5:7 we read his promise again, "Cast your care upon him, for he careth for you."

#### PART THREE: He Will Provide a Helper

Read John 14:16. Jesus promised he would not leave his followers alone. They were worried and afraid. He told them he was going to the Father, but a Comforter would come in his place to be with them. This is the Holy Spirit. He is still here ready to help us when we are troubled and to remind us of the teachings of Jesus. You are never alone in your troubles. He has promised to be with you and his promises are true.

#### PART FOUR: He will Bring Joy in Suffering

Read Matthew 5:11,12. If a Christian suffers because of his faith in Jesus Christ he can be happy because he knows that Jesus himself was persecuted. Even though his life on earth may be hard, the Christian is promised a reward in heaven. If a person suffers because he has done wrong, he deserves the punishment he is receiving. He has no reason to be happy in his suffering. Christians suffer in various ways for their faith. Some are beaten and imprisoned. Others are cast out from their families. But many Christians do not suffer in these ways. They must stand firm in their faith even though others laugh at them or ridicule them. They must remain true to Jesus Christ even though all their family and friends follow the way of drunkenness or witchcraft. They may be scorned and scolded for refusing to take part in some of these practices. A Christian

suffers in these ways, too, and God's promise is to those who rejoice in their persecution for righteousness sake.

#### PART FIVE: He Will Help You in Temptation

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. The temptations which we have are the kind that normally come to people. We will not have temptations that are too great for us to resist. This is the promise of God. He will not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength. He will give us strength to endure it. He will show us a way to escape the temptation before us. Those who love God and live close to him will find a way to endure the temptation or to escape it. A person who is really trusting God will not say, "I would not have done it, but the temptation was too great." God will not let us be tempted beyond our ability to stand. If we yield to temptation, it is because we lack faith.

#### PART SIX: He Will Forgive

David committed a great sin. He used his power as king to send a man to battle to be killed because he wanted his wife. He was guilty of lust and murder. He made excuses within his heart for the sins which he had done. He convinced himself that as king he could take what he wanted. Even so David loved the Lord. When Nathan the prophet showed David his sin, he saw at once how wrong he was. He stopped making excuses for his mistakes. He turned to God and confessed his sin, begging for forgiveness. God did forgive him and David continued to serve God. You may read in Psalm 51 David's prayer of repentance.

Many times it is difficult for Christians to see the wrong things they do. And sometimes when we see our sins we still do not like to acknowledge them. Some Christians who have sinned are so miserable because of their wrong doing that they try to hide from God. Because of their sin they stop going to church or associating with other Christians. They do not confess their sins as David did.

We have a promise that God will forgive if we confess our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). He promises "If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:24).

CONCLUSION: We do not need to worry. God promises to provide for our needs. He will bear our burdens. He will give us a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to help us in times of trouble. He will give us joy when we suffer for his sake. He will not let us be tempted beyond our strength. If we do sin, He will forgive us. Let us depend on Him completely.

PRAYER

## PROGRAMME ELEVEN

THEME FOR THE UNIT: PROMISES OF GOD

Theme for Today: PROMISES CONCERNING WISDOM, STRENGTH, AND SERVICE

Scripture for a Devotional: Philippians 4:8-20

Memory Verse:

"I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

PROGRAMME LEADER:

Some Christians feel that they cannot do the things that God wants his followers to do. Some say, "I am not educated. I do not know how." Others say, "I do not have the strength to do it." And others say, "I cannot. I am sure to fail." God gives us some promises to help us in our Christian life and in witnessing. Let us look at his promises about wisdom, strength, and service.

PART ONE: He Will Give Wisdom

Read James 1:5. God promises to give us wisdom when we ask for it. His wisdom will help us to choose the right way to follow. Many times it is difficult to know the best way. Sometimes two ways appear to be good. He promises to help us choose the one way that is his way. His wisdom will help mothers when they teach and counsel with their children. When a child asks his mother what he should do, the mother should ask God for wisdom before she gives an answer. His wisdom will help us to understand the problems of other people so that we may help them. But we must ask for his wisdom or it will not be available to us.

