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YT14S

THE CHRISTIAN IN A SPIRIT-FILLED WORLD

BIBLE STUDIES FOR YOUTH

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CHAPTER ONE

SATAN, HIS ORIGIN AND FALL

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3; Ezekiel 28:12-18; Isaiah 14:12-14

A young man, who was born into a non-Christian family, was invited to church one day by his friend. He heard about Jesus and was converted. His Christian friend began to warn him against the devil or Satan. The young man had heard nothing about him, and he became more anxious to know who Satan was and where he came from.

There are many young Christians who only know Satan's name. In Genesis 1 we read about God as the Creator of all things. God created the great host of heavenly spirits called angels. In Hebrews 12:22 we learn that these angels are so many that they are uncountable.

HIS ORIGIN Ezekiel 28:12-18

It is clear that God did not say these things about the earthly or human being. It is all about Satan. Satan, by the name of Lucifer, had great wisdom. He was perfect and full of beauty. He was in the Garden of Eden where God later placed Adam and Eve.

We can easily understand that Satan would be jealous of Adam and Eve dwelling in a beautiful garden like that one in which he had been living.

Verse 14 indicated that Lucifer was the ruler among the angels. He had an anointed cherub who was his guardian. Cherubs are angelic beings who proclaim the righteousness of God and his glory.

Lucifer was perfect in all his ways, and God trusted him so much that he gave him all the precious stones for his covering and allowed him to be on his holy mountain. God allowed him to walk in the middle of the stones of fire.

HIS FALL Isaiah 14:12-14

There is an idiom in the Shona language (Zimbabwe) which says that in many cases, if people are given a high rank, this is the beginning of their fall.

It is certainly possible to have high rank and not fall; but there is a danger, a temptation, to use power for one's own interests. Lucifer certainly did this. He was given power, but he let it develop into pride.

Lucifer was perfect in his ways until iniquity was found in him. (Read Ezekiel 28:15 again.) What crime did Lucifer commit? What kind of iniquity was found in him?

In the verse of Isaiah 14 we see that Lucifer desired five things in his heart. (1.) He said in his heart that he would ascend into heaven. (2.) He said he would exalt his throne. (3.) He said he would

ascend above the heights of the clouds. (4.) He said that he would sit on the mount of assembly in the far north. (5.) He decided that he would be like God.

This marked the end of Lucifer, the shining, morning star. It was the birth of Satan who is called the adversary or the enemy. He is called the devil, who is the accuser and destroyer. The devil is also called the slanderer and tempter. He became the wicked one.

Satan was cast down because he declared himself the prince of the earth. He committed the sin of pride.

CONCLUSION

We see that pride was the downfall of Lucifer, but what does that mean to us today? Many people today are falling into the same trap. They are doing what Satan himself did at his great fall.
Proverbs 16:18 says, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

Lucifer tried to make himself equal to God. In fact he said that he would be like God. This could never be. Can the creature be greater than the Creator?

In the Garden of Eden the tempter used the same idea to get Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit. In Genesis 3:5 he told Eve that if she would eat of the fruit she would not die as God had said. Instead she would be like God knowing good and evil.

Satan continues to tempt people today in the same way. Many believe him and fall. But Paul gave the word of God to the Romans in 12:3 “For by the grace given to me I bid everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith of faith which God has assigned him.”

The decision is up to you. Will you fall to the temptation of Satan, or will you follow the Lord’s instructions?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

“You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High’ (Isaiah 14:13-14).”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What was the beginning of Satan?

2. Was he created to be evil? (Explain)

3. What is pride?

4. Is there pride in your heart which you need to ask God to remove?

Cheating

Adversary

Deceit
Lust

EVIL ONE

Lies

Tempter

Hate

Witchcraft

CHAPTER TWO

SATAN, HIS WORK TODAY

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 3:1; Genesis 3:1-7; Job 1:9; 2:4; Matthew 13:19; 4:3; Luke 11:14-26

In the first chapter we studied about Satan's beginning and fall. We found that he was cast down to earth where we live. What is he doing here? We will find today that he is prowling around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (Zechariah 3:1). We can be sure that he is working with great enthusiasm because he knows that his days are numbered. His time is very short.

HIS CHARACTER Genesis 3:1-7; Job 1:9; 2:4; Matthew 13:19; 4:3

School boys and girls in Africa like to give names to their teachers. Those names will call to mind something that the teacher has said or done to the students. Let us look at the names used in the Bible for Satan. Perhaps we can learn something of his character from them.

First he was called adversary. This means one who stand in one's way. Read 1 Peter 5:8. Satan is another name which is given to the evil power that stands in opposition to God but which in the end is always subject to his will.

The devil means the enemy, the accuser or slanderer. Because he hates God and he hates us, he gives false reports to examples of this in the Bible? Read Genesis 3:1-7 to see how the devil gave a false report about God to Eve. In Job 1:9 and 2:4, the devil gave an untrue report to God about his servant Job.

In Matthew 13:19 we read about him when he is called the evil one. This title suggests that Satan is wicked, but he is also the source of all evil or wickedness in the world.

He is called the tempter in Matthew 4:3. He continually tries to get man to sin. He changes himself and appears as an angel of light. Christians must be alert against the subtle methods of Satan.

HIS METHODS Luke 11:18

One of Satan's most cunning methods concerns healing. In Luke 11:18 the Lord had healed a man with an evil spirit. The devil wanted to confuse people about God's power and what is done by the power of Satan.

The story is told of a woman who had been sick for a long time. She went to see a doctor who told her that she had ulcers. He gave her some medicine. The woman's relatives kept on urging her to go to a man who practiced healing. She finally went to the man, and in time she recovered. Then many of her relatives said it was the spirits that had healed her. As a result of this experience the woman became a witchdoctor.

