

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 1

What It Means To Be a Christian

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Every person has some big events in life. The most important for anyone is becoming a Christian since it affects both you and others for eternity. Here's what it means:

I. IT MEANS YOU ARE SAVED.

1. God has forgiven every sin of your past life. This idea is expressed by these scriptures. Ezekiel 18:21,22; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Romans 6: 17,18.

Since God has forgiven your past sins, he will now treat you as if you had never sinned. Hebrews 10:16,17. He is your Father. Romans 8:16,17; 2 Corinthians 6:17,18.

This new relationship to God brings many blessings. You have God's companionship in loneliness. Hebrews 13:6; 2 Timothy 4:16,17. You may obtain forgiveness of sins through prayer. 1 John 1:9. Continuing this relation depends on you. James 4:8.

Since God has forgiven our sins through Christ, we shall always be indebted to Him for this great favor. It is so easy to forget kindnesses others have done for us. Christians sometimes forget: Revelation 2:4. God's people in the Old Testament often forgot His goodness: Jeremiah 2:32. This is usually the first step toward becoming a backslider.

II. IT MEANS YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN.

Christians belong to God, having been purchased by the merits of Christ's sacrifice. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15; 1 Peter 1: 18,19. We cannot "do as we please."

This means that you never stop serving God. Whether at work at home, at play—we are God's. His will comes FIRST, everything else second. Christ is our example when he prayed in Matthew 26:39.

Religion, then, is not a matter of occasional church services, but it involves doing God's will in everything, every day. Matthew 6:33; Romans 6: 12,13,19. When you are diligent at your business, you are serving God; Romans 12:11. A woman working faithfully at home is serving God: 1 Timothy 5:14. We are serving God in every honest and honorable activity.

III. IT MEANS YOU HAVE ENTERED A NEW LIFE.

There is nothing which expresses the idea of the new life so well as Romans 6:4 where it is compared to a person dying and coming to life again.

This change is bigger and harder for some than for others. It depends mainly on the kind of past life you have been living. For a man like Cornelius, it was not hard. See Acts 10: 1-6. For some of the Corinthian Christians, it was hard. See 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11.

God makes this new life possible by forgiving all past sins, as we have seen. It is not likely that you will do perfectly in stopping your *past* sins. Not only will you find it hard to break old habits, but persecution may add to the difficulty. Persecution is sometimes physical. Sometimes, however, ridicule hurts people more. It hurts to be left out of the old crowd. See 1 Peter 4: 3,4; Luke 6: 22,23; Matthew 10: 22.

So great is this change that Jesus spoke of it as being "born again." John 3: 3. Of course God provides help for His new children in this new life. This help is described in: 1 Corinthians 10: 13; Philippians 4: 13. In a later lesson, we will study in detail some of the helps God has provided.

IV. IT MEANS YOU HAVE ENTERED A HAPPY LIFE.

In Bible times, becoming a Christian was a time of great joy. Acts 2: 41; Acts 8: 39. This happiness comes first from knowing that you are at peace with God.

The fact that we are children of a KING, and have a great inheritance waiting for us causes joy. John 14: 1-4. Romans 8:17 states that we are joint-heirs of all the glory of Christ himself. Anyone who looks forward to a place such as described in Revelation 21 certainly can be happy.

Our happiness also comes from the pleasure of Christian associations, from doing good to others, from teaching God's word, and many other privileges. It is no wonder we are told to "rejoice in the Lord always." Philippians 4:4

TEST ON LESSON 1

1. Write the expression in each verse below that means the same thing as "having sins forgiven."

Acts 2: 38 _____

Acts 22: 16 _____

Romans 6: 18 _____

2. Complete "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye _____, saith the Lord, and

_____ the unclean thing: and I _____,

And will be a _____ unto you, and ye shall

be my _____ saith the Lord Almighty.

3. Quote a verse which shows that keeping close to God depends on us:

4. Christians belong to _____, having been bought, not by money but by _____

5. Complete: "Seek ye _____

6. Jesus illustrated the new life by saying a person must be _____

_____ and Romans 6 compares it to _____

7. Mention the kinds of persecution the Bible says may happen to faithful Christians.
8. Give two reasons why the Christian life is a happy life.

a. _____

b. _____

9. Complete 1 Corinthians 10:13: "There hath no temptation

taken you but such as is _____:
but God is faithful, who will not suffer you

but will with the temptation also make _____

_____, that ye may be able to bear it.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Do you trust God's promise to forgive your sins when you obeyed the gospel? _____
2. Do you now feel really obligated to serve God because of this blessing? _____
3. Is it your idea of the Christian life to "live as you please"? _____
4. Did becoming a Christian require a big change in your life? _____
5. Have you found this change difficult? _____
6. Do you feel that your life as a Christian is now pleasing to God? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 2

Worship....Public and Private

LESSONS FOR

NEW CHRISTIANS

New relationships have new duties. Any new father can tell you this is true! For the Christian, worship is one of these important new duties.

I. PUBLIC WORSHIP

The Bible gives examples (Acts 20:7) and commands (Hebrews 10:25) concerning this duty. However, proper worship is not something people can be driven to do, but must arise from a sincere desire to praise and thank God. Read Psalm 100.

You may ask: "How often must I worship?" The early Christians always met on the first day of the week for worship. Sometimes other meetings were held, just as is true today. Christians who are truly appreciative, who are anxious to please God (Matthew 5:6), who enjoy communion with Christ (Matthew 18:20) will want to attend every meeting. It is the lukewarm (Revelation 3:15,16) who will worship seldom and irregularly. We need not fear doing too much. (See Luke 17:10).

You will find that the worship helps you live a better Christian life, that it will set a good example for other Christians, for those not Christians. It is certainly what Jesus would do. Luke 4:16.

ACTS OF WORSHIP: Worship requires activity. We shall now study the acts of worship commanded by God.

1. **PRAYER.** Read these examples of public prayer: Acts 2: 42; 4: 23,24; 12: 12. 1 Corinthians 14: 15 shows that two things are necessary in prayer: (a) that you *understand* what is said, (b) that you are *sincere* in what is said. Usually in public prayers, one person will lead, while others join in silently. Anytime we address God, we should show our reverence.

2. **SINGING.** Commands to sing are found in Col. 3:16, Ephesians 5: 19, Hebrews 13: 15. God is not much interested in the voice or tune, but rather in the attitude of the heart. He wants *understanding* and *sincerity*. Instrumental music is unacceptable to God in worship and you should not try to worship when it is used. We worship by God's command and should not do anything for which there is no authority. There is authority only for singing, none for instruments.