PART TWO: The Holy Spirit Will Teach You

Read John 14:26. Jesus promises us that the Holy Spirit will teach us and help us remember all that Jesus said. If we want to learn, we must read the Bible. His Spirit will teach us the meaning of the parts we do not understand. He will help us to understand if we cannot read very well. He will even help a

person who does not know how to read. He will help this person to understand when the Word of God is read by another person. He will help her to remember the teachings. There are many Christians who have very little education, but they know the teachings of the Bible. God's Spirit has helped them to understand. We must try to learn and have faith that He will help us. This is his promise, and his promises are true.

#### PART THREE: He Will Give You Strength

Read Isaiah 40:31. God promises his children that they will have strength for their tasks. This promise is for those "who wait upon the Lord." Who are the people "who wait upon the Lord"? They are the ones who always follow his leadership. They do not begin any work in their lives without first seeking his will. They do not make any plans for their lives unless they pray God to show them his will. Therefore, everything they do is in accordance with his will. He will give these people strength for their tasks. They will be able to do everything without getting tired.

#### PART FOUR: His Strength Overcomes Our Weakness

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. Paul was bothered by a certain weakness he had in his body. He does not name it; he calls it a "thorn in the flesh." He prayed that God would remove it, but God did not. Then Paul learned that the weakness of his body forced him to trust in God. Instead of his weakness he had the strength of God. God's grace is sufficient for all of us. If we are weak, we must trust in God. The more we trust in Him, the more strength we have. We can exchange our weaknesses for his strength. Many people who are strong in their bodies and intelligent do not trust in God. They think they have the strength to do everything by themselves. When they trust only in themselves and never look to God, they are sure to fail. Let us trust God completely and exchange our weaknesses for his strength.

#### PART FIVE: He Promises us Fruit

Read John 15:5. If we abide in Him, he promises us fruit. The fruit of an orange tree is oranges. The fruit of a mango tree is mangoes. The fruit of a Christian life is more Christians. Every fruit tree should bear fruit. Every Christian should bear fruit. We are promised fruit if we "abide" in him. People who abide in him trust in him every day of their lives. They pray and they try to live a life of love like Jesus. They tell their friends about his love. Jesus loved all people. People loved him; they were drawn to him. Crowds followed him wherever he went. A person who abides with Jesus is like him. Because he is like Jesus he loves people; they love him and are drawn to the Saviour whom he imitates in his life. These people are the fruit of a Christian life. Let us seek to live so close to Jesus Christ that we will be like him and draw many people to him.

#### PART SIX: What We Sow We Will Reap

"Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Our life and actions here on earth will bring a harvest. The kind of harvest depends on the things we do.

If we live sinful lives, there will be a harvest of corruption. A person who hurts other people by his cruel deeds reaps a harvest of hatred. He has no friends. A person who drinks strong drink, reaps a harvest of illness and perhaps poverty.

A person who sows seeds of kindness has many friends. "And let us not grow weary in well-doing for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9). A person who bears witness of his Saviour reaps a harvest of souls. "And he that goes forth weeping bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6). If we give liberally, we will reap liberally. God promises those who give that they shall never lack anything

they need. "He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully...and God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work" (2 Corinthian 9:6,8).

**PART SEVEN: He Will Be With Us As We Witness**

Read Matthew 28:19,20. Jesus commanded his followers to go everywhere and make disciples. This command is for all believers. When we hear it, maybe we think, "How can I do this? I am only one small woman!" But Jesus makes a promises. He promises that he will be with us always. So when we teach or witness, we can be sure he is there. Read Matthew 28:18. Jesus has all power and authority. If he is with us, nothing can overcome us. We can say as Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

**CONCLUSION:** God promises us wisdom. He promises us the Holy Spirit to teach us. He promises to give us strength. He promises us fruit and says he will be with us always. Let us dedicate ourselves to his service, knowing that he will supply all our needs.

**PRAYER**

