



Stave Creek
BAPTIST CHURCH

Great Commandment • Great Commission • Great Compassion

Christianity 101

The Basics

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Week 1
Understanding Who Jesus is and
Understanding Who You Are in Christ

You are now a follower of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.

So, what does this mean?

Understanding who Jesus is and what He means to you is essential to learning how to live in this new life you have recently committed to, or recently got serious about.

Basic facts and how we know they are true:

1. As evangelical Christians we believe in the Holy Bible.

How did we get the Bible and how can we know that it is trustworthy?

"If over 40 authors, living on three different continents, with generations of time between the first writing and the last word, wrote the 66 books of the Bible, then how did these books become recognized as God's words and be placed together into one book? This assembly has been known as "canonization." Canonization is the identification of writings that were authoritative for the Church because God inspired them. Those writings that were both authoritative and inspired were recognized as God's Word and as such assembled into one book, the Bible.

Contrary to modern arguments, the canonization of the Bible did not occur when a church or government determined what books were "in" and what books were "out."

The Old Testament writings were fully accepted by the Jews and Jesus as God's authoritative and inspired Word. The Jews of Jesus's day identified the 39 books of the Old Testament in three categories; the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection He told them that "'everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:44–45, CSB).

As the story of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection unfolded in history, the men given authority from Jesus began to write to churches and individual believers to encourage and lead them in their faith. These writings from the Apostles were recognized to be inspired by God and were received as Scripture. Even the Apostles themselves recognized each other's writings as being inspired by God—they equated them with the authority and inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures (see Peter 2 Pet. 3:15–16). These writings were preserved, carefully copied, and included in the larger work of writings that today we call the Bible.

Though these writings were considered authoritative relatively quickly, the oldest document with the full list of New Testament writings is Athanasius's list from 367 A.D.

As many other books came along that contradicted the accepted books of the Bible, the early church worked to set in stone the books that were authoritative and inspired. The heretical views of other books were examined and discussed through early church counsels, which led to a clear and final identification

for the whole Church. One of the great stories of the first centuries after Jesus's resurrection is the amazing way in which God and His Church protected the truth of Scripture from error or worse.

By God's grace, His Word has been preserved and protected today. The very words that the saints of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament wrote under the full inspiration of God are contained in our Bibles. When we read the Bible, we can be confident that we are hearing God's voice just as He first spoke it to our spiritual parents long ago." (Credit: **By Brandon D. Smith and Jeremy Writebol** At Lifeway.com)

"The Word of God has stood the test of time and the world's greatest critics and has never been proven wrong."- Andy Goode

So, understanding the validity of our source of information is key to placing our faith in that information.

**The Dead Sea scrolls:
Credit: Ed Stetzer**

The Dead Sea Scrolls are ancient manuscripts that were found at several sites near the western shore of the Dead Sea. The most important site was near Qumran, where eleven caves containing scrolls or artifacts were discovered from 1946 to 1956. Also notable are discoveries at Murabba'at (1951), Nahal Hever (1951 or 1952), Wadi Seiyal (1951 or 1952), and Masada (1963-65). Professor W. F. Albright, America's foremost archaeologist, described the scrolls as "the greatest archaeological find of modern times."

At least 941 scrolls were discovered in the Qumran caves (715 in Cave 4 alone). They are dated on paleographic and radiocarbon grounds to between ca 250 b.c. and a.d. 68, when the site was destroyed by the Romans. The Qumran library is divided into two basic categories: 240 biblical scrolls and 701 nonbiblical scrolls. The nonbiblical scrolls are further divided into: Apocryphal scrolls (such as Tobit), Sectarian scrolls (such as the Rule of the Community), and Pseudepigraphic scrolls (such as the Prayer of Nabonidus).