3. **TEACHING.** Acts 20:7 shows that teaching was a part of public worship in the early church. Just as babies desire food, Christians desire to learn. 1 Peter 2:2. As you grow, you may look forward to teaching others. 2 Timothy 2: 24; Hebrews 5: 12.

LORD'S SUPPER. This part of the worship is a memorial of Christ. It is called by various other names: Acts 20: 7 and 1 Corinthians 10: 16. Read Paul's account of it in 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29. It should be taken in seriousness. It is to remind us of Christ's sacrifice and of His promised return. Eating it symbolizes our dependence on Christ for spiritual life. Those who do not love or appreciate Christ will neglect this or will fail to observe it properly. It is an especially good time to examine our lives by Christ's standards.

CONTRIBUTION. The heart of Christianity is to be found in giving. God has given abundantly to us; we are to give to Him. Christians are to give some of their income each week to God's work. Read 1 Corinthians 16: 1,2. The Bible does not tell exactly how much. Read 2 Corinthians 8: 12; 9:6,7. In the Old Testament, Jews gave at least 10% of their income to God. Probably God expects this much or more today since we have much greater blessings than did they. It is important to **PLAN** your contribution so it will not be wasted or spent on other things. God's part comes *first*. Matthew 6:33.

II. PRIVATE WORSHIP.

Our worship is certainly not limited to public services. We should pray daily in private. See Matthew 6:6. Giving thanks for food at meals is a part of private worship. See 1 Timothy 4: 4,5. It is a fine thing for families to take a few minutes of each day for prayer, reading the scriptures and perhaps singing. Family worship brings a blessing to any home. If unable to meet with a congregation on the Lord's Day, we may carry out the complete worship privately. Private worship cannot replace public worship, however. Hebrews 10:25.

Worship is such an important part of Christian living, that neglect of it is often the first sign of backsliding. The more faithful you are at worship, the more you will enjoy it.

TEST ON LESSON 2

1. Complete: "Forsake not the _____
_____ as the manner of some is."

2. How would you answer the question: "How often must Christians attend church services?"

3. What two things are necessary for acceptable prayer and singing as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:15?

4. A song leader said once: "I asked those with poor voices and with little music knowledge not to sing. In that way, our worship will be more beautiful." Is this right or wrong? Why?

5. Give two other Bible names for the Lord's Supper and the place where found.

Name	Passage
Lord's Supper	1 Corinthians 11:20

6. The two substances used in the Lord's Supper are _____

and _____; they represent _____

and _____.

7. What should Christians be thinking of while engaged in the Lord's Supper?

8. Complete: "Upon the first _____ let every one of you _____, as God hath _____."
9. The Jews, in a practice called tithing, gave _____% of their income to God.
10. In 1 Chronicles 29: 10-16 David thanks God for the liberal offering of the people. Complete vs. 14: "But who am I, and what is my _____ that we should be able to _____ so willingly after this _____? for all things _____, and of _____ have we _____."
11. What two men do we find engaged in private worship in Acts 16:25? _____
12. 1 Timothy 4:4,5 teaches that we ought to give thanks for _____

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Do you attend every worship service where you are? _____
2. Do you give at least 10% of your income to God? _____
3. Do you feel you are putting your duty to God before everything else? _____
5. Do you truly want to do ALL your duty to God _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 3
Bible Study

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Most new Christians find difficulty getting started with Bible Study. This is an important duty, and one which the Bible emphasizes. Read 1 Peter 2: 2; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11.

I. WHY IS BIBLE STUDY IMPORTANT?

1. *Ignorance causes sin.* Since we must depend on God to tell us what is right and what is wrong, we could easily commit many sins if ignorant of the Bible. Read: Psalm 119:11; 1 Tim.1:12,13.

2. *If ignorant, we cannot teach.* Christians must teach others: Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 5:12; 1 Peter 3:15.

3. *Ignorance encourages error,* just as dirt encourages disease. False teachers make great progress where the people have not studied. Ephesians 4:14,15.

4. *Ignorance robs the church of leaders.* Christian men and boys may look forward to becoming elders or deacons. Women may teach younger women. (Titus 2:3,4). To do these things requires study. Without proper leadership, the church cannot fulfil its mission.

II. WHY BIBLE STUDY IS NEGLECTED.

1. Some just "take the preacher's word," and so do not study for themselves. Most preachers are good men, but they can be wrong. (An example is in Acts 18:24-26). Read 1 John 4:1,2; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

2. Some say they "can't get anything out of the Bible." This may be true because they have read it so little, or because they do not know how to go about studying it. Some have simply made no effort to understand it.

3. Some "don't have time." Those people who DO study, are busy, too, but they leave off less important things. Matthew 6:33 invites us to put the things of the kingdom FIRST.

III. SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY.

1. *Time.* Regularity is a key to success. You should set aside some regular time for study. Physical condition affects your study, so late

night is a bad time. Family study is good, but each person needs to have a regular time in which he can come face to face with God's message--alone.

2. VARIOUS HELPS.

TRANSLATIONS: Since the Old Testament was first written in Hebrew, and the New in Greek, a translation is necessary for most of us. Translations are called "versions." Some well-known English versions are: (1) King James Version, made England in 1611; (2) Revised Standard, made in the U.S. in 1952; (3) New International, made in the US in 1973. These have differences in wording, but very little in meaning. Translations are not inspired by God, but are remarkably free from error due to great care by translators.

DICTIONARIES: Not knowing the meaning of words is a common cause of not understanding the Bible. An ordinary English dictionary should be regularly used. Special Bible dictionaries are also very useful. Your instructor on these lessons can help you obtain such books if you need them.

CONCORDANCE: This useful work contains various words and subjects in alphabetical order along with a list of places in the Bible where they may be found. A large concordance may list every word in the Bible along with every verse where it may be found. This is a great time-saver in finding verses on a given subject.

V. METHODS OF STUDY.

(Bible study is most profitable when it is systematic. Three methods are outlined here.)

1. *The Planned-Lesson Method.* These lessons are an example. Someone prepares a lesson on some subject, then it is studied in a class or at home. Such lessons are common in various church classes. Many times, such lessons encourage private study at home, but no Christian's study should be limited to this method!

2. *The Subject Method.* This involves selecting some subject (say Baptism, for example), then collecting and studying each passage in the Bible on the subject. The passages are found with a concordance or a "center reference" Bible. It is usually well to list all the passages on paper so you can then carefully study each one separately. Finally, you can reach a conclusion as to what is the Bible teaching on this subject by using the information gotten from each of the various passages.