Jesus was accused of casting our demons by the power of Beelzebub. Jesus replied that Satan has a kingdom in the hearts of people. Christ fights against that kingdom in order to establish his own kingdom in the hearts of people.

HIS GOAL

The work of the devil today is to establish his kingdom in the hearts of people. He causes them to worship him by different means. Satan has gotten hold of the hearts of many young people and is ruling their lives. People are much more interested in witchcraft when they are young than they are at any other time in their lives. Some think that is where they will get protection, honor, and wealth. They do not realize that they are dealing with a creature of subtle methods. He cannot be trusted.

A witchdoctor told his son that when he was fourteen years of age he would inherit his father's work. The young boy was excited to hear this. He wanted to be a witchdoctor for several reasons: First, his father was feared by all the people in the community. His father was honored and obeyed even by the chief himself. His father made his living by means of deceiving people instead of working. He made high charges for his services to those who came to him.

The young man did not have the right methods of evaluating a good job. He was thinking only of earthly comforts and pleasures. Perhaps he had never read Mark 8:36-37: "For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life?"

CONCLUSION

Satan is very busy in the world today. He is working at all times trying to tempt and deceive people. His strongest efforts are against Christians. He does not need to worry about those who are not Christians because they are already in his clutches. How can we guard against the "flaming darts of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16)?" We must look to the Lord who is our strength. If we seek him and his way, he will give us the grace and the ability to stand against the evil one.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it: but he who does the will of God abides for ever (1 John 2:15-17)."

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour (1 Peter 5:8)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What are some of the names for Satan and what do they mean?

2. What is his work in the world today?

3. What methods does he use to do his work?

4. What is your protection against the devil?

CHAPTER THREE

SATAN AND JUDGEMENT

Scripture Reading: Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-9; Job 1:6-12; Matthew 25:41

A young man asked a question, “Why does God allow Satan to continue working against him and his church?” There are many truths about Satan. Let us think about the question of that young man.

SATAN’S EXPECTATIONS Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-9

When Satan was cast out of heaven because of his first act of rebellion, he was not in complete control of his forces. He needed to have some time to put all of his cunning methods into action. His schemes and plotting of ways to deceive mankind were not all in working order.

Satan believed and still believes sincerely that he is the conqueror. He thinks that he can overthrow God, so that he will be supreme.

For this reason God is allowing Satan a special opportunity to prepare his armies to fight the last battle in which Satan will be finally defeated. We can get something of a picture of that terrible day by reading the passages of Revelation in this chapter. God will triumph, and Satan will be completely overthrown.

A TIME OF TESTING Job 1:6-12

Another reason why God permits Satan to work against him is so that man will be tested. God wanted to test the obedience of man. If a man wanted to build a fence, he would need to put poles into the ground. If he dug a hole in the ground and put a pole into it, he would need to know that it was strong enough to hold the fence. How could he test the strength of that pole? He would shake it.

Likewise, if God wants to test the obedience of his children to see if they are loyal to him, he allows Satan to tempt and shake them.

In Job we read about a time when a faithful servant of God was tested. God said that Job was not like any other on earth. He was a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away form evil. This is a good example of Satan’s belief that he can conquer the world. He felt that Job was obeying God only because of the things that he had. Satan said that if these possessions were taken away, Job would turn away from God.

SATAN’S CURSE

God is not afraid of Satan. The Bible clearly teaches us that Satan is conquered already and is already judged. Read John 16:11 and 1 John 3:8.

Satan is under perpetual curse. That means that his curse will never cease. God can forgive any sin if the person will repent and accept Christ as his Saviour. This is true for everyone, but not for the devil and his angels. In Genesis 3:14 we read about the curse God put on the devil. If we examine this verse we find that Satan's curse remains the same forever.

SATAN'S DESTINY Matthew 25:41

"And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Revelation 20:10)."

Hell is not a place which was prepared for man. It was prepared for the devil. Man will go to hell only because he obeyed and followed Satan instead of believing and trusting in Jesus Christ.

Many people live as if they do not believe in Christ or in the devil either, but they are wrong. They seem to want a middle road, but there is no neutral position. If a person does not believe in Jesus Christ, that disbelief puts him on the side of the devil.

"Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels...' (Matthew 25:41)."

The choice must be made by every person. No one else can choose for you. Whom will you follow?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroyed the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the work of the devil?

2. Why do you think God permits Satan to work in people today?

3. Why was hell prepared?

4. What defence do you have against Satan? (Read Ephesians 6:11).

CHAPTER FOUR

WITCHCRAFT AND THE WORK OF SATAN

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 33:1-6; Exodus 22:18; Acts 16:16-18; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Satan called Jesus the deceiver or the imposter. (See Matthew 27:63). This is a part of his work, to deceive men. Today we want to see how he deceives people and gets them to follow him.

DECEIVER AT WORK

The story is told of two women who were married to the same man. The older wife knew her husband well, and she always did the things that made her husband love her. This did not please the younger wife. She grew bitter against the older wife. The two were unable to talk together. The younger woman thought of a plan.

The younger wife went to a neighbor and persuaded her to help. The neighbor began to make friends with the older wife. She went to her house almost everyday to talk.

When the two had seemed to become friends, the younger wife gave the neighbor some poison to put into the food of the older wife. After she ate the poisoned food, the older wife died.

Satan uses this same principle. He uses people who seem to be interested in our welfare, but they are used to lead us from life to death. They seem to want to help us, but they lead us into depression, which is of the devil. One of Satan's major jobs is to lead people away from God so that they will perish in their sins.