- **The scrolls were discovered and copied in Palestine (Israel).**
- **The scrolls were written in the three languages of Scripture.** Of the 240 biblical scrolls from Qumran, 235 are written in Hebrew and 5 in Greek, and of the 701 nonbiblical scrolls, 548 are written in Hebrew, 137 in Aramaic, and 5 in Greek. This means that at least some Jews could speak Greek in late Second Temple Palestine, and reinforces the idea that Jesus and His followers knew Greek.
- **The biblical scrolls both affirm and enhance the Hebrew Bible used by scholars.**
- **Most of the nonbiblical scrolls throw light on Judaism in the late Second Temple period.**
- **Some scrolls illuminate our understanding of Jesus and the early Christians.**

Principles found in the Bible that Christian believe about the Bible:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Principle Number 1: The Bible is accurate and reliable

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

¹²For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Principle Number 2: The Bible is alive and able to direct us for daily living

Romans 15:4-7 (ESV)

⁴For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Principle number 3: The Bible is essential and relevant no matter what anyone says

The Bible Lesson for Week 1

Ephesians 1:1-6 (ESV)

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Doctrinal Point: Salvation begins with God (v.3,4)

Realization for me as a born-again believer in Jesus Christ:

- Jesus chose me. This is who I am in Christ, I am loved by God.

Reinforcement of this truth: **John 15:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

Same idea scriptures:

Romans 3:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God.

Luke 19:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (ESV)

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴ To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 6:37 (ESV)

³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

2nd Realization for me as a born-again believer in Christ:

- God **adopted** us. (v. 5)

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

"Adoption" in the NT refers to the official act of a father who bestows the status of full adulthood on a son of minor status. It is not the taking in of an outsider; it is the placing of a family member into the privileges and blessings of adulthood. This means that even the youngest Christian has everything that Christ has and is rich in grace. - Dr. Warren Wiersbee

Week 2
More on Who is Jesus?

The meditation assignment from last week:

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Today we add verse 14:

John 1:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Theological notes taken from this passage:

- If were not clear before you read to verse 14 we now see that the WORD became flesh.
- Jesus is the **Word**.
- Jesus existed in the **beginning**, not just at Bethlehem and beyond. (v.2)
- Jesus **created** all things. (v3)
- Jesus is more than flesh he is **the life** and **the light**. (V.4)
- Jesus is **greater** than the darkness.
- Jesus is **God**.
- Jesus is fully **God** and fully **man**.

So, are you ready to fully understand as much as mere humans can understand the concept of Jesus as the Son, and the Messiah?

Jesus has several major roles:

1. Creator
2. **Prophet** The ultimate and perfect revealing of the Father to man.
3. **Priest** The ultimate and perfect sacrifice for our sins who lives to intercede for us.
4. **King** (Messiah)

Now let's understand a biblical truth about GOD the FATHER to better understand more about Jesus.

Colossians 1:15-20 (ESV)

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

As already noted, the heretics viewed Jesus as one among a series of lesser spirits descending in sequential inferiority from God. Paul refutes that with two powerful descriptions of who Jesus really is. First, Paul describes Him as **the image of the invisible God**. *Eikōn* (**image**) means "image" or "likeness." From it we get our English word *icon*, referring to a statue. It is used in [Matthew 22:20](#) of Caesar's portrait on a coin, and in [Revelation 13:14](#) of the statue of Antichrist.

Although man is also the *eikōn* of God ([1 Cor. 11:7](#); cf. [Gen. 1:26-27](#)), man is not a perfect image of God. Humans are made in God's image in that they have rational personality. Like God, they possess intellect, emotion, and will, by which they are able to think, feel, and choose. We humans are not, however, in God's image morally, because He is holy, and we are sinful. Nor are we created in His image essentially. We do not possess His incommunicable attributes, such as omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, or omnipresence. We are human, not divine.

The Fall marred the original image of God in man. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve were innocent, free of sin, and incapable of dying. They forfeited those qualities when they sinned. When someone puts faith in Christ, however, that person is promised that the image of God will be restored in him or her. "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son" ([Rom. 8:29](#); cf. [2 Cor. 3:18](#); [Col. 3:10](#)). God will make believers sinless like Christ when they enter the final phase of their eternal life.

Unlike man, Jesus Christ is the perfect, absolutely accurate image of God. He did not become the image of God at the incarnation, but has been that from all eternity. [Hebrews 1:3](#) describes Jesus as "the radiance of [God's] glory." Christ reflects God's attributes, as the sun's light reflects the sun. Further, He is said to be "the exact representation of [God's] nature." *Charaktēr* ("exact representation") refers to an engraving tool, or stamp. Jesus is the exact likeness of God. He is in the very form of God ([Phil. 2:6](#)). That is why He could say, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" ([John 14:9](#)). In Christ, the invisible God became visible, "and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father" ([John 1:14](#)).

MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Colossians and Philemon.

1 Timothy 6:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Exodus 33:20-23 (ESV)

²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." ²¹ And the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, ²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a

cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.

²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.”

Jesus takes on the physical form to be God in the flesh. So, when Adam is created, when Adam is confronted and when the first sacrifice was made, who was there? Answer: **Jesus**

Some realizations from this passage today:

Memory Verse for the Week:

Romans 6:23 (ESV)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Meditation for the week:

Romans 10:8-17 (ESV)

⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);

⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.

¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Homework: What does Romans 10:8-17 say to me as a Christ Follower? What does this passage me to me as far as what I believe about salvation?

Discuss: _____

Week 3
The 5 Truths Every Christian Should Know:

- 1. Grace | 2. Man | 3. God | 4. Christ | 5. Faith**

HOMEWORK; Memorize: 1 John 5:13 (ESV)

¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (ESV)

¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died;
¹⁵ and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

Philemon 1:6 (ESV)

⁶ and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

Teacher note: I talk about how I grew in my. Faith by witnessing to others. Below is the outline of how I learned to share the gospel. This. Is the EE outline.

I. Introduction

- A. Listen to them about their **personal** life
- B. Ask about their **church** background.
- C. Tell them about our **church**.
- D. 3-minute version of your salvation story
- E. Two Diagnostic Questions

Question 1- *Do you know for sure if you died today that you would go to heaven?*

Question 2- *If you died today and stood before God and HE said to: "Why should I let you into my heaven?". What would you say?*

II. The Gospel

A. Grace

- 1. Heaven is a **free** **gift**. **Romans 6:23**

Romans 6:23 (ESV)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- 2. Heaven is not **earned** or deserved. **Ephesians 2:8,9**

Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

B. Man

- 1. Man is a **sinner**. **Romans 3:23**

Romans 3:23 (ESV)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

- a. Sin defined (explain sin is violating the 10 Commandments)

b. Three sins a day (adds up to 1000 sins a year, too much to account for)

2. Man cannot **save** **himself**. **Matthew 5:48**

a. Omelet with Bad Egg

b. See why it is impossible?

C. God

1. God is **love**. **1 John 4:8b** *God is love*

2. God is **Just**. **Exodus 34:7b** *God will not let the guilty go unpunished*

D. Christ

1. Who Christ is. John 1:1; John 1:14; John 20:28

Jesus is the **infinite God-Man**

2. What Christ did. Isaiah 53:7

Jesus **died** on the cross and **rose** from the dead to **pay** the penalty for our sins and to **purchase** a place in heaven for us.

E. Faith

The **key** to Heaven.

1. What faith is not: **trusting** in facts.

James 2:19

Faith is not **temporary**. (just when we are on an airplane)

2. What faith is:

Trusting in Jesus Christ **alone** for salvation.

Acts 16:31

III. Commitment

A. Does this makes sense? (*You are asking the person you witness to for a response*)

B. Commitment: Would you like to receive the free gift of eternal life?

C. Clarification

1. Transfer trust (*stop trusting in self or works and trust in Jesus alone*)

2. Receive the resurrected and living Christ as Lord and Savior. Rev. 3:20

3. Repent

D. Prayer

1. Pray for the person to understand
2. Pray with the person, the “sinner’s prayer”
3. Pray the person to have assurance and victory.

E. Assurance

1. Read John 6:47 aloud to the person.
2. Go over the 2 Questions again
3. Welcome to the family of God.
4. Understanding Baptism
5. Appointment for Baptism

F. Immediate Follow up.

G. Continued Follow up & connection to a small group

You need a list of lost people you are praying for and a place to fill in their Spiritual Birthday (SDOB)

when God moves in their life and you get to share the gospel with them.

Meditation for the week:

Romans 8:1-11 (ESV)

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.

⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

My List:

Name	SDOB
1. _____	___/___/___
2. _____	___/___/___
3. _____	___/___/___
4. _____	___/___/___
5. _____	___/___/___

Checkpoints:

1. Changes in my life: _____

2. Reading God’s Word every day?
3. Talking to God every day?
4. Trusting God with your everyday life?
5. Worshipping God as a way of life?
6. Being a good steward of my time. My talent and my treasure in a God honoring way?