3. *The Book Method.* This consists of an intensive study of single books of the Bible. It is an especially fine way to study the letters of the New Testament. After the book for study is selected,

you first collect information concerning its author, and the ones to whom written. You should next read the book through rather rapidly at least twice in order to get a general idea of its subject-matter and also to enable you to form a rough outline of the book. You may then read more slowly and carefully each section of the book according to your outline. Use the dictionary to be sure you understand every word. Many people make the mistake of studying a book by chapters rather than by topics. Memorize the especially good verses. Constantly compare what you learn with your own life.

Each method has its own advantages; all three methods should be used. Certain parts of the Bible lend themselves to one method better than others. It is usually best to study Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John together rather than separately since they discuss the life of Christ and often tell the same events. It is also best to study the Old Testament prophets in connection with the historical portion of the Old Testament in which they fit. Probably the book method is best for your regular, daily study. The other two methods should be used as needed.

TEST ON LESSON 3

1. Complete: "But grow _____

2. _____ is an example of one who sinned through ignorance as mentioned in 1 Timothy 1: 12,13.
3. Complete: "These were more _____ than those in Thessalonica in that they _____."
4. _____ was an eloquent preacher who needed to "learn the way of the Lord more perfectly."
5. The Old Testament was originally written in the _____ language and the New Testament in _____.
Translations of the Bible are also called _____
and my Bible is a _____ Version.
6. The method of study in which many scriptures from different parts of the Bible are collected and studied is the _____ method; and important help for this kind of study is a _____

7. The book of James is a good one to illustrate the Book Method. Read through this book rapidly. Below are listed the main topics of the book. In the space at the right, write the number of the chapter in which the topics at the left are discussed.
8. a. Having respect of persons. Chapter _____
- b. Control of the tongue. Chapter _____
- c. Temptation Chapter _____
- d. Condemnation of rich men. Chapter _____
- e. Faith and works. Chapter _____
- f. Hearing and doing. Chapter _____
- g. The shortness of life. Chapter _____
8. Why should the four gospels be studied together? _____
- _____
- _____

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. How long do you study the Bible daily? _____
2. Do you study the class lessons at home that you will have at church meetings? _____
3. If you are not doing so now, are you willing to spend 30 minutes daily in Bible study? _____
4. What is your biggest problem in study? _____
- _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 4
Good Works

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Important as worship and study are, they are not a complete list of Christian duties. Our duties also involve good works which benefit others.

I. CHRISTIANS ARE TO DO GOOD WORKS.

Do not misunderstand the purpose of good works; they are not to "buy" our way to heaven. One reason for them is that they will cause others to glorify and obey God. See Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 2:11,12.

Good works are the way in which we show that we have faith that is alive. Read James 2:14-16.

Good works are necessary if we wish to be like Jesus. He "went about doing good." Acts 10:38.

God saves people because He loves them, but He looks forward to the good works they will do in serving Him. Read carefully: Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14 and 3:8, 14.

II. WHAT GOOD WORKS ARE WE TO DO?

Good works may be divided into two kinds, as follows:

A. *Spiritual Good Works.* This applies mainly to the souls of people rather than the body. When Jesus taught people the will of God, He was doing spiritual good works.

We may teach others how to become Christians. We are to be "fishers of men." Matthew 4:19; 2 Timothy 2: 24,25. A Christian who does not teach others is selfish for refusing to share his blessings with others. Backward regions of the world have tried to improve themselves by requiring each person who could read and write to teach one other person. "Each one teach one." What a wonderful thing if each CHRISTIAN would convert one other person each year!

We encourage other Christians. We are truly "our brother's keeper." God does not want each Christian to have to "go it alone," but is anxious that we assist each other. Other Christians need continual encouragement. Read Hebrews 10:24. This is especially true of the leaders, who often become discouraged with their problems and troubles. In bereavement, Christian brethren can be helped by your words of encouragement. You probably know how much such things mean to you. Don't fail your brethren. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3,4.

A part of our duty toward the brethren is to help correct them in their sins. Read Galatians 6:1,2 and James 5:16. In case another person offends you, your duty is to go to that person and see if he will not make it right. Read carefully: Matthew 18:15-17. Just as you would seek to prevent a child from eating poison, so do Christians have great interest in helping others overcome sin so they may go to Heaven.

B. *Material Good Works.* Although the soul is more important than the body. Christians do not overlook doing good for people in a physical way. These are the material good works. We quickly think of Jesus' example in healing. Read Luke 7:22. The Apostles and early church continued to do this kind of good works.

In Jesus' teaching about the judgment, he revealed that we will be judged by these good works. He suggests some things we may do in Matthew 25:34-46. It is interesting to know that Jesus regards whatever we do to his disciples as done to himself!

Another familiar statement by Jesus is found in the story given in Luke 10:30-37. It pictures Jesus' anger with religious people who are "too good" to help the needy and unfortunate.

So important are these good works, that in James 1:27 they are said to be a part of "pure religion." It should be noted that the word "visit" in this verse is not just a "social visit," but includes taking help.

Women have an especially good opportunity to be "rich" in good works. Suggestions for them are found in 1 Timothy 5:10 and Titus 2:3,4.

The New Testament emphasizes in many places the great importance of helping the needy. Read Acts 20:35; Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 4:28; Hebrews 13:2. Since we cannot relieve ALL unfortunate people, our FIRST duty is toward Christians, and members of our own family. See Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 5:8, 16.

In Acts 6:1-5, seven men were appointed in the church especially to attend to these matters. These men were probably deacons. Of course we may do much of this work individually without the church being charged.

TEST ON LESSON 4

1. Complete: "Let your light so shine _____
that they may see _____
and glorify your _____."
2. List the six material good works named by Jesus in Matthew 25:
34-36:

3. In Acts 9: 36-39, a lady named _____ had made
_____ for the poor.
4. Complete: "Moreover if thy brother shall _____ against
thee, _____ his fault between
_____; if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother."
5. What do Jesus' words "fishers of men" mean?

6. Hebrews 13:2 says that someone in showing hospitality to
strangers "entertained angels unawares." Who was this?

7. What office in the church seems to have especial responsibility
to help the needy with church funds? _____
8. To whom does the expression "household of faith" refer in
Galatians 6:10? _____

9. Christians should allow other Christians to live their lives as they please. True _____ False _____

10. What does "zealous" mean in Titus 2:14?

11. What does "maintain" mean in Titus 3:14?

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade_____

1. Are you now trying to teach someone else to become a Christian? _____

2. Do you feel you are doing enough material good works? _____

3. Which of the material good works are you failing in most? _____

4. When some brother in Christ offends you, will you follow the procedure in Matthew 18:15-17? _____

5. Will you try to encourage your Christian brethren when you have opportunity? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 5
Daily Living

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Some people say they do not believe in "mixing religion and business." They would reserve a tight compartment of life for religion. This cannot be done with Christianity. Christianity involves every relationship, every activity of life--24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I. THE GENERAL AIM OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Christianity is a positive way of life. It does forbid some things, but the main force of Christianity is not to be found in these, but in constructive living.