SATAN USES LYING

A woman accompanied her friend to church one Sunday. She was very sick with malaria. When the service was over and all the people were leaving, the woman fell to the ground.

She was taken to her parents who took her to a witchdoctor to find out what was wrong. After hearing where she had been the witchdoctor said, "Why did she go to church? The spirits do not want her to worship Jesus. You must go immediately and brew beer, kill a goat, and ask forgiveness from the spirit."

No one suggested that the woman go to a hospital. Before the beer was ready, the woman died. She died both physically and spiritually. If she had gone to a hospital she could have received treatment and lived. Perhaps she could have gone to church again to hear the gospel of salvation. Perhaps she would have trusted Jesus and been saved. Satan had kept her away from God by lying to her.

Satan can work in other ways. He can make a person well without hospital care and prayer in order to make him believe in him as a saviour.

Many people have been led astray by Satan's messengers. The witchdoctors tell half truths and half lies to make people believe them. This is not a new method. Satan used it in the Garden of Eden when he talked with Eve. He said to her, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it our eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:4-5)." Adam and Eve did come to know what good and evil were, but they also died.

ANGEL OF LIGHT 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

The Bible tells us that Satan changes himself and becomes like an angel of light. No wonder those who worship him change themselves and become like worshippers of Christ.

We are living in an age when people want to see a sign before they will believe. Satan is the right one to satisfy such people with false signs. He is powerful enough to do signs and miracles for people to see and believe in him.

When Moses and Aaron went to the Pharaoh to ask that he release the children of Israel to leave the land of bondage, they were given a sign by God. They were told that Aaron should cast his rod down, and it would become a serpent. They did this, and the Pharaoh called in his sorcerers. They too cast down their rods, and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. (Exodus 7).

CONCLUSION

Satan is still working. Even today there are superstitions and omens which people obey and fear. Some people believe that a pregnant woman should never eat an egg, when in fact the egg has excellent food value which would help her.

In some places one or two babies who were born as triplets must be neglected until they die. Others believe that a baby born with teeth should not be allowed to live.

Some think that a child who has measles should never be washed, and even the person who cares for that child should never touch water or cross a river or stream. In fact, the patient should be kept clean, and the one who cares for such a sick one should wash their hands often so as not to spread germs. They think the child should not eat eggs, beans or meat, which are very good foods for regaining strength.

As Christians we are freed from these practices, which are usually done in ignorance. Read Romans 6:16-18 and 1 Corinthians 13:11-12.

CONCLUSION

We can easily recognize that there is power in the hands of Satan, but there is greater power in the hand of God. We already have the victory, because he has overcome the world.

"Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4).

VERSE TO MEMORIZE

“But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, ‘I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’ And it came out that very hour (Acts 16:18).”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What are some of the methods Satan uses to deceive people?

2. How does Satan use truth to achieve his purposes? (Genesis 3:4-5).

3. What hope do we have in the face of Satan’s power?

4. Have you put yourself completely in the safety of God’s power?

CHAPTER FIVE

HOW TO IDENTIFY WITCHCRAFT

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 27:5, 9; Daniel 2:27-28; Isaiah 2:5-6

Witchcraft is widely practiced and much believed in Africa. It is widely known by the majority of the people.

Witchcraft can be divided into two categories. The first is healing and bewitching. We cannot understand witchcraft if we leave out the people who practice it. They are called witchdoctors, herbalists and witches.

The second category is mediums. These are people who deal mainly with the spiritism side of witchcraft.

Witchdoctors and herbalists can be identified by their dress. They usually wear a string around their necks, fitted with beads, bones and horns. They also have a hat decorated with feathers from unusual birds. Some of these people dress as ordinary people much of the time.

Mediums wear a black cloth in place of trousers, and black beads around their necks.

WITCHDOCTORS

These people are deeply involved in the healing business. They treat diseases with a mixture of medicines. They use roots, shells, leaves and bushes. They also use fat from animals and birds and oil from certain plants.

Most of the witchdoctors claim that they are empowered and directed by the spirits. Their faith is completely in the spirits, not in God. The claim to know what causes problems and how to settle them. They instruct their patients to do whatever they tell them.

According to witchdoctors, most of the problems which face the people come from the spirits or from the surrounding enemies. They say that if a person fails to comply with the demands of the spirits, then the spirits will get angry and cause problems in the home. Witchdoctors are greatly feared in the community, and therefore even the chief may listen to their predictions. Because they claim to have been given that job by the spirits, the people listen to them. Many people believe and fear the spirits.

HERBALISTS

A herbalist is more like a pharmacist. He knows how to prepare different roots and things to treat people. He does not cast bones or try to tell people the causes of their problems. Most of them are free from spirits, although they claim to be guided by them. They give people medicine which, they say, will help them have good luck.

WITCHES

A witch is one who possesses poison drugs. This person can be a man or a woman. He can direct evil spirits and use them as his messengers or killing agencies.

A person can inherit this job from his dead parents or grandparents. He can buy it from friends. If a witch hates someone or is hired to get rid of another person, the witch can give poison. He can send his agencies to go and do away with that person. Some witches go by night, knocking on the doors of those whom they want to get rid of or kill.

MEDIUMS

If there is a drought in the area people may go to a medium and ask him to pray for rain. He claims that he can call the major spirit of the country to possess him. The spirit then tells the people what to do to have rain. They pay funds to the spirit through this man if they are instructed to do so. The spirit that possesses this man claims to have the power to stop rain or make it fall.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY? Jeremiah 27:5-9; Daniel 2:27-28; Isaiah 2:5-6

Let us look at the Bible and get our instructions from God about what we should do regarding this serious matter. We will quickly see that God denounces all of these. He denounces all who get their power from the devil.

