

Exhortations From God's Word

Book I

**Be Holy
Walk By Faith
Consider Yourselves ...
Do Not Boast in Your Arrogance
Prepare Your Minds
Beware of False Teachers
Do Not Love the World, Love God
Flee Lusts
Bridle the Tongue, Bridle the Whole Body
Keep Seeking the Things Above
Remember Your Former Separation From Christ
Be Imitators of God
Sow Bountifully**

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Introduction

"Exhortation" is a noun meaning *an appeal, an encouragement*. "Exhort" is a verb meaning *to call on, entreat* in which one is advised, warned, or admonished. An exhortation often encourages us to turn away from a sinful path and pursue a righteous path in service of God. An exhortation often stimulates us to progress in our service to God.

Christians are commanded to bear with the word of exhortation (Heb. 13:22). In so doing, we patiently bear with the exhortations contained in God's word continually growing to maturity (cf. Heb. 5:11-14).

This series of lessons is not intended to be exhaustive. These lessons are in outline form and are, therefore, abbreviated. My intention is for the outlines to present the Scriptures relative to each topic and express a few thoughts. Students should study the Scriptures for themselves and apply the lessons beyond the few suggestions made in the outlines.

God's word is perfect, but men are fallible. If you find any errors in these lessons or have suggestions to improve them, please contact me at allan@biblestudyguide.org.

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I. Be Holy

A. Introduction:

1. God and Jesus are holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16; Acts 2:27; Rev. 4:8). As children of God and members of the body of Christ, we must be holy in all our behavior (conduct) (1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
2. In this lesson, we study the meaning of Peter's exhortation to be holy.

B. "Holy" means:

1. Several Greek words are translated "holy." Therefore, the meaning of holy is varied depending on the exact Greek word under consideration.
2. In general, "holy":
 - a. represents the **sanctity of deity (God) and anyone in a right relationship with God.**
 1. People who have come into a right relationship with God are called saints. The Greek for "saint" is akin to the Greek for "holy."
 2. A saint has been sanctified (i.e., separated to God). He has been made holy having been separated from sin and consecrated to God.
 - a. Christians must, therefore, be holy in all their behavior (1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
 - b. We are holy in all our behavior when we are obedient (1 Pet. 1:14-16; cf. Rom. 1:5-7).
 - b. denotes those who are **religiously right.**
 1. It is used of God who is religiously right in everything.
 2. It is used of people who have been sanctified and made religiously right. They have come into a right relationship with God.

C. We can be holy because God has made it possible:

1. We can only be holy because **God is holy** (1 Pet. 1:15-16).
 - a. Only God, who is divinely holy, can make us who are unholy to be holy. In other words, only God who is divinely right and righteous can bring sinful man into a right relationship with Himself (Rom. 3:23-26).
2. We can be holy because of God's **eternal plan** (Eph. 1:4; 3:11-12).
 - a. Salvation is in Christ (Rom. 6:23; 2 Tim. 2:10; cf. Eph. 1:3; 2:4-22; 3:8-12).
 1. God gave Christ (Jn. 3:16).
 2. Christ came to earth and humbled Himself to die on the cross (Phil. 2:5-8).
 - a. Therefore, we must obey Jesus to be saved (Phil. 2:9-13; Heb. 5:9; Matt. 28:18).
 - b. The adoption as sons is through Christ (Eph. 1:3-12).
 1. People who are united with Christ in baptism (Rom. 6:3-5; 7:4; Gal. 3:27) are adopted as sons (Rom. 8:1-25; Gal. 3:26-4:7).
3. God has called us with a holy calling (2 Tim. 1:9), the **gospel** (2 Th. 2:14).

- a. People who partake of (i.e., respond, obey) the calling are made holy (i.e., in a right relationship with God). Because they have obeyed the holy commandment (2 Pet. 2:21; cf. 1 Pet. 1:14; Rom. 1:5-7).