The aim of Christian living is to imitate Jesus. See 1 Peter 2:21; Philippians 2:5 and 1 Corinthians 11:1. No doubt this is one reason why we have 4 books in the Bible telling of Jesus' life.

Another way of expressing this aim is found in Philippians 1:20. We are to "magnify Christ." To magnify something is to bring it closer and make it appear larger. People can see Jesus better by seeing His likeness in your life. Are you magnifying or hiding Jesus from your associates?

Christians, then, are like mirrors reflecting the likeness of Christ to the world. We are also like lights shining into a dark world. Our light is our resemblance to Christ--a Christ-like character. Read Matthew 5:14 and Philippians 2:15.

II. CHRISTIAN LIVING IN VARIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

When a person becomes a Christian, everything changes. See 2 Corinthians 5:17. To help us imitate Christ, the Bible tells us of our duties to God in the important relationships of life. Let us study some of them.

1. *Parents.* Christianity affects this relationship. To young Christians living at home with parents, these commands are given: Ephesians 6:1-3 and Colossians 3:20. Jesus himself set the example as told in Luke 2:51. When children "leave home," they are still to "honor" their parents. This means showing respect for them and caring for them when they need it. Read carefully 1 Timothy 5:4,8, 16.

2. *Government.* While the Bible does not make any requirement concerning the kind of government a nation must have, it does teach about the Christian's duty under his own government.

We must pay taxes. Matthew 22: 17-22; Romans 13: 6,7
We must show respect to the rulers. 1 Peter 2:17
We must pray for the rulers. 1 Timothy 2:1-3
We must obey the laws. Romans 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13-15

Christians obey the laws regardless of the danger of being "caught." We may disobey the laws only when it would cause us to disobey God as shown in Acts. 4: 18-20 and Acts 5: 29.

3. *At Work.* We are commanded to work if physically able. See 2 Thess. 3:10-12 and 1 Thess. 4: 11,12. The Bible gives instructions to both employers and employees in these places: Ephesians 6: 5-9; Colossians 3:22-24; Colossians 4: 1; 1 Peter 2:18.

4. *Marriage and Home.* According to Matthew 6:33 we are to put the Kingdom of God first. In planning marriage, Christians should seek a companion who will be a help in living the Christian life. One's companion has much influence and a disinterested person may cause the Christian to become unfaithful.

Christians need to understand that marriage is a permanent affair, even though civil laws may allow easy divorce. Divorce and remarriage are sinful except for the reason given by Jesus in Matthew 19:9.

Some duties of a Christian wife are found in 1 Peter 3: 1-6; Colossians 3:18; Ephesians 5:22; Titus 2: 4,5.

5. *Children.* Duties of Christian parents are given in Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs 22:6, Colossians 3:21 and 2 Timothy 3: 14,15. The most important of these is that of teaching them God's will. This must include a proper example. Failure to fulfil these duties will disqualify a father for service as an elder or deacon (See 1 Timothy 3: 4,5,12). The example of Samuel in the Old Testament shows the loss of influence through failure to properly train children. 1 Samuel 8:1-5.

6. *The World.* Christians are to be different from others. See Romans 12:1,2; 1 Peter 2:11,12. This difference is in manner of life, in high moral standards. Christians must learn to resist the appeal of something that "everybody's doing." The sin of "worldliness" is the condition when Christians live no different from those who are not Christians.

7. *Enemies.* Even Jesus was mistreated and had enemies. You probably will, also. How shall we treat those who harm us? Romans 12:18-21 gives the answer. Jesus' own example is found in 1 Peter 2:23. It is hard to do, but is a part of daily Christian living. See Matthew 5:43-48

8. *Conversation.* Even our speech comes under the law of Christ. We must "bridle" or control the tongue. See James 1:26. This includes avoiding swearing or cursing (Matthew 5:33-37), avoiding filthy, foolish talk (Ephesians 4:29 and 5:4), avoiding speaking evil of others (James 4:11). Gossip is forbidden as well as lying. Study Colossians 4:6 and 1 Timothy 4:12 in this connection.

9. *Care of the Body.* Although not of the *highest* importance, care of the body is important. 1 Timothy 4:8. The reason lies in the fact that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). The body should not do what we would not want done to Christ, for His Spirit dwells in us. Study 1 Corinthians 6:13-15.

TEST ON LESSON 5

1. Complete: "For even hereunto were ye _____:
because _____ also suffered for us, leaving
us an _____, that ye should _____
_____." Reference: _____
2. What does it mean to "honor" one's parents?

3. The word _____ is used in the Bible to mean
the same as taxes.
4. What passage commands us to pray for rulers? _____
5. Where are we commanded to obey civil laws? _____
6. Colossians 3:22-24 has instructions to Christian workmen.
What does the expression "not with eyeservice" mean?

What does "do it heartily" mean?

7. How are Christians to treat their enemies?

8. According to James 1:26, failure to control the _____

shows that the person's religion is _____

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Do you truly desire to imitate Jesus? _____

2. Do you believe your duty to God comes before
duty to government if they should conflict? _____

3. Will you try to ask yourself "What would Jesus do?"
more often when you make decisions? _____

4. Do you believe your religion should be kept
separate from your daily life? _____

5. Are you really trying to return good for evil? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 6

The Divine Nature

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Our last lesson stated the aim of Christian living as imitating Christ. In this lesson we are going to study the qualities of character and of disposition that help us to do this. The whole lesson is based on 2 Peter 1: 2-11.

I. GOD'S COMPLETE PROVISION FOR CHRISTIANS:

Verse 3

God has provided all we need to make a success of the Christian life: "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

What are the things He has given to help us? We have the Scriptures which teach us our duties. (See 2 Timothy 3: 16,17). Fellow-Christians are a help (Galatians 6:1,2). The worship, with its songs, prayers, communion and teaching is a help. See Colossians 3:16. The privilege of private prayer is always a source of help. Romans 8:26.

II. OUR AIM: THE DIVINE NATURE. Verse 4.

In order to encourage us, God gives great promises to us. Some of the promises are found in these verses: John 14:1-4; Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 6: 17,18.

These promises are to encourage us to become "partakers of the divine nature." This simply means that we are to become like God or Christ. The word "nature" refers to the character, what a person is really like. The word "divine" shows it is God that we wish to be like.

As we become "partakers of the divine nature," our own nature changes. Perhaps you have heard the old saying: "Human nature never changes." That is probably true, except for the person who becomes a Christian. Gradually his human nature changes. See Romans 12:1,2. It is human nature to mistreat those who mistreat us. It is the divine nature to return good for evil. It is human nature to be selfish; it is the divine nature to give generously to others without expecting anything in return. These things that seem hard to do become much easier the more we are changed into the divine nature.