- Memorize 1 John 5:13

Week 4

Knowing for Sure

Struggling with the assurance of salvation is something I like to refer to as growing pains. Almost every believer goes through some lack of assurance. If the Apostle Peter could walk with Jesus in the flesh for 3 years and be tempted to deny Christ, then why would it not be possible to doubt.

Here is the key concept: Doubt cannot become disbelief.

Even John the Baptist struggled when he found himself in prison, I guess you could say when the chips were down, and John sent a message to Jesus because it must have seemed to John that things were not going as planned.

Sometimes the Christian life will not go as you have planned, or as you think it should. It is in these times you may be tempted to doubt and our prompted to question.

The memory verse from last week is a great verse for times when you are tempted to doubt your salvation.

Now we will add another passage: **2 Timothy 1:8-14 (ESV)**

⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, ¹² which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.

¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

From the meditation last week ,we now have the opportunity to break down the passage
Romans 8:1-11

Freedom from Judgment—No Condemnation ([Rom. 8:1-4](#))

There are no conditions for us to meet.

“The basis for this wonderful assurance is the phrase "in Christ Jesus." In Adam, we were condemned. In Christ, there is no condemnation!”- Dr. Warren Wiersbee

The Bible never says that we will not make mistakes. We will sin, fail and embarrass ourselves. When you are struggling with this concept remember this:

Abraham lied about his wife; David committed adultery; Peter tried to kill a man with his sword. There will always be consequences for our sins, but never condemnation if we are in Christ Jesus.

Let’s look in on Dr. Weirsbee’s commentary on this passage:

“The Law condemns; but the believer has a new relationship to the Law, and therefore he cannot be condemned. Paul made three statements about the believer and the Law, and together they add up to: *no condemnation*.

The Law cannot claim you (v. 2). You have been made free from the law of sin and death. You now have life in the Spirit. You have moved into a whole new sphere of life in Christ. "The law of sin and death" is what Paul described in [Romans 7:7-25](#). "The law of the Spirit of life" is described in [Romans 8](#). The Law no longer has any jurisdiction over you: you are dead to the Law ([Rom. 7:4](#)) and free from the Law ([Rom. 8:2](#)).

The Law cannot condemn you (v. 3). Why? Because Christ has already suffered that condemnation for you on the cross. The Law could not save; it can only condemn. But God sent His Son to save us and do what the Law could not do. Jesus did not come as an angel; He came as a man. He did not come "in sinful flesh," for that would have made Him a sinner. He came *in the likeness* of sinful flesh, as a man. He bore our sins in His body on the cross.

The "law of double jeopardy" states that a man cannot be tried twice for the same crime. Since Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins, and since you are "in Christ," God will not condemn you.

The Law cannot control you (v. 4). The believer lives a righteous life, not in the power of the Law, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Law does not have the power to produce holiness; it can only reveal and condemn sin. But the indwelling Holy Spirit enables you to walk in obedience to God's will. The righteousness that God demands in His Law is fulfilled in you through the Spirit's power. In the Holy Spirit, you have life and liberty ([Rom. 8:2](#)) and "the pursuit of happiness" ([Rom. 8:4](#)).

The legalist tries to obey God in his own strength and fails to measure up to the righteousness that God demands. The Spirit-led Christian, as he yields to the Lord, experiences the sanctifying work of the Spirit in his life. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" ([Phil. 2:13](#)). It is this fact that leads to the second freedom we enjoy as Christians.

Freedom from Defeat—No Obligation ([Rom. 8:5-17](#))

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh" ([Rom. 8:12](#)). There is no obligation to the old nature. The believer can live in victory. In this section, Paul described life on three different levels; and he encouraged his readers to live on the highest level.

"You have not the Spirit" ([yv. 5-8](#)). Paul is not describing two kinds of Christians, one carnal and one spiritual. He is contrasting the saved and the unsaved. There are four contrasts.