D. As Christians, we must be holy in all our behavior (conduct).

1. We are made holy upon **obeying** the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:9; 2 Th. 1:8-10; 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2 Pet. 2:21; cf. Rom. 1:5-7; Heb. 5:9).
2. Therefore, we have a responsibility to be holy in all our behavior (1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
 - a. If we are obedient to God, we are holy in all our behavior (1 Pet. 3:14-16).
 1. To be obedient and thus holy in all our behavior, we must:
 - a. prepare our minds for action (gird up the loins of our minds) (1 Pet. 1:13).
 - b. be sober and alert at all times, ready to obey God in every situation and at any cost (1 Pet. 1:13; cf. 1 Pet. 5:5-10).
 - c. fix our hope on the grace which will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:13; cf. Col. 3:1-4; 2 Th. 1:10; Heb. 12:1-2).
 - b. If we do not live up to the responsibility of being holy in all our conduct, it would have been better for us never to have obeyed the holy commandment (2 Pet. 2:21).
 - c. We walk by the most holy faith (Jude 1:20; 2 Cor. 5:7) revealed in God's word (Rom. 10:17; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:3).
 1. As long as we are obedient to the truth (1 Pet. 1:22-23) revealed in God's word (Jn. 17:17) we will be holy in all our conduct (1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
3. Christians:
 - a. have holy bodies (Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:19; cf. 1 Tim. 2:8). Therefore, everything we do must be holy (Col. 3:12-17; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
 1. Everything we do will be holy if everything we do is in the name (i.e., by the authority) of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17).
 - b. compose a holy body which is the church (1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21; 5:27).
 1. Christians compose a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5) and a holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9).
 2. Therefore, we receive all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3-4).

E. As holy people of God, we will live in God's eternal holy city.

1. Everyone who is holy at the time of their death will be blessed and holy for eternity (Rev. 20:6). They will live in God's eternal holy city (Rev. 21:2, 10; 22:11; cf. Rev. 2:10).
2. We should be holy in our conduct knowing that the world will be destroyed, sinners will be punished, and holy people will be rewarded (2 Pet. 3:10-13; cf. 2 Th. 1:6-10; Heb. 12:22-29).

F. Review:

1. God and Jesus are holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16; Acts 2:27; Rev. 4:8). As children of God and members of the body of Christ, we must be holy in all our behavior (1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:11).
2. We are made holy upon obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Th. 1:9; 2:14; 2 Pet. 2:21; cf. Heb. 5:9).
3. If we remain holy until the time of our death, we will be blessed and holy for eternity (Rev. 20:6) and live in God's eternal holy city (Rev. 21:2, 10; 22:11; cf. Rev. 2:10).

II. Walk By Faith

A. Introduction:

1. Christians walk by the most holy faith (Jude 1:20; cf. 2 Cor. 5:7) which is revealed God's word (Rom. 10:17; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:3).
2. In this lesson, we study the meaning of Paul's exhortation to "walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).

B. "Faith" means:

1. Faith is firm conviction based on hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).
2. Faith is:
 - a. Faith is the **assurance** (substance) of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1).
 1. "Assurance" is literally *a standing under* denoting that which stands or sets under a foundation. The foundation of our hope is faith based upon God's word (Rom. 1:16-17; 10:17).
 2. The result of faith based on God's word is obedience (Acts 6:7; Rom. 10:17; 5:1; 6:17; 16:26) and purification (1 Pet. 1:22).
 - b. Faith is the **conviction** (evidence) of things not seen (Heb. 11:1).
 1. "Conviction" denotes *proof* and thus *conviction*. By faith we prove (i.e., have proof of) the things which are not seen.
 - a. The result of having assurance in things hoped for is having conviction in things not seen.
 - b. Our faith is based on God word (Rom. 10:17). Our evidence for unseen things is God's word.
 2. "Things not seen" are the things and acts which are unknown or unproven in the natural world (e.g., creation, Heb. 11:3).
 - a. Salvation is unseen (Heb. 11:10, 16).
 - b. Christ and our reward are unseen (Heb. 11:25-26).
 - c. God is unseen. By faith we see God although He is invisible (Heb. 11:27).
 - c. Faith is the only way by which man can gain approval (obtain a good testimony) from God (Heb. 11:2, 4, 6).
 1. Therefore, we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