III. STEPS TOWARD THE DIVINE NATURE. Verses 5-7

Becoming like Christ does not happen automatically and without effort. We must "give all diligence." This means making every possible effort. The starting point is the FAITH we have when we become Christians. The other things are to be "added to your faith."

VIRTUE. This word means "firmness, courage, manliness." The idea is that a person must not only have faith, but must have COURAGE to stand up for what he believes. We see an example of a LACK of courage in Peter. Read Matthew 26:69-75. See also Mark 8:38; 2 Timothy 1:8; 1 Peter 4:16.

SELF-CONTROL. Sometimes the word "temperance" is used. This expression means the ability to make oneself do what is right. This may involve two things; (1) *Refusing* to do certain things that are wrong, such as stealing, fornicating, cursing (2) Doing other things *moderately* and not too much. Some things that are right, may become sinful if done in excess. It is right to rest, but if done too much it is the sin of laziness. It is right to eat, but it is the sin of gluttony if done too much.

KNOWLEDGE. The knowledge we have when we become Christians is vital, but we must have much more in order to become like Christ. We must continue to learn. Most churches have several Bible classes each week and each Christian ought to take advantage of them. Paul is a wonderful example; even in his old age and in prison, he was anxious to learn. Read 2 Timothy 4:13.

PATIENCE. The idea of this word is continuing faithful to God under difficulties. Job is an example mentioned in James 5:11. Read about him in Job 1:1-22 and 2:1-10. Probably many of us would have given up in discouragement if we had been in Job's place. Too many of us today serve God faithfully only when it is easy and convenient.

GODLINESS. This seems to mean reverence and respect for God. Those who curse and take God's name in vain are lacking in respect for God. Those who talk or do not give attention at the worship are lacking respect.

BROTHERLY KINDNESS. This simply means an interest in fellow Christians and helping them. See: 1 Corinthians 12:26; Ephesians 4:31,32. Love for each other was very great in Bible times. See Acts 4:34,35. Many church troubles arise because Christians do not know and love each other.

CHARITY. This means the same as the previous term, only it includes ALL people. Galatians 6:10 expresses the idea. To love people means that you do whatever is in their best interest in all your dealings with them.

IV. THE RESULT OF THIS DEVELOPMENT. Verses 8-11.

All of us want to be SURE of heaven. This will happen if we carefully develop these qualities.

Developing these qualities will prevent sinning. "If we do these things, you shall never fall." Thus although it is *possible* for a Christian to fall, it is not *necessary* that he do so.

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly" into the everlasting kingdom." These words picture our entrance into heaven, comparing it to the return of a great soldier from a distant country. A parade may be given in his honor. It is a joyful welcome with thousands coming to greet him. This is an "abundant entrance" and is what our entrance in heaven will be like. Surely this will be well worth every effort we can make. This is the result of becoming "partakers of the divine nature." Revelation 21:1-6; 22:1-5.

TEST ON LESSON 6

1. Name two helps God gives us in living right.

2. Mention two of the "exceeding great and precious promises."

3. Complete: "And be not _____ to this world; but be ye _____ by the renewing of your _____, that ye may prove what is the _____ and _____ and _____ will of God."

4. The qualities listed in this lesson are sometimes called the "Christian virtues." List them below.

5. Which one of these is lacking when a person talks or fails to give attention at the worship? _____
6. Which one is illustrated by Job? _____
7. Which one means courage? _____
8. What is the final result when a person develops all these qualities? _____

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Are you ever ashamed of being a Christian? _____
2. Which of the virtues do you think you have developed best? _____
3. In which are you most lacking? _____
4. Do you feel you are gaining knowledge as a Christian? _____
5. Do you ever become discouraged in your efforts to live the Christian life? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 7

The Church and You

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

I. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The church is composed of people who have been saved. God controls church membership and adds only the saved to it. See Acts 2:47; Ephesians 5:23. It is sometimes called God's family. 1 Timothy 3:15.

The word "church" refers to the saved in two senses: (1) the saved all over the world; (2) The saved in one particular locality. Examples of the first meaning are: Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18. Examples of the second meaning are: 1 Corinthians 1:2; Revelations 1:11. You can see from this that the church is not a denomination nor a combination of denominations.

The universal church never meets; it has no officers save Jesus, its Head. Most Christians, however, can be associated with a local congregation, and the responsibilities therein can be clearly set forth.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH.

1. *You should be identified with a local church.* When Paul returned to Jerusalem from Damascus after his conversion, he identified himself with the church there. See Acts 9:26-28. Generally, Christians should be identified with the *nearest* faithful church. In this way, your influence in the community around you can be better used. Furthermore, it is difficult for elders of a church to oversee those who live outside the general community served by the church. When you move to another community, you do not leave your "membership" behind you. Christians are responsible to God wherever they are. Our membership goes wherever our responsibility goes. You should identify yourself and work with the church wherever you may be.

2. *You should cooperate with the leaders.* In a fully developed church, there will be elders to oversee the work. In the Bible, the terms elder, pastor, bishop overseer refer to the same office. The most frequently used word is elder. These terms are used interchangeably in such places as: Acts 20: 17,28; Titus 1:5-7; Ephesians 4:11.

You should know who the elders are. 1 Thessalonians 5:12. You should show them respect. 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 1 Timothy 5:17.

You should obey when they lead scripturally. Hebrews 13:17.
You should not carelessly accuse them nor speak evil of them.
1 Timothy 6: 1,9.

In most churches there will be other special workers appointed by the elders and working under them. Deacons will work especially with the charity work of the church. (1 Timothy 3:13). There may be evangelists who give their time to preaching. (2 Timothy 4:5). There will be various other teachers (Ephesians 4:11; Acts 13:1). You can find opportunities to cooperate with all these.

The elders should be your spiritual advisors. They are mature, experienced Christians and are charged with "watching for your soul." You may feel free to consult with them at any time.

3. You should contribute regularly to the work of the church.

We have studied this subject in another lesson. What others give is not the standard for your giving. Often the biggest part of the work is carried on by the sacrifices of a very few. None of us shall receive any blessings for work in which we had no part. See 2 Corinthians 8:13,14.

4. You should do your part of the work of the church. We cannot PAY to have our part of the church's work done. We receive no credit for work that others are doing. This point is clearly made in Matthew 25:14-30. In this parable of the talents, each was judged by what he had personally done. It was not a group report.