***In the flesh—in the Spirit* ([y. 5](#)).** The unsaved person does not have the Spirit of God ([Rom. 8:9](#)) and lives *in* the flesh and *for* the flesh. His mind is centered on the things that satisfy the flesh. But the Christian has the Spirit of God within and lives in an entirely new and different sphere. His mind is fixed on the things of the Spirit. This does not mean that the unsaved person never does anything good, or that the believer never does anything bad. It means that the bent of their lives is different. One lives for the flesh, the other lives for the Spirit.

***Death—life* ([y. 6](#)).** The unsaved person is alive physically, but dead spiritually. The inner man is dead toward God and does not respond to the things of the Spirit. He may be moral, and even religious; but he lacks spiritual life. He needs "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" ([Rom. 8:2](#)).

***War with God—peace with God* ([yv. 6-7](#)).** In our study of [Romans 7](#), we have seen that the old nature rebels against God and will not submit to God's Law. Those who have trusted Christ enjoy "peace with God" ([Rom. 5:1](#)), while the unsaved are at war with God. "'There is no peace,' saith the Lord, 'unto the wicked'" ([Isa. 48:22](#)).

***Pleasing self—pleasing God* ([y. 8](#)).** To be "in the flesh" means to be lost, outside Christ. The unsaved person lives to please himself and rarely if ever thinks about pleasing God. The root of sin is selfishness—"I will" and not "Thy will."

To be unsaved and not have the Spirit is the lowest level of life. But a person need not stay on that level. By faith in Christ he can move to the second level.

"You have the Spirit" ([yv. 9-11](#)). "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" ([Rom. 8:9](#)). The evidence of conversion is the presence of the Holy Spirit within, witnessing that you are a child of God ([Rom. 8:16](#)). Your body becomes the very temple of the Holy Spirit ([1 Cor. 6:19-20](#)). Even though the body is destined to die because of sin (unless, of course, the Lord returns), the Spirit gives life to that body today so that we may serve God. If we should die, the body will one day be raised from the dead, because the Holy Spirit has sealed each believer ([Eph. 1:13-14](#)).

What a difference it makes in your body when the Holy Spirit lives within. You experience new life, and even your physical faculties take on a new dimension of experience. When evangelist D.L. Moody described his conversion experience, he said: "I was in a new world. The next morning the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter... the old elms waved their branches for joy, and all nature was at peace." Life in Christ is abundant life.

Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament - The Bible Exposition Commentary – New Testament, Volume 1.

Checkpoints:

1. Changes in my life: _____

2. Reading God's Word every day?
3. Talking to God every day?
4. Trusting God with your everyday life?
5. Worshipping God as a way of life?
6. Being a good steward of my time. My talent and my treasure in a God honoring way?
 - Memorize Ephesians 2:8,9

Read your Bible every day. Start in Ephesians or in the Book of John and read something each day.

When you get in the practice of reading every day, you will be ready to read a scripturally based book that will help you establish more fully your identity in Christ.

Part of this class will involve reading Neil Anderson's book: "**Victory Over the Darkness**"

Meditation for the Week
Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

- ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins
- ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—
- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
- ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,
- ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
- ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
- ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
- ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Homework for your good and God's glory.

Telling Your Story

Make a list of a few things that God has done for you, or of things you know God answered for you in prayer: a restored relationship, a need met, something that God did that made you smile and then you knew God was working in your life.

Now pick one of those things from your list above and write a short, quick story about it here:

Put a finish on the story that communicates the idea that because of God doing these things in your life, you have the confidence that putting your faith and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation is the greatest thing that ever happened to you. Write that in your own words

here: _____

Week 5

Some Things We Need to Know About Being Lost

Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

- ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins
- ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—
- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
- ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,
- ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
- ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
- ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
- ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Sin's Work against Us (Eph. 2:1-3)

Things we need to know about ourselves **before** Christ:

1. We are **dead**. (vs.1)
 - We have no **spiritual** life.
 - We do not **understand** spiritual things.
 - We are unable to **please** God.
 - The cause of the spiritual death is **sin**. (vs.1)
 - Death requires **resurrection** not **resuscitation**.
 - Unless you are born-again you are **spiritually** dead.

2. We are **disobedient**. (vs. 2-3a)

- There are three forces that encourage man in his disobedience:
- The **World**.
 - The world wants you to **conform**.