C. People who walk by faith obey God. People who walk by sight disobey God.

1. We must be **obedient** to the faith to be saved (Acts 6:7; cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-23).
 - a. Jesus' disciples are people who are obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7; cf. Matt. 28:18-19).
 - b. By faith in the working of God, we are raised with Christ through baptism (Col. 2:12). Our trespasses are forgiven and we are made alive together with Christ (Col. 2:13).

2. Faith is firm **conviction** based on hearing **God's word** (Rom. 10:17) by which we obey God (Rom. 1:5; 6:17; 16:26).
 - a. By faith we are pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6) by obeying Jesus (Heb. 5:9).
 - b. We obey the truth (1 Pet. 1:22-23) because we believe the truth (2 Th. 2:12-13).
3. People who obey God have a living faith, but people who disobey God have a dead faith (Ja. 1:22-27; 2:14-26).
 - a. Faith works through love (Gal. 5:6, 22-25).
 - b. People who have a dead faith are, of necessity, walking by sight (cf. Gal. 5:16-21). Their faith is in the wisdom of men, the things which are seen (1 Cor. 2:5).

D. To walk by faith:

1. To walk by faith, we must **hear (study), learn, understand, and know (knowledge)** God's word (Rom. 10:17; cf. Col. 1:4-12). Then, we will be fruitful (Col. 1:4-12; cf. Matt. 13:8, 23; Mk. 4:20).
 - a. If we believe God's word, we will be strengthened to do His will (Col. 1:9-11; cf. Rom. 1:16; 1 Th. 2:13).
2. To walk by faith, we must **serve God** (Phil. 2:17; cf. 1 Th. 1:3; 2 Th. 1:11).
 - a. We must fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7).
3. To walk by faith, we must **test ourselves** to see if we are in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5; cf. 1 Th. 5:21-23; Heb. 3:12; Ja. 5:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:7).
 - a. We must be careful not to fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1; cf. 1 Tim. 6:10, 21).
4. To walk by faith, we must **never deny the faith** of Jesus Christ (Rev. 2:13).
 - a. We must keep God's commandments (Rev. 14:12).

E. When we walk by faith:

1. When we walk by faith, we are made **strong** (Acts 16:5).
 - a. Faith is our shield (Eph. 6:16) and breastplate (1 Th. 5:8). We are victorious over the world (1 Jn. 5:4-5).
 - b. We are built up in the most holy faith (Jude 1:20; cf. Jude 1:3).
2. When we walk by faith, all our temporal **needs are met** by God (Matt. 6:30-34) and we are content (1 Tim. 6:6).
 - a. We are not afraid to face troubles and trials (Matt. 6:25f; cf. Matt. 10:26-33; Rom. 5:3-5; Ja. 1:2-4).
3. When we walk by faith, our **prayers are effective** (Ja. 5:13-18; cf. 1 Pet. 3:10-12; 1 Jn. 5:14-15).
4. When we walk by faith, we have **full assurance** (Heb. 10:22) of salvation (Heb. 11:39-40; 12:22-29; cf. Phil. 1:20).
 - a. We draw near to God holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering (Heb. 10:22-23).
 - b. We have faith to the persevering of the soul (Heb. 10:39).
 - c. We resist Satan (1 Pet. 5:9) and overcome the world (1 Jn. 5:4-5).
5. When we walk by faith, we **courageously** look forward to the resurrection and judgment (2 Cor. 5:1-10).

F. Review:

1. Faith is firm conviction based on hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).
2. People who walk by faith obey God. People who walk by sight disobey God.
3. To walk by faith, we serve God as revealed in His word (Rom. 10:17; Eph. 6:16; 1 Th. 5:8; 1 Jn. 5:4-5).
4. When we walk by faith, we are made strong (Acts 16:5), all our temporal needs are met (Matt. 6:30), our prayers are effective (Ja. 5:13-18), we have full assurance of salvation (Heb. 10:22), and we courageously look forward to the resurrection and judgment (2 Cor. 5:1-10).