5. You should help keep the church united. Church unity is not accidental. Here are some things you can do.

Be a peacemaker when brethren have disagreements. (Matthew 5:9). Avoid prying into affairs of others. (1 Thessalonians 4:11. 2 Thessalonians 3:11,12). Avoid gossip. (1 Timothy 5:13). Avoid discussion of foolish questions. (2 Timothy 2:23; 1 Timothy 6:3,4). This involves leaving alone questions which are not clearly revealed and are unimportant. Avoid partiality. (1 Timothy 5:21). This means that you should become acquainted with all members of the church. Treat all as nearly alike as possible.

6 You should live the kind of life that will represent the church. Study 1 Timothy 4:12 and Titus 2:7,8. Enemies of the church delight in finding some Christian who is not living right and in using him as an excuse to attack the church. Teachers of the gospel ought not to be put in the embarrassing position of having to apologize for the lives of professed Christians. None of us is perfect, but each should strive to be an example of what Christians ought to be. David's sin caused embarrassment to Israel. See 2 Samuel 12: 13,14. You have no right to engage in conduct which you are unwilling for all other Christians to do.

7. *You should help keep the church pleasing to God in all things.* Check all that is taught by the Bible and insist that only scriptural teaching be done. (See 2 John 9-11). Encourage other members to do more work and be faithful. (Hebrews 10:24). When you know of a good work that ought to be done, call it to the attention of the elders or other members. You should also insist that the church be kept pure from wicked and sinful people. God tells us what to do with them and he is displeased when nothing is done. 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14; 1 Corinthians 5:1-11. As you have opportunity, admonish those who are unfaithful.

TEST ON LESSON 7

1. What two meanings does the word "church" have?

2. What did Paul try to do when he came to Jerusalem after he became a Christian? _____

3. _____ is the most often used word to describe the men who are in charge of the work in a local congregation.

Some other terms for the same men are: _____

4. Mention two important duties we have toward these men:

5. Complete: "He that soweth _____ shall _____

also sparingly and he which soweth _____ shall reap also bountifully. This passage is discussing what Christian duty?

6. Mention two of the ways to keep unity in the church which seem especially important to you.

7. Complete: "Be thou an example of _____

in _____, in _____,

in _____ in, _____, in

_____, in _____."

8. 2 John 10 states that Christians are not to receive false

teachers into _____; according to 2

Thessalonians 3:6 we are to _____ from those who walk disorderly.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Does the church where you are a member

have elders? _____ Do you know them? _____

2. Are you giving liberally to the church? _____

3. Are you doing your part of the work? _____

4. Is your life a pretty good example of what Christians should be? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 8
Overcoming Sin

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

In order to reach heaven we must not only have PAST sins forgiven, but we must keep free from sin. Read Rev. 2:10. Satan will do all he can to cause us to sin. See 1 Peter 5:8. However we have God's help. God controls Satan's power as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:13. God's help is for those who resist to the limit of their ability. This lesson is concerned with helping you to overcome sin.

I. HOW SIN DEVELOPS.

In finding a cure for a disease, doctors need to learn how the disease develops: how it enters the body, what part it affects and how. When these things are learned, a plan of attack can be developed.

James 1:12-15 outlines the way sin develops in people. We shall first study this development, then see how that helps us overcome sin. Read this passage carefully.

FIRST STAGE: TEMPTATION. (vs. 14). Before an actual sin has been committed, there is *temptation*. Temptation includes two things: (1) Lust-which is simply a desire for something; (2) Enticement-which is an opportunity and an encouragement to satisfy the desire. Thus, in simple form:

TEMPTATION = DESIRE + OPPORTUNITY

Here is a simple illustration: A small boy is **TEMPTED** to steal some cookies when he **WANTS** them and has a **CHANCE** to get them. The temptation will be very strong if he wants them badly, and has a really good chance to get them.

You know, of course, it is not sinful to be tempted. Jesus was tempted, yet sinless. See Hebrews 4:15.

SECOND STAGE: SIN (vs. 15). "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." This simply means that a temptation becomes a sin when you **ACT** and yield to the temptation. We saw that temptation was **DESIRE** plus **OPPORTUNITY**. Sin involves the added step of some **ACTION**. In simple form:

SIN = TEMPTATION + ACTION

THIRD STAGE: Final PUNISHMENT. (vs. 15). "Sin when it is *finished*, bringeth forth death." The "death" mentioned is explained in Revelation 20:12-15. Sin is "finished" when you continue in it and refuse to repent. In simple form:

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT results from sin unrepented.

II. HOW TO OVERCOME SIN.

In the first part of the lesson we looked at the three stages in the complete development of sin. Putting them all together, we have:

**DESIRE + OPPORTUNITY + ACTION
+ NO REPENTENCE = PUNISHMENT**

Sin and Satan will have overcome if you receive this final punishment. You will have overcome sin if you avoid this punishment and enter heaven. We can overcome sin by stopping its development at any one of these four points leading to the final punishment. Let us see how this may be done.

1. DESIRE: *We must learn to control our desires.*

It is a part of Christian development to gradually change the things we desire or want to do. Read Romans 12:2; Galatians 5:24 and Colossians 3:2. You may ask: "How can this be done?" The study of the Bible will help you desire to do right, especially where it tells about God's reward for good people and punishment of sinners. The more you love God, the more you will want to please Him and the more you will WANT to do the things He asks you to do. Thinking about God's blessings will help you love Him. You will also find that actually living the Christian life makes you WANT to do right, more and more.

Gradually you should find that you are less and less tempted to lie, or curse, or steal because you just don't WANT to do them any more.

2. OPPORTUNITY: *We must limit opportunities to sin.*

It is a mistake to go into situations where we will have extra encouragement and opportunity to sin, especially when we have not yet gotten good control over our desires. 1 Corinthians 15:33 (Revised Version) shows the importance of choosing our companions wisely so as to avoid sin. Bad companions encourage us to sin. Study also Psalm 101:6,7. The person whom you marry can have a great effect on helping or hindering you in living right. Study God's law for Israel in the Old Testament- Deuteronomy 7:1-4 and 1 Kings 11:1-9

The kind of place where one goes for recreation may affect our ability to avoid sin. Study Psalm 101:3.

3. ACTION: *We must develop control over body and mind so we will not yield to temptation.*

We will never remove every desire and every opportunity to sin, so we must learn to CONTROL OUR ACTIONS. This is simply "self-control." Read Proverbs 16:32. Jesus had perfect self-control. See 1 Peter 2:21-23. The word "temperance" is often used in the Bible to mean self-control. See 1 Corinthians 9:25 and Galatians 5:23. Self-control is needed especially when Christian living is unpopular and we may be ridiculed for not going with the crowd. Luke 6:22,23.