The Lord spoke to Jeremiah and ordered the people to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. In Jeremiah 27:5 we read, “It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth...” In verse 9 he adds, “So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who are saying to you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon’.” The same message was expressed by Peter in Acts 5:29; “We must obey God rather than men.”

Let us look to Daniel and the time that he was living in the king’s palace. The king had dreams which troubled his sleep. He called in magicians, enchanters, sorcerers to tell him the meanings of his dreams. When the king had one dream which these men could not interpret, he called in Daniel. God gave Daniel the interpretation. Read Daniel 2:27-28 to see what he said to the king.

Isaiah spoke regarding the Lord’s judgement and called the house of Jacob to “come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. (Isaiah 2:5).” Then he adds in verse 6, “For thou hast rejected thy people the house of Jacob, because they are full of diviners from the east and soothsayers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with foreigners.”

Isaiah also spoke of the choice we have. “Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for them mouth of the Lord has spoken (Isaiah 1:18-20).”

Once again, we must make choice. What will your choice be?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

“Now the works of the flesh are plain:...impurity...sorcery...those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the work of a witchdoctor? a Herbalist? Witch? Medium?

2. What does the Bible say about this?

3. What decision will you make about whether you will believe in Christ or in witchcraft?

4. Who will be your helper?

CHAPTER SIX

WITCHCRAFT AND THE CHRISTIAN

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Amos 3:3; Micah 5:12; Mark 5:6-13; Acts 8:20-24; 13:6-11; 16:16-18; Ephesians 6:10-11; 14:18

God chose the children of Israel to be his special people. He commanded them to be holy. There are special opportunities for these people as God's chosen, but there are also special responsibilities. Let us look at God's expectation for his chosen people regarding witchcraft.

GOD'S COMMAND ABOUT WITCHCRAFT Deuteronomy 18:10-12

God commanded his people to be separated from witchcraft. (Read these verses in Deuteronomy.) What is the meaning of the words in the verses we have just read? A soothsayer is one who practices witchcraft. An augur interprets omens. A charmer casts a spell, and a necromancer is one who calls up the dead.

For the people whom God chose as his special people, he said, "You shall be blameless before the Lord your God." He explained to them that the nations whom they would come against would be those who "gave heed to" or those who listened to these people. These practices however, were an abomination to the Lord. He hated them, and in fact it was because of these practices that the Lord was removing those people from their land. God's people must obey him.

Verse 14 says, "...but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you so to do."

EXAMPLES OF DELIVERANCE Mark 5:6-13; Acts 8:20-24; 13:6-11; 16:12, 16-18

Throughout the ministry of Christ, he encountered Satan's angels known as demons. They oppressed people, but when they came face to face with the Saviour they cried out with great fear.

In the verses from Mark 5 we see that at Christ's command, the evil spirits left the man immediately. In Acts 8, Peter encountered a minister of Satan who was preaching. In the power of Christ, Peter rebuked him and urged him to repent and ask for forgiveness. Peter told him to submit himself to Christ and his power.

Paul encountered opposition from Satan's messenger at Paphos. Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, rebuked the man and caused him to become blind. (See Acts 13:6-11.) Paul met another messenger of Satan at Philippi. When the slave girl tried to disturb the preaching of God's word, Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, rebuked her. The evil spirit left her. It is recorded in Acts 16.
In all of these incidents, Christ stands out as the one and only powerful God. He world in the person of the Holy Spirit through his true followers. Satan was never able to withstand God's power at any time.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS FEAR?

Christians have no reason to fear Satan and his messengers or evil spirits. The Bible says "...for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4)." We should memorize that verse and say it often, in order to remember it. We have constant claim to the great power of God which can overcome all evil.

The man who wrote these chapters about witchcraft was once under the power of Satan and served him as a witchdoctor. He has been saved by God's power and grace. Now he has become God's servant. He has witnessed the deliverance of many people who were once Satan's followers. These people were oppressed by evil spirits. Through God's power they were released and saved.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE Ephesians 6:10-17

A Christian has to resist and fight the devil. We have no armor nor power to fight him in ourselves, but God has provided this for us. This is the armor of God as found in Ephesians 6:10-17. Without this armor we are powerless when Satan attacks us. Notice that this armor has no covering for the back. If we turn our back on God we have no defense. This would indicate that God wants us to go forward for him, not backward. The Christian is not to retreat. He is to advance.

Satan is powerful, but never forget that God is more powerful than Satan. We are more than conquerors through him. (Read Romans 8:37.)

In Ephesians 6:18 Paul tells us to "pray at all times in the Spirit." We have been studying about evil spirits which are demons of Satan. They have much power through witchcraft. Paul tells us that the way to fight these evil spirits is through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God. In the remaining chapters of this book we will study the Holy Spirit and how he works to help us fight Satan and live for Christ.

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:11-12)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What stand does God command the Christian to take on witchcraft?

2. Should Christians be afraid to stand against Satan?

3. What defense will we have?

4. Have you committed yourself to never be a part of witchcraft?

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:13-17

God has always made provision for those who follow him. Christians today do not have Jesus walking beside them as he did with the first disciples. They have Jesus with them in the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Truth. He will guide you in all truth. He is always available to lead you to understand what God wants you to do. If Christians learn how dependent they are on the Holy Spirit, they will want to know him better.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY Matthew 3:13-17

Throughout the Bible there are references to the Trinity of God. God can best be understood by studying how he has revealed himself to us.

He has revealed himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These are clearly seen in the scriptures in this section. The Son was consecrated for his ministry by the Holy Spirit. The voice of the Father from heaven gave his blessing.

Jesus said that he was the exact image of the Father. (Read John 14:9 and Hebrews 1:3.) The Bible uses the name “Spirit of Christ” the same as “Spirit of God.” (Romans 8:9).