III. Consider Yourselfes ...

A. Introduction:

1. When becoming a Christian, we become a new person (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Therefore, we view ourselves and the world around us differently than we did before becoming a Christian.
2. In this lesson, we study the meaning of Paul's exhortation to consider (reckon) ourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11).

B. "Consider" (reckon) means:

1. "Consider" (reckon) as used in Rom. 6:11 means *to calculate, to take into account, to consider*.
2. In Rom. 6:11, the phrase following the word "consider" is the view we should have of ourselves.
 - a. When we take into account the fact that we died to sin when we were baptized into Christ's death (Rom. 6:2-3), we should consider (count, calculate) ourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11).
3. Other examples:
 - a. We are to consider ourselves as sheep to be slaughtered (Rom. 8:36).
 1. It is God's will that we endure trials and sufferings on earth. Therefore, we should view ourselves as sheep to be slaughtered. But, we should not forget that we will also overwhelmingly conquer our enemies.
 - b. The Corinthians were to consider Paul to be the same person whether writing to them or actually present with them (2 Cor. 10:11).
 1. Their view of Paul should always be the same.

C. We consider (reckon) ourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:1-23).

1. We **died to sin** and were made alive to God when we were baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3).
 - a. We are alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11; cf. 2 Tim. 1:9; 2:1, 10).
 1. We were baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3).
 2. Without being baptized into Christ, we cannot be alive to God.
 - b. When we were baptized, we were made alive together with Christ (Col. 2:13).
 1. Before being baptized, we were dead in our transgressions (Col. 2:13).
 2. After being baptized, we were alive because we have been forgiven all our transgressions (Col. 2:13; cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).
2. We should view ourselves as **dead to sin** (Rom. 6:2, 11).
 - a. Having died to sin, we should not continue to live in sin (Rom. 6:1-2).
 1. We are buried with Christ through baptism into death (Rom. 6:3-4).
 - b. Our old self was crucified when we were baptized (Rom. 6:6).
 1. We consider the members of our earthly body as dead (Col. 3:5).

- c. Sin no longer reigns in our mortal bodies; therefore, we do not obey it in its lusts (Rom. 6:12).
 - 1. Sin is no longer our master (Rom. 6:14).
- 3. We should view ourselves as **alive to God** in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11).
 - a. We were united with Christ and rose up to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4-6; Col. 2:13).
 - 1. We were born again (1 Pet. 1:22-23; Jn. 3:5).
 - 2. We became a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).
 - a. We put on the new man (Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
 - b. We were freed from the slavery of sin and made ourselves slaves of God (Rom. 6:6, 16-18, 22).
 - 1. As slaves of God we are slaves for obedience resulting in righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18). Therefore, we receive the gift of God which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.6:23).
 - c. We are alive from the dead and instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13).
- 4. We should view ourselves as **joined to Christ**. Having died through the body of Christ, we have been joined to Christ and bear fruit to God (Rom. 7:4).
 - a. When we were baptized into Christ, we were united with Him (Rom. 6:3-5).
 - 1. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches (Jn. 15:1-6). It is only because of Jesus that we can bear fruit to God (Jn. 15:4; cf. 2 Jn. 1:9).
 - 2. We are one in spirit with Jesus (1 Cor. 6:17; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).
 - a. Therefore, we must glorify God in our bodies (1 Cor. 6:19-20).
 - b. When we were baptized into Christ, we were baptized into the body (1 Cor. 12:13) which is the church (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - a. We were added to the church (Acts 2:47).
 - b. As members of Christ's body, we are in subjection to Him and saved (Eph. 5:23-24).