Romans 6:23 (ESV)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 59:2 (ESV)

² but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

1 Timothy 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

Romans 12:2 (ESV)

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- The **devil**.
 - He is scheming against the body of Christ.

- The **flesh**. (The sin nature)

Psalm 58:3 (ESV)

³The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.

Ephesians 6:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Summary thought: The unsaved person is controlled by the world, unable to overcome the devil and cannot change his own nature.

3. We are **natural born sinners**. (vs. 3b)

- This does not mean we cannot do “good” things; we just cannot do God pleasing things.

Luke 6:33 (ESV)

³³And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

Luke 11:13 (ESV)

¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

4. We are **condemned**. (vs. 3c)

John 3:18 (ESV)

¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

2 Peter 3:8-10 (ESV)

⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

God's Work for Us (Eph. 2:4-9)

"Salvation is of the Lord" ([Jonah 2:9](#)).

Four actions God performed on our behalf:

1. God **loved** us (v.4)

1John 4:8

2. God made us **alive**. (v.5)

3 Physical resurrections that model the spiritual resurrection:

- Luke 7:11-17 Raised the widow's son
- Luke 8:49-56 Raised Jairus' daughter
- John 11:41-46 Raised Lazarus
- **John 5:24 (ESV)**
²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

3. God **elevated** us. (v.6) (*changed our position*)

"We are not raised from the dead and left in the graveyard. Because we are united to Christ, we have been exalted with Him and we are sharing His throne in the heavenlies. Our physical position may be on earth, but our spiritual position is "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Like Lazarus, we have been called from the grave to sit with Christ and enjoy His fellowship"). Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament - The Bible Exposition Commentary – New Testament, Volume 2.

John 12:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

4. God **SEATED** us eternally. (vv. 7-9)

Ephesians 1:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise

Dr. Wiersbee : "He keeps us ([vv. 7-9](#)). God's purpose in our redemption is not simply to rescue us from hell, as great a work as that is. His ultimate purpose in our salvation is that for all eternity the church might glorify God's grace ([Eph. 1:6, 12, 14](#)). So, if God has an eternal purpose for us to fulfill, He will keep us for all eternity. Since we have not been saved by our good works, we cannot be lost by our bad works. Grace means salvation completely apart from any merit or works on our part. Grace means that God does it all for Jesus' sake! Our salvation is the gift of God. (The word *that* in [Eph. 2:8](#), in the Greek, is neuter; while *faith* is feminine. Therefore *that* cannot refer to *faith*. It refers to the whole experience of salvation, including faith.) Salvation is a gift, not a reward."

Week 6

Growth & Maturity

RELATIONSHIP
Colossians 2:6-10

People Grow Better Together

Colossians 2:6-10 (ESV)

⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,
⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,
¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

Adapted from: "Victory Over the Darkness" by Dr. Neil Anderson

Chapter 13 People Grow Better Together

Exploring Level 1 ROOTED IN CHRIST

Level 1: Verse 10

As a believer in Christ you are rooted in Him; you are made complete.

There are people who come into discipleship seeking content more than community.

Discipleship is building the life of Christ into one another.

Discipleship is about practicing the presence of Christ.

Level 1 Spiritual Conflict: The lack of salvation or the lack of assurance of salvation.

Level 1 Rational Conflict: Prideful people are self-sufficient.

Brokenness over sin in our lives makes us ready for discipleship.

Level 1 Emotional conflicts: fear, guilt and shame.

Romans 8:1 (ESV)

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Level 1 Volitional Conflict is rebellion.

Spiritual growth involves submission to God and to others.

Level 1 Relational Conflict is to overcome rejection.

Preparing you for homework:

Spiritual Gifts

Where is your place in the church, according to how God wired you?

Dr. Ken Hemphill defines a spiritual gift as "an individual manifestation of grace from the Father that enables you to serve Him and thus play a vital role in His plan for the redemption of the world." Peter Wagner defines a spiritual gift as "a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God's grace for use within the context of the Body."

I like to use this definition: "A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church."

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11 contain representative lists of gifts and roles God has given to the church. A definition of these gifts follows.

Leadership

Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (12:8).

Administration

Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor.).

Teaching

Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God's Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).

Knowledge

The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God's Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor.).

Wisdom

Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor.).

Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor.; Rom. 12:6).

Discernment

Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor.).