HOW CAN THE TRINITY BE POSSIBLE?

How can God be three in one? Can we understand this? We must admit that it is not completely possible for us to understand the nature of God, but he will help us to know enough about it for our present needs. One day when we get to heaven we will be changed to be like him, and we will understand and know all things. For now let us consider some things about the Trinity, the Three in One, and accept by faith what we do not understand.

GOD THE FATHER

We think of God watching over his creation and caring for them. Immediately we remember the creation of the world. God established order for mankind. It is easy to see the father relationship as he fellowships with Adam and Eve. God shows them his grace, love and forgiveness as a Heavenly Father.

Fathers are people who care for us, provide, guide, correct and love us. It is easy to understand God in this role. Jesus called God his Father. He prayed to his Father. He said that all things were still in the Father’s hands. The Father, God, is in control of everything.

GOD THE SON Colossians 1:19; John 1:1; Hebrews 1:1-2

In Jesus Christ, Christians meet God. He has made himself known through his activity in history. Only a person can reveal the depth and mystery of what is personal. God is personal. Jesus is God's personal and highest revelation of himself to mankind.

It was God, not some part of him, who acted in Christ. It was God giving himself in his Holy Spirit.

Jesus was a man, ordinary in some ways. He was also God in the flesh. He was both divine and human. He had free human choice, but in these decisions God was at work.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:3

The Holy Spirit refers to God's activity within us. God does many things for us, but he also does some things within us. The Holy Spirit helps us accept and understand God's Word. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. He makes it possible for us to believe in Christ as our Saviour.

It is the Spirit who creates the fellowship of the church. He is responsible for its life. The Spirit produces the change of life in us from sin to faith.

We must follow the leading of the Spirit if we are to have the Lordship of Christ.

Who then is the Spirit? The Spirit is a continuation of Christ in the world. He endorses Christ's Lordship. The relationship between Christ and the Spirit is very real. The Gospel of John teaches that the Spirit could not come to men until Christ was glorified (John 16:7-15). Paul used "Spirit of Christ" and "Holy Spirit" as almost the same word. This means that the Spirit has Christ's personality. He is a person. He is included with the Father and the Son in the Trinity.

CONCLUSION

The failure to recognize the mutual relationships of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit has caused confusion among Christians. Sometimes the Spirit is considered separate from the whole Christian understanding of God. Anything people decide to do may be attributed to the Spirit's leading. This caused problems in the Corinthian church. The people took the gift of tongues and made it the choice evidence of the Spirit. They felt that people who did not speak in tongues had not received the Spirit. This caused serious problems because the presence of the Holy Spirit is not limited to just those who speak in tongues. There are other evidences of his presence.

What does the Trinity mean? It is the full Christian experience of God as the Father, as the Son in Jesus Christ and as the Holy Spirit. These bear witness in us of the Lordship of Christ. In these three we have on God with one purpose, one will and one concern of love.

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth (John 16:13)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the Trinity?

2. What is the work of the ministry of each person of the Trinity?

3. What work have you allowed the Holy Spirit to do in your life?

CHAPTER EIGHT

HOLY SPIRIT AND INSPIRATION

Scripture Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14:17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

The work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal God's word and will. One of the ways he does this is through the Bible. The Bible gives us truth and guidance for our daily life. We search the Scriptures to know our Lord better and to fellowship with him. The Scriptures help us to know his way and to walk in it. It is very comforting to know that God can and will provide guidance for us. The Heavenly Father leads his children in many ways. He leads us through his word. He leads us by the inner witness of the Holy Spirit.

In this chapter we will ask and seek to answer some questions: Is the Bible God's word? Does God speak through the Bible? What does inspiration mean? How is the Bible inspired? What is the work of the Holy Spirit in inspiration? How does God direct his people?

BIBLICAL INSPIRATION 2 Timothy 3:14-17

The Bible is made up of sixty-six books. About forty human authors wrote these books. They wrote over a period of more than 1500 years using three languages.

In reality the Bible is one book, not sixty six. It has a single subject. It is consistent in its content and in its presentation of truth. How could such a book have unity? Unity could come only through the work of God through his Holy Spirit. God inspired it to be written. He planned its writing and guided its composition.

Paul teaches in these scripture verses that all of the Bible is inspired by God. It is adequate for teaching, correcting, and for training people in righteousness. Historically the Bible has influenced every society in which it has been followed as a guide for conduct. People are better citizens, better neighbors, and better people when they follow the Bible.

INSPIRATION: WHAT AND WHO? 2 Peter 1:19-21

Inspiration means to stimulate or arouse to action. Through the Bible God arouses people to do something. Through the Bible people are often led to see a sin, to confess, and to avoid it. Through the Bible people are inspired to worship Christ and allow him to be Lord of their life.

The Bible arouses us to action, but it also is inspired. This means that God prepared time, events, and certain men to write the books of the Bible. They had the proper training and spiritual preparation for the job. God used their own style of writing, but those too were in his plan. (Read 2 Peter 1:21).

The Holy Spirit is the agent of inspiration. He has always been active in preparing all things to be ready for the coming of Christ. Without the Holy Spirit no one would know anything about God. It

is the Holy Spirit that illumines our mines. He gives us understanding. No one accidentally discovers God or discovers truths in the Bible. God reveals himself to us through the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

For the Christian the Bible is the most important book in the world. There is no other book like the Bible. It is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. (Psalm 119:105) It is the inspired word of God.

We can be inspired to serve God through reading the Bible. The Holy Spirit is continually at work. We are dependant on the Holy Spirit for any understanding of the Bible or of God's will for our life.