D. We must also consider:

- 1. We must consider (Lk. 14:31) the **cost** of being a disciple of Christ (Lk. 14:26-33).
 - a. The cost of being a disciple of Christ is to die daily (1 Cor. 15:31).
 - b. As a disciple of Christ we consider ourselves as sheep to be slaughtered (Rom. 8:36).
 - 1. If we faithfully endure suffering, we will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God (2 Th. 1:5; cf. Lk. 20:35).
 - c. We consider the trials associated with being a disciple of Christ a joy (Ja. 1:2-4).
- 2. We must consider how to **stimulate** one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24; cf. 2 Pet. 1:13).
 - a. God has given us the assembly of the saints as the main venue in which to stimulate one another.
 - b. Christians who carefully consider their brethren to stir them up to love and good works will not forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:24-25).
- 3. We must consider (think) ourselves **fortunate** to have opportunities to teach others (Acts

26:2).

- a. Paul taught the gospel at great personal expense, but he considered himself fortunate. We too must consider ourselves fortunate to teach others, even if there is a great personal price which we must pay.

E. Review:

1. As Christians, we must view ourselves as dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:2, 11).
 - a. We should not continue to live in sin (Rom. 6:1-2).
 - b. We were been united with Christ and rose up to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4-6; Col. 2:13). We are one in spirit with Jesus (1 Cor. 6:17).
2. Being alive to God, we must also consider:
 - a. the cost of being a disciple of Christ (Lk. 14:26-33) and die daily (1 Cor. 15:31).
 - b. how to stimulate one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24; cf. 2 Pet. 1:13). We should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:24-25).
 - c. ourselves fortunate to have opportunities to teach others (Acts 26:2).

IV. Do Not Boast in Your Arrogance

A. Introduction:

1. God is opposed (resists) to the proud and gives grace to the humble (Ja. 4:6). We are, therefore, commanded not to boast in our arrogance (Ja. 4:16).
 - a. If we are boasting in our arrogance, it is a reflection of pride. Therefore, it is a reflection of our lost condition (Ja. 4:6, 16).
 - b. If we are boasting in our arrogance, we have strayed away from the truth and need to turn from the error of our way (Ja. 5:19-20).
2. In this lesson, we study humility and pride to understanding James' exhortation to not boast in our arrogance (Ja. 4:16).

B. Definitions:

1. "Proud":
 - a. describes a person who makes himself appear to be above others. A proud person is arrogant and boastful. In this respect, "proud" is always used in a bad sense.
 - b. describes man's proper view (boast, glory) toward God and everything associated with God. In this respect, "proud" is always used in a good sense.
2. "Pride" denotes the state of being proud.
 - a. The word is used in a bad sense except in respect to our proper view toward God and the things associated with God.
3. "Humble" describes a person who does not make himself appear to be above others (cf. Rom. 12:10, 16; Phil. 2:2-5).

C. Worldly pride is a sin.

1. Pride in worldly (fleshly) things is a **sin** (1 Jn. 2:16).
 - a. Our pride is in God, not the world (2 Ch. 17:6; Ps. 34:2).
2. Everyone who is proud is an **abomination** to the Lord (Pr. 16:5).
 - a. It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud (Pr. 16:19; cf. Matt. 16:24-26).
 - b. Haughty eyes and a proud heart are the lamp of the wicked. It is sin (Pr. 21:4; cf. Pr. 21:24).
 1. God's word is the lamp of the righteous (Ps. 119:105).
 2. The lamp of the wicked will go out (Pr. 13:9). But the word of God endures forever (1 Pet. 1:25).
 - c. The soul of a prideful man is not right (Hab. 2:4).
 1. The just are not proud. They live by faith (cf. Rom. 1:16-17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).
 2. For a person to live by faith, he cannot be proud (cf. 2 Cor. 5:7).
 3. People who trust in God (have faith) are not proud (Ps. 40:4).
3. We become proud when we **forget God by not keeping His commandments** (Deut.