4. IMPENITENCE: *We must repent of sins when we commit them.*

While trying to control our DESIRES, our OPPORTUNITIES, and our ACTS, we will still commit sin. There is one thing left that makes it possible to overcome sin. God understands that we are weak and so has provided a way for us to be forgiven of any sin we may commit. When you became a Christian, you were forgiven of all past sins when you were baptized. Now that you are a Christian, God has a different plan.

Repentance, confession, and prayer are God's requirements. Study Acts 8:22 and 1 John 1:9. Where the sin has been public, thus an offence to the church as well as to God, the confession is made to the church. Read James 5:16. God is willing to forgive as often as we sincerely ask His forgiveness. God will not forgive sins of which we refuse to repent and make confession.

TEST ON LESSON 8

1. Complete: "There hath no _____ taken you but such as is _____ to man: but God _____, who will not suffer you to be tempted _____ but will with the _____ also make a _____, that ye may be able to _____ .Reference: _____"
2. What two things make up a temptation?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
3. Is it a sin to be tempted? _____

- 4. What does it take for a temptation to become a sin?

- 5. How may sin result in eternal punishment?

- 6. Mention one way we can overcome sin by arranging to have fewer opportunities to sin.

- 7. The word _____ in the Bible usually means "self-control." Solomon said the person who can control himself is better than _____
- 8. When Christians sin, the three things which must be done to be forgiven are:
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
- 9. When should a public confession of sins be made?

- 10. How often will God forgive our sins?

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

- 1. Do you live or work among people who make it hard for you to live a Christian life? _____
- 2. Do you feel you are becoming better able to avoid sin and overcome temptation? _____
- 3. Do you ask God daily to forgive your sins? _____
- 4. Do you truly DESIRE to please God above everything else? _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 9

Discerning Good and Evil

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

Hebrews 5:13, 14 describes Christians in two states of growth: "babes" and those of "full age." These latter "have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." This suggests a real problem to sincere Christians: how to decide what is right and what is wrong. No one "automatically" knows the answer always. No person on earth has the authority to decide for you. It is God's will that decides the matter. This lesson is intended to help you be better able to find God's will.

I. THE BIBLE PLAINLY SAYS SOME THINGS ARE WRONG.

For the things mentioned, this settles the matter. But every sin is not mentioned by name, for the Bible would be endless if that were true. You will find lists of specific sins in: Eph. 5:3-6; Eph. 4:25-31; Colossians 3:5-9; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10. (On new words, be sure to use a dictionary.) You will notice that some are repeated; also that most of these are sins generally admitted to be wrong.

II. ACTS SIMILAR TO THESE ARE ALSO WRONG.

Read Galatians 5:19-21 again. The last item on the list is "such like." Thus when we are uncertain about an act, we may see if it is like any sins specifically mentioned. In Galatians 5:22,23, you will find a list of GOOD things. By writing each list down in parallel columns on a paper, it is fairly easy to see whether some questionable act is more nearly like things condemned or more nearly like things approved. For example, the Bible does not mention pornography as a sin. Yet it is fairly easy to see that it is included in "such like." The problem of certain kinds of dancing can probably be settled by a similar study.

III. ANY ACT WHICH HURTS YOUR CONSCIENCE IS WRONG.

Romans 14:23 teaches this. "Not of faith" refers to the conscience. Read also Acts 24:16. Although the conscience is not a perfect guide, it must not be violated. The conscience is that part of us which tells us when we have done something contrary to what we

have been taught is right. You can easily see that HOW the conscience acts, depends upon WHAT we have been taught. The important thing to remember is that if we abuse our conscience, it cannot help us do RIGHT when we learn WHAT is right.

God describes this bad condition as "having the conscience seared with a hot iron." Like dead nerves with no feeling, the conscience which has been abused will not warn us of wrong doing. See 1 Timothy 4:2.

IV. ADVICE OF OTHER CHRISTIANS CAN HELP.

Hebrews 5:14 says the "full age" Christians can better discern good and evil. Experience teaches lessons that cannot be learned any other way. That is why the help of older Christians is needed. 1 Kings 12:6-20 tell the story of a young king and shows in a fine way the value of advice from older, experienced people. Elders, teachers, preachers are some whom you may consult. Titus 2:3,4 show that older women are to teach younger women.

V. CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF AN ACT ON OTHERS

More than any other people, Christians must think of their influence on others. We must think of our influence on *non-Christians*. People are not converted WHOLLY by proving what is the right doctrine. The manner of life of Christians has strong influence. Study 1 Timothy 4:12.

We must consider our influence on *Christians*, too. Any act is wrong which has the effect of causing another Christian to sin or become discouraged. Study 1 Corinthians 8:8-13.

VI. CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF AN ACT ON YOURSELF.

You have two parts—a physical part (your body) and a spiritual part (your mind and soul). We must consider the effect on each. Study 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. This shows our body is "for the Lord," and is the "temple of the Holy Spirit." We are to "glorify God" in our bodies. This implies taking care of the body. Luke 2:52 indicates Jesus took care of the body.

More important, however, is the effect on our spirit. Some acts cause people to become less interested in worship, in Bible study, and in Christian living. Study Psalm 101:3. Some acts, not wrong in themselves, make take up so much time that they interfere with worship, Bible study, or doing good works. To the extent that this is true, such things are wrong. See Matt. 6:33.

VIII. DOES IT INVOLVE WASTE OF TIME, MONEY?

Christians are "stewards" of their time, money, and all God has given. Look up "steward" in a dictionary. We are required to use what God has given us and be able to give good account to Him for it. Read carefully Matthew 25:14-30. Ephesians 5:15,16 emphasizes the use of our time. Many of us WASTE enough time to read the Bible through several times a year. A heathen nation could be won for Christ with the money we waste.

Rest and relaxation are not a waste, because they prepare mind and body for doing our best work. Jesus rested. He attended a wedding feast.

IX. WOULD JESUS DO IT?

When you know a person pretty well, you can often guess what he will do or think. So it is with Jesus. The better you know his life and teaching, the better you can decide right and wrong by asking yourself: "Would Jesus do it?" If deep in your heart you know He would not, it is probably wrong.

You can probably remember someone—a teacher, your mother, or father—giving you a "look" when you were about to do something wrong. It will be a help to you to remember that Jesus IS watching. He is looking on with intense interest. Read Psalm 139:1-4. When writing to various churches, Jesus told them "I know thy works." See Rev. 2:2,9,13,19. Remembering this will help to decide right and wrong.