How much do you study and meditate on the Bible? How much do you depend on the Holy Spirit to lead you? Perhaps today he has revealed to you that you need to repent of your sins and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Will you trust him now?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"No prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God (2 Peter 1:21)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What do we mean by inspiration?

2. How does God inspire people today?

3. Who enables us to understand God's messages to us?

4. How much do you study God's Word to know him better?

CHAPTER NINE

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:14-21; John 16:7-13

The title of this chapter could be misleading, because someone could think that the Spirit had not been present until the day of Pentecost. God is Spirit and has always been active in his creation since its beginning. We can clearly see the activity of the Holy Spirit when reading the Old Testament.

All of the spiritual events in the Old Testament occurred because of the Holy Spirit's activity; the appearance of angels, visions, dreams of revelation, miracles and prophetic announcements. The recording of the Old Testament events occurred because of the work of the Holy Spirit.

COMING OF THE SPIRIT

Since the Spirit has always been active and present in our world, then what do we mean by "The Coming of the Holy Spirit." God is Spirit and has always been active and seeking men to follow the truth. But the Spirit had not been living in man before the coming of Christ. God's Spirit worked with man, but only those who were called for ministry were anointed by the Spirit. Usually these people were the prophets. This does not mean that others could not be led by the Spirit to follow God and to know his will. But God's chosen ones were especially empowered. (Read Joel 2:28-32.) In these verses the prophet taught that the Spirit would be given out upon all flesh. It would be a special happening. At the proper time the Spirit would be given out upon all flesh. This would be a special happening, and the Spirit would be available to live in God's people.

This was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. While he was preaching, Peter quoted from Joel 2:28-29. He said that the prophecy had been fulfilled that day.

When we use the term, the coming of the Holy Spirit, we do not mean a certain spiritual gift such as speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit comes to each person when that person repents of their sin and receives the Lord Jesus their Saviour. No one can receive the Holy Spirit without receiving Jesus Christ as Saviour. The Holy Spirit has always been present, but it was not until Jesus gave his life on the cross that men could have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

PURPOSE OF PENTECOST Acts 2:14-21

This is described in detail in Acts 2. Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32. The Spirit was poured out on individuals. The Holy Spirit was available to all.

The Holy Spirit came to convict and redeem each person who would receive him. "And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Acts 2:21)."

They spoke in tongues on that day, but this is not necessary for salvation. The real miracle was that God's love is for all men of every nation, and they heard it in their own language.

WHY DID HE COME? John 16:7-13

Jesus promised the disciples that he would not leave them comfortless. He would send the Comforter to them. The Spirit comes to live within each believer. When a believer has received Jesus Christ, he has received the Holy Spirit. He does not need to continue asking for him. We can ask to know him more fully.

Why does the Holy Spirit come? His first work in a person is to convict that one of his sin and help him to be saved. Then the Holy Spirit works in a person to enable him serve his Lord. The Spirit can bless others through the saved one. Jesus taught that when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples he would work through them to convict others of unrighteousness, sin and judgement.
His purpose is also to glorify God through the Son, Jesus. God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are seeking that all may honor the Son, God's beloved One. He does this in us. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to yield the control of our life. Then Christ can really dwell there as the only Master.

CONCLUSION

Do you now understand the coming of the Holy Spirit? He has come to you. If you know him as your Saviour, then he lives within you. He desires to glorify Christ in your life. Allowing the Spirit to bring glory to the Son will bring unspeakable joy to your life. It is the way to happiness.

If you can not understand all about the coming of the Holy Spirit in your life, accept his presence by faith. Then he will be able to reveal more of himself to you.

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"...according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith (Ephesians 3:16-17)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the meaning of the "coming of the Spirit?"

2. What does Pentecost mean?

3. Why did the Holy Spirit come?

4. Have you allowed him into your life by receiving Jesus as your Saviour?

CHAPTER TEN

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:35; John 3:13-17; 14:16-20; Romans 8:6-14

The Holy Spirit is equal in every way with God the Father and God the Son. He affects every part of our Christian life. His presence or absence makes the difference between life and death spiritually. We are born spiritually through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Now let us consider his work.

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

God is Spirit. He is active. He is always at work. This world was created because of the Holy Spirit. All of God's work is through the Spirit. The Bible teaches that the Spirit was moving all over creation bringing God's will into being.

The Spirit of God brought this world into existence, but he also has the responsibility for all of God's revelation to us. All of the events in the Old Testament were brought about by the Spirit of God. He inspired and provided for the written word which became our Bible. Every time we realize God's will or decide to serve God in any way, it is the Spirit who has illumined our understanding.

In the Old Testament the Spirit set people apart for service. God made the choice of those who would be his servants. The Holy Spirit led these people to discover God's calling. He then empowered them for service. As long as they followed his guidance, they never failed. However, the Old Testament is full of those who failed God when they decided to make their own decisions and not follow the Spirit's leading. The lives of Abraham, Joseph, Gideon, Elijah, David and others give evidence to the empowering work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

IN JESUS MINISTRY Luke 1:35; John 3:13-17

The life and ministry of the Lord Jesus depended on the Holy Spirit. The angel announced to Mary that her child would be of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 3:35) This was the incarnation of God in human flesh. It was the Holy Spirit who accomplished the birth of God the Son, through Mary. All of the activity and plans for the coming of the Messiah were of the Holy Spirit.

It was the Holy Spirit who signified the beginning of Jesus' ministry at his baptism. (John 3:13-17) From the start of his ministry the Spirit was leading. It was the Spirit of God which led him into the wilderness to allow Satan to test and to tempt him.