- 8:11-14, 17; cf. Rom. 1:21-32).
- a. Proud people act corruptly (sinfully) and are unfaithful to the Lord (2 Ch. 26:16; cf. Pr. 11:2; 15:33; 18:12).
 - b. Proud people are contemptuous (i.e., willfully disobedient) (Ps. 123:4).
4. Boasting and arrogant behaviors are **outward signs** of pride (2 Ch. 25:19; Dan. 5:20).
 - a. Arrogant boasting is evil (Ja. 4:16).
 5. People with a proud heart will be **repaid (punished)** for their evil (Ps. 31:23; cf. Ps. 94:2; Pr. 15:25; 16:5; Is. 2:12; 5:15; 13:11).
 - a. Pride goes before destruction. A haughty spirit preceeds stumbling (Pr. 16:18; cf. 1 Cor. 10:12).
 - b. God is able to humble those who walk in pride (Dan. 4:37).

D. God saves humble people.

1. God **saves humble** people (Job. 22:29; Ps. 76:9; Ja. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).
 - a. The humble tremble at God's word (Is. 66:2).
 - b. God leads the humble in justice and teaches them His way (Ps. 25:9).
 - c. People who humble themselves will be exalted (Lk. 14:11).
 1. Proverbs 22:4 The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor, and life.
2. We must humble our souls to **obey God** (Zeph. 2:3; Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27, 29, 32).
 - a. Jesus is humble (Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:8) and obeyed God (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8).
 1. We must also have a humble attitude (Phil. 2:5).
 - b. Moses was the most humble man on earth in his day (Num. 12:3).
 - c. People who seek God must be humble and turn from their wicked ways (2 Ch. 7:14).
 1. God caused Israel to wander in the wilderness to humble them (Deut. 8:2, 3, 16).

E. Christians must be humble.

1. Christians must be **humble** (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8).
 - a. Our humble state will be transformed into conformity with the body of Christ's glory at the resurrection (Phil. 3:21; cf. 1 Cor. 15:35-58; 2 Cor. 5:1-10).
2. We must **receive the word**, which can save our souls, with humility (Ja. 1:21; cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-23).
 - a. God gives grace to the humble and exalts the humble (Ja. 4:6, 10; 1 Pet. 5:5-6).
 - b. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16; cf. 1 Th. 2:13).
3. Christians are humble and do **not speak against one another or judge one another** (Ja. 4:10-12).
 - a. To speak against a brother is to say things for the purpose of harming him.
 - b. To judge a brother in James 4:11-12 is to do so as the Lawgiver and Judge - God. This judgment is reserved for God and can only be executed by God.
 1. Christians must exercise proper judgment in areas concerning the church (1 Cor. 5; 2 Th. 3:6, 14; cf. Jn. 7:24).

4. Christians are humble and do **not boast** in their arrogance (Ja. 4:10, 13-16).
 - a. Our speech reflects our faith and trust in God as well as our dependance on God.
5. Having **humbled** ourselves under the mighty hand of God (1 Pet. 5:6-10):
 - a. we will be exalted in due time (1 Pet. 5:6; cf. Phil. 3:21).
 - b. we cast all our anxieties (cares) upon God (1 Pet. 5:7; cf. Matt. 6:24-34).
 - c. we are sober and alert so that we are not devoured by the devil (1 Pet. 5:8; cf. Eph. 6:10-18).
 - d. we resist the devil firm in the faith (1 Pet. 5:9).
 - e. we endure suffering (1 Pet. 5:10; cf. Rom. 5:3-5; Ja. 1:2).
 - f. we will be perfected, confirmed, strengthened, and established (1 Pet. 5:10).

F. Christians are proud of God, His ways, His people, and the church.

1. "Proud" and "pride" are used in a **good sense** in respect to God and everything associated with Him.
2. Our pride (delight, boast) must be in the **ways of the Lord** (2 Ch. 17:6; Ps. 34:2).
 - a. Our boast (glory) should not be in the flesh but in the cross of Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:12-15).
3. We are proud of the **apostles** (2 Cor. 5:12; Phil.1:26; cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-33; 12:11-12).
4. We are proud of **faithful Christians** and **churches of God** (2 Th. 1:4).