Exhortation

Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (12:8).

Shepherding

The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph.).

Faith

Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

Evangelism

God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph.).

Apostleship

The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. Eph.).

Service/Helps

Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. ; Rom. 12:7).

Mercy

Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (12:8).

Giving

Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (12:8).

Hospitality

Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).

God has gifted you with an expression of His Holy Spirit to support His vision and mission of the church. It is a worldwide vision to reach all people with the gospel of Christ. As a servant leader, God desires that you know how He has gifted you. This will lead you to where He would have you serve as part of His vision and mission for the church.

You have the opportunity to take home a spiritual gifts survey, a tool to help you narrow down the areas of your giftedness. Please take home this important tool, use it, graph your findings as provided and bring back next week for discussion.

Memory Verse for this week:

1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Have you shared your story with anyone since we began this class?

Why not? _____

Week 7
Growth & Maturity
Built Up in Christ
Colossians 2:7

⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

- To be built up in Christ is to be able to **discern** the difference between walking in the **Spirit** and walking in the **flesh**.
- The mark of **immaturity** is the tendency to walk more in the flesh.
- **Most Noteworthy:** Outside factors do not determine how we walk, God and our response to Him, are the only 2 factors that determine our walk.

Colossians 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

Colossians 2:18-19 (ESV)

¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,

¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

- When we fall into believing the lies of the enemy our spiritual growth will be affected.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

- People who cannot assume **responsibility** for their thoughts cannot be disciplined, it requires **mental discipline**.
- **Emotions** are a product of our thoughts. If our thoughts and beliefs are wrong we will have **negative** emotions.
- The greatest determinants of mental and emotional health are:
 1. True **knowledge** of God
 2. **Acceptance** of His ways

- 3. **Assurance** of His forgiveness

Christians must choose **self-control** over fleshly **impulses**.

The flesh does not want to forgive

- Satan uses **un-forgiveness** more than any other human **deficiency** to stop the growth of ministries and individuals.
- **Forgiveness** is the key to freedom in Christ.

Christian's goal in discipleship: **Sanctification**

1. Help people learn to walk by **faith** in the power of the **Holy Spirit**.
 2. Guide people to **discipline** their minds to believe the **truth**.
 3. Help people stop living only by **emotions** and to live **focused** on Christ and not their circumstances.
 4. Encourage people to develop **self-control**.
 5. Challenge people to **resolve conflicts** by forgiving others and seeking forgiveness.
-

Meditation and MEMORY verses for this week:

Psalm 1:1-6 (ESV)

¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

² but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does
not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the
righteous;

⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Growth & Maturity
Week 8

Colossians 2:6 (ESV)

⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

Spiritually mature people are those who can **discern** good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Discernment is not just a function of the mind; discernment is also a function of the **Holy Spirit**.

Spiritual discernment is the first line of defense in **spiritual warfare**.

Hosea 4:6 (ESV)

⁶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Rationally: People are lacking knowledge and **suffering** in life as a result.

Philippians 4:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

Emotionally: The mature believer learns to be **content** in all circumstances.

"This life is full of discouragements, and many of the believer's desires will go unmet. None of the believer's goals will go unfulfilled as long as it is a godly goal."- Neil Anderson

A Spirit filled person is someone who has no **unresolved conflicts** of which he or she is aware.

Romans 12:10

John 13:35

Review the first two goals of discipleship:

1. Help those you disciple to be firmly rooted in Christ.
2. Accept God's goal of sanctification and grow in the likeness of Christ

Now the 3rd goal of discipleship

3. To help believers function as believers in their homes, at their jobs and in society.

- The Christian walk is using your **talent, intellect** and your **spiritual gifts** to the glory of God in all things and most importantly in the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

What's the problem?

Most Christians are:

1. Locked into the **past**.
2. Immobilized by **fear**.
3. isolated by **rejection**

What is the next step for Christians who are not progressing in sanctification?

Answer: **Repent** and **Submit** to discipleship

Meditation this week:

Psalm 51:1-19 (ESV)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. ¹⁴ Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing

aloud of your righteousness. ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. ¹⁸ Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; ¹⁹ then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Memory verse:

Psalm 51:8-10

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Next Week: Understanding Church Membership and how to be a God honoring church member