TEST ON LESSON 9

1. Hebrews 5:13,14 mentions what two stages of growth?

_____ and _____

2. Name three things the Bible says are sins:

_____, _____, _____

3. In Galatians 5:21, "such like" means: _____

4. Complete: "For whatsoever is not _____

is sin. This passage teaches us not to go against. _____

5. Young king Rehoboam took the advice of the _____
 (young, old)
 men, and as a result the people _____

6. According to Titus 2:3,4 _____ women are to teach
 the _____ women.
7. Complete: "Be thou an _____ of the believers in
 _____, in _____, in _____, in
 _____, in _____, in _____."
8. Why should we care for the body, according to 1 Corinthians
 6:13-20? _____
9. Quote the first half of Psalm 101:3: " _____

10. Who is always seeing all that we do? _____ What
 passage shows this? _____

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Do you have some older Christian to whom you
 feel free to go for advice? _____
2. Do you feel that you usually give enough
 thought to the effect of your acts on others? _____
3. Are you really trying to keep a good conscience? _____
4. Will you ask, when in doubt, "What
 would Jesus do?" _____

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.

Fit for the Master's Use

LESSON NO. 10
Continuing to Grow

LESSONS FOR
NEW CHRISTIANS

"Babes" in Christ ought to grow just as babies in homes do. Growth is necessary in all of life-in business, in science, in industry. It is a constant struggle to improve. These scriptures emphasize Christian growth: Ephesians 2:19-21; 4:14,15; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Thessalonians 1:3.

Growth alone is not enough; it must be well-rounded, balanced growth. The Christian must grow in knowledge, in zeal, in ability to teach, in faith, in a Christ-like character, in good works. He must not be full of knowledge while his disposition remains unChristlike.

This lesson is intended to help you continue to grow.

HINDRANCES TO GROWTH

1. *Lack of effort.* Christian growth is not automatic. One may be a "babe" for many years. (Read Hebrews 5:13 and 1 Corinthians 3:1,2) Growth requires effort and some follow the course of least resistance and laziness.

2. *Discouragement.* Some make a good beginning but get discouraged and quit. This may be due to church troubles, personal troubles, lack of encouragement, lack of schooling (which makes studying hard). Few of us will have the discouragements Paul had. Read 2 Corinthians 11: 24-28; Phil. 1:15-20. Discouragement often starts with a feeling of uselessness. To cure that read 1 Corinthians 15:58.

3. *The Law of Disuse.* A knife stays bright when used, but unused it becomes rusty. Matthew 25:14-30 shows how this law operates. Read Heb. 2:1. We lose what knowledge, ability and opportunity we have when we do not use them.

4. *The Law of Interference.* Crops, trees and flowers do not grow well when crowded. Christians may allow other things to crowd out their spiritual life. Study Mark 4:18,19. Business men may become too busy to attend to God's business. A woman may get so occupied with work and home chores that she has no time for God. A young person may be so busy with school that prayer, worship, good works and Bible study are crowded out. This is very easy. Read the story in 1 Kings 20:39,40.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONTINUING YOUR GROWTH

1. Be active in the work of your congregation.

It is essential that you begin immediately on work you can do. There is work for everyone, but it is a mistake to try work for which you are not prepared. Read Psalm 84:10. This was a lowly work indeed, but David was glad to do even that. However small a job, you should find some work to do! Here are suggestions:

Try to convert someone. Read what two of Jesus' disciples did: John 1:40-46. We are to be soul-winners. Matt. 4:19. You can do this by inviting friends to attend services with you, by studying with them at home, by giving out tracts on Bible subjects, by taking some older Christian with you to teach. One of the happiest experiences you can ever have will be when you are directly responsible for saving someone.

Offer your services to the elders. These wise men will be glad to find work for you in keeping with your ability. Sometimes they hesitate to call on people for work if they are not sure you are willing. Though men may do different work from women in the church, there is work for all. The important thing is to have the spirit of Isaiah as shown in Isaiah 6:8!

Look for work needing to be done. The best employee is one who can see things to be done without having to be told every step to take. Most of us are good critics of other people. This talent can be put to good use in this way: **WHENEVER YOU SEE SOMETHING TO CRITICISE, TAKE THAT AS YOUR JOB TO DO.** Someone's failure is our opportunity. Our ability to criticise is one way God shows us our work.

2. Start a regular study program.

We have had a lesson on Bible Study. Study will supply spiritual nourishment necessary for growth. You should arrange a **REGULAR** program for studying both the Bible and other related things. Occasional books on Bible subjects will help you. It is good to read regularly some periodical published by Christians. Your instructor for these lessons can make suggestions. Paul did not stop studying even though old and in prison. Read 2 Timothy 4:13. The Ethiopian eunuch, though not a Christian, and unable to understand much of what he read, puts many of us to shame by his interest in studying the Bible. Read Acts 8:27-31.

3. Constant self-examination.

Sometimes children mark their height on the wall each year. That way they can measure their growth. Self-examination of some kind is necessary. Businesses take inventory; schools give examinations. Without this we cannot know our true condition and will be like the Laodicea church. Read Revelation 3:17,18 and 2 Corinthians 13:5. Someday we will be examined by Christ. We surely do not want to hear the thing a great king heard in Daniel 5:27. Here are some questions you should ask yourself often: Do I have a better Bible knowledge than 1 year ago? Am I as interested in the church as when baptized? Have I helped someone else to become a Christian? Am I enjoying life as a Christian? Am I improving my life, my disposition, my weaknesses and becoming more Christlike? Am I setting an example for other Christians? Have I stopped any good work I once started such as daily prayer, study of the Bible, attending worship? Self-examination is hard, but growth is impossible without it.

TEST ON LESSON 10

1. Complete: "But speaking the truth in love, may _____
_____ into him in _____, which is the head,
even _____."
2. In 1 Cor. 3:1,2, new Christians are called _____.
3. What happened to the talent of the one-talent servant in Matthew 25 when the master returned?

4. How did Isaiah answer the question in Isa. 6:8?

5. Complete this passage on Christian growth (Jno. 15:2): " Every
branch in me that _____ he _____;
and every branch that _____ he
_____ that it may _____."

6. In Question 5, the branches refer to _____
 and to "purge" means _____
 (Use dictionary.)
- 7 The church at _____ was blind to its true condition.
8. In 2 Corinthians 13:5 Christians are told to
 "_____ whether you be in the faith."
9. The two examples of soulwinning in John 1:40-46 are
 _____ who brought _____ to Jesus,
 and _____ who brought _____.
10. In the Old Testament story (1 Kings 20:39,40), the servant lost his captive soldier because he was _____.
- This illustrates the law of _____ in spiritual growth.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Grade _____

1. Have you started regular Bible Study? _____
2. Have you tried to convert someone? _____
3. Do you truly desire and intend to grow? _____
4. What will be your biggest hindrance to growth?

Please give your name, address, and any questions below.