Perhaps the part of Jesus' ministry we remember best was the miracles. People marvelled at how he could perform such miracles. They asked such questions as: "How can he forgive sins?" "How can he do such miracles unless God is with him?" When Jesus was accused of doing his miracles through the power of Satan, he claimed his power was through the Spirit of God (Matthew 12:28).

The people of Palestine were amazed at Jesus' teaching. How could an uneducated man teach such things? They said that he was only a carpenter's son. How could he teach with such authority? Jesus claimed only to do the will of the Father. His words were all inspired by the Spirit. He was and is the Son of God.

The Spirit of God raised Jesus from the dead. This showed his final and complete triumph over Satan. It was complete victory over sin and death through the power of the Spirit. Who could doubt the presence and power of the Spirit in the life of Jesus? Remember, God the Son and God the Spirit are One.

IN EVERY BELIEVER John 14:16-20; Romans 8:6-14

It is impossible to be a Christian without the presence of the Holy Spirit. The first work of the Spirit is to convict us of our sin. Then faith comes to us by means of the Spirit. When a person repents of his sin and receives Christ by faith, the Holy Spirit regenerates his spiritual life. He is born again. Men are spiritually dead until they are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. These dead men can get life from only one Person, the Son of God. This comes through the Son when we receive him as our Saviour.

The Holy Spirit lives in each Christian. Every believer, no matter how weak and imperfect, has the Holy Spirit in him. The Bible teaches that if one does not have the Holy Spirit he is not one of God's children. (See Romans 8:9.) It also says, "He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life (1 John 5:12)." The Holy Spirit is a person, and we should refer to him as he or him, never as it. As a person he dwells in us.

The Holy Spirit seals the believer with God, as a child of God. The presence of the Spirit shows God's ownership. We are bought with the price of the blood of Jesus, and we belong to God. This sealing of the Spirit gives us assurance as Christians.

CONCLUSION

The Holy Spirit is God's promise of the life to come with the Lord. He is the promise of our inheritance and the guarantee that God is going to keep all his promises. He accomplishes all that God desires. He is constantly working in our lives.

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?

2. What is his work in the New Testament?

3. What is his work in a Christian’s life today?

4. What is the Holy Spirit doing in your life?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: John 7:37-39; Galatians 5:22-23

The Bible teaches that God's plan for the Christian life is a life of fullness, satisfaction and usefulness in his service. The greatest need in our time is for God's children to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What is this filling? How does a Christian become filled? How can you know when you are filled? Let us try to answer these questions.

THE MEANING OF FILLED

The word, filled, gives the idea of a fullness that leaves nothing to be desired. So the term indicates having the Holy Spirit in free and unhindered control of every area of life. He should control all knowledge, power, holiness, peace and joy.

If we put an iron into a fire, the iron becomes hot like the fire. The fire has penetrated the iron. Then the iron is in the fire, but also the fire is in the iron. They have joined in making the two to become as one. The iron is still an iron, but it is also hot. The effects of the heat can easily be felt, and the iron is far more useful because of the fire.

In some ways the Holy Spirit in a person's life can be compared to the iron. Without the fire we are nothing but dead weight. When a person becomes one with the Holy Spirit, the effects are far reaching. The person can be useful because of the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit living in us controls us. He enlightens the mind so that we have a deeper insight into spiritual truth. He cleanses the emotions and affections and holds them to Christ. His ministry is always Christ-centered, and from him we get power to do the will of God.

CONDITIONS FOR FILLING John 7:37-39

The Holy Spirit convicts a person of sin and then comes into his life at the moment he accepts Jesus as Saviour. The Christian, however, who wants to follow him completely will want more and more of the Holy Spirit. The Christian who never desires a deeper life in Christ will not find it, but all who earnestly seek him will find him. (John 7:37).

What are the requirements for receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit? One must first have the desire to have a deeper walk with Christ. We must repent of all sin which would separate us from him. This does not mean that we will be sinless, but we must turn away from those sins that we have allowed to control our lives. If we hold sin in our hearts, God will not hear us. The filling of the Spirit is dependent on making Christ the center of the life of the Christian. This will mean removing self and letting Christ be Lord.

As the Christian trusts in Christ, he will begin to feel his power, which is the presence of the Holy Spirit in that life.

EVIDENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Galatians 5:22-23

We are eager for the spectacular in life. We remember that at Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and they received power. (Remember Acts 2.) We may wish for the rushing wind, the tongues as of fire and the speaking in tongues that others can understand. But Pentecost can never be repeated.

If we would determine the presence of the Holy Spirit in a life today, we should read the verses in Galatians in this section. When we plant a tree we expect it to bear fruit. Likewise Christ expects his followers to bear fruit. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. When we see these fruits in the life of a Christian, we know that the Holy Spirit is living in that person.

CONCLUSION

Fullness of the Spirit is not a one time experience. It is a result of a close, daily walk with Jesus. As the Christian studies God's Word, prays and seeks to follow the leadership of the Spirit, he will find that the Lord is always faithful. He who made our salvation a reality will continue to help us to live for him.

"And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6)."

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you (Matthew 7:7)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is the first work of the Holy Spirit in a person's life?

2. How can we know that the Holy Spirit is living in a person?

3. How can we have more of the Holy Spirit?

4. How much are you allowing the Holy Spirit to live in you?

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE SPIRIT BECAME FLESH

Scripture Reading: Luke 2; John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-11

God has always been active through the Holy Spirit, but at the proper time there was an event that made possible our present relationship to him in the Spirit. That special event was the birth of God's only Son, Jesus Christ.

Without God's coming in human flesh, we would not have known the fellowship of the Son through the Spirit. We would still be under the system of the Old Testament law. But Christ did come.

THE SPIRIT PUT ON FLESH Luke 2

The Spirit of God had a wonderful plan. This plan was that man could learn about the Father from a world he could understand. God could experience through his Son the problems and sufferings of sin. This plan was the first Christmas. God's Spirit clothed himself in human flesh. A woman conceived by the Holy Spirit. A child was born, and his name was Jesus.

This great act is called the incarnation. It means "in the flesh." God's spirit took up residence in a human body. It means that Jesus was both Spirit and flesh, a perfect blending. God became man, but he did not sin.

When the angels sang that night in Bethlehem, they had a good reason. Even before God had created this world, he planned for this event. He knew that mankind would fall into sin. He knew we would not be able to save ourselves. God prepared for our redemption even before creation.

As you read Luke 2 remember that the first Christmas was for you. The Son of God coming in human flesh is the most important event which prepared the way for our salvation. Jesus made our salvation possible through the death on the cross.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS TO JESUS John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-11

We understand from these verses that Jesus, the Word, was with God when he created the world. Jesus has always existed as the Second Person of the Trinity. Jesus was not created at the time of the first Christmas. He did take the form of human flesh at that time.

In the Philippians verses we learn that the Son had existed as equal with the Father. In his heavenly kingdom all spiritual glory and majesty were his. Why God the Son would desire to leave all of that is impossible to explain. His motivation was love for us. It is hard to believe that the Eternal God would love sinful man that much, but he does. The Bible teaches that the Son did not object to being born in human flesh. He did not complain about all that he was leaving in heaven because of sinful man. Instead he gladly laid aside his heavenly privileges for a while. He humbled himself

and became a man. He was completely obedient to the Father. He became as a servant and took the form of a man. He freely gave his life for our sins.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS TO US

As we think of the great sacrifice of God on our behalf, what should be our response at Christmas time? There are many worldly ways to celebrate the day, but many of them do not give honor and glory to Jesus. Expressing our love and appreciation to him should be the main concern of Christians at Christmas time.

Christmas should be a time of worship. We should praise and thank him for what he did for us. It should be a time of joy. The angels sang. We too should express our joy to God and toward our friends to show our thanks.

Christmas should be a time of love. “For God so loved...He gave...(John 3:16).” We should give ourselves in love to him and for his service. This should be a special time for commitment of ourselves to God.

CONCLUSION

Think about the work of the Spirit. When the time was right God sent forth his Son. Jesus was born of a virgin to die for our sins. God put on human flesh.

We must not think of Jesus as only a baby in a manger. We should think of him as the Saviour, dying on the cross. The real meaning of Christmas is found on the cross, in the resurrection, and at the Day of Pentecost.

In response to this, what can you give him for Christmas?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE:

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory...(John 1:14).”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What is meant by the term, incarnation?

2. When did God decide that he would send his Son to die for man’s sin?

3. What did Christmas mean to Jesus?

4. What does Christmas mean to you?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

BEING LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: John 14:16-31

God provided for us al full and abundant life. Christians are people who have a reason to be happy. God wants to fill us with joy. He desires fellowship with us, and we need fellowship with him. This should be a regular part of the Christian's life. A Christian an experience a life in which God leads him in a constant walk.

HIS POWER IS GREATER

If you hold a piece of iron in your hand over a pool of water, and if you loosen your grasp of that iron, what would happen? Yes, the iron would be drawn downward and sink into the water. It would be mastered by the law of gravitation. Now, let us imagine that the same piece of iron was attached to a piece of wood and dropped into the water. Now it would float. Why?

No change had taken place in the iron. The law of gravity is the same. But now the law of gravitation has been mastered by a stronger law, the law which governs floating objects. Because of this the iron is freed from the law of gravity.

The life of a person is very similar to this example. In our lost condition we are mastered by the law of sin and death. We are at its mercy, and there is no way of escape from death. After receiving Jesus as Saviour, however, we are controlled by a more powerful force. He saves us from death and gives us life, even an abundant life through his Spirit. Jesus' power is greater than the power of death. (Read 1 John 4:4.)

ACCESS TO HIS POWER John 14:16-31

We cannot hope to have the privilege of using God's power if we keep known sin in our lives. Unconfessed sin stands between a person and God. All men are sinners, and we cannot stand against sin in our own power. How then can a person be led by the Spirit?

First, we must confess our sins to him and ask for his forgiveness. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:8-9)." When we ask God to forgive us of sins, we must remember this promise that he will forgive, and we must accept his forgiveness. We should not continue to think of ourselves as guilty of that sin. We must praise him for his faithfulness in forgiving us.

Then we read in John 15:7 that we must abide in him. Abiding in Christ means seeking constant fellowship with him. He must have first place in your life. We should plan a time early in each day for fellowship with God. Then we can carry on throughout the day in that fellowship. Psalm 88:13b says, "...in the morning my prayer comes before thee."

Abiding in Christ also involves a love for his Word. Do you like to study the Word of God? The Bible is God's written message to us. He constantly teaches us as we read and study it. We should have a definite plan of how we can study God's word and learn more and more about him. As we study, we must remember to ask him to teach us the things we need to learn.

CONCLUSION

Yes, God provided a full and abundant life for his followers. He also gave mankind the privilege of choosing whether or not we would accept him and his way. He wants to lead all men into that life of fellowship with him. He wants our praise, our confession, our seeking of him through the Bible and prayer. He wants our lives in service to him.

He is willing and eager to lead you into the fullness of life with him. Will you let him have control of your life?

A VERSE TO MEMORIZE: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you (John 15:7)."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN ANSWERS:

1. What should be the reason for happiness in a Christian's life?

2. What do you mean by abiding in Jesus?]

3. How can we have access to the power of God?

4. Are you ready to surrender your life to the leadership of the Holy Spirit?