G. Review:

1. Worldly pride is sinful. Our pride (boast, glory) must be in God and the things associated with Him.
2. We must be humble to be saved.
3. Because we are humble:
 - a. our humble state will be transformed into conformity with the body of Christ's glory at the resurrection (Phil. 3:21).
 - b. we do not speak against one another or judge one another (Ja. 4:10-12).
 - c. we do not arrogantly boast (Ja. 4:10, 13-16).
 - d. we will be exalted in due time (1 Pet. 5:6; cf. Phil. 3:21).
 - e. we cast all our anxieties (cares) upon God (1 Pet. 5:7; cf. Matt. 6:24-34).
 - f. we are sober and alert so that we are not devoured by the devil (1 Pet. 5:8; cf. Eph. 6:10-18).
 - g. we resist the devil firm in the faith (1 Pet. 5:9).
 - h. we will be perfected, confirmed, strengthened, and established (1 Pet. 5:10).
 - i. we are proud of God, His ways, His people, and the church (2 Ch. 17:6; Ps. 34:2; 2 Cor. 5:12; Phil.1:26; 2 Th. 1:4).
4. God is opposed (resists) to the proud and gives grace to the humble (Ja. 4:6). We are, therefore, commanded not to boast in our arrogance (Ja. 4:16).
 - a. If we are boasting in our arrogance, it is a reflection of pride. Therefore, it is a reflection of our lost condition (Ja. 4:6, 16).
 - b. If we are boasting in our arrogance, we have strayed away from the truth and need

to turn from the error of our way (Ja. 5:19-20).

V. Prepare Your Minds

A. Introduction:

1. We must prepare (gird up the loins) our minds for action to live as obedient children of God (1 Pet. 1:13-14).
2. In this lesson, we study the importance and manner of preparing our minds.

B. We must prepare our minds (1 Pet. 1:13-14).

1. We are commanded to prepare of our minds (1 Pet. 1:13-14). Therefore, when we do the things necessary to prepare ourselves, we are obeying God (cf. Heb. 11:7).
2. People who do not prepare themselves to serve God, are rebellious and stubborn being unfaithful to God (Ps. 78:8; cf. Eph. 4:17-19). They are lost in sin (Eph. 4:18).
3. We must prepare our minds:
 - a. to love God (Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30; Lk. 10:27).
 - b. to willfully serve God (1 Ch. 28:9).
 - c. to be set on God's interests and not man's interests (Matt. 16:23; Mk. 8:33; cf. Matt. 6:24-34; Phil. 4:4-9).
 1. Our minds must not be set on evil (Col. 3:5; Heb. 10:22; 3 Jn. 1:11).
 2. Our minds must be set on things above (Col. 3:1-4).
 - d. to do God's work (Neh. 4:6; Eph. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:21).
 - e. to seek knowledge (Pr. 15:14; cf. Pr. 18:15; 22:17).
 - f. to not defile ourselves (Dan. 1:8; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; Ja. 1:27; cf. 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:5; 1 Th. 5:21-22).
 - g. to be humble and not be haughty (Phil. 2:3; Rom. 12:16).
 - h. to fight the spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-18; cf. 1 Ch. 7:11; 2 Ch. 26:11; Es. 8:13; Ezek. 38:7; 2 Tim. 4:7-8).
4. We prepare our minds through:
 - a. study of God's word (Heb. 5:11-14; cf. Rom. 1:16; 1 Th. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 2:1-3).
 1. Christians have the knowledge (Col. 3:10; cf. 1 Tim. 2:4) revealed in God's word (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:2-8; 3:18).
 - b. renewing our minds (Rom. 12:2). We conform our minds to the doctrine of Christ (Rom. 12:9f; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Jn. 1:9).
 - c. being stimulated to love and good works when assembling with the saints (Heb. 10:24-25).
 - d. keeping a sober spirit, fixing our hope on God's grace, not being conformed to lusts, and being holy (1 Pet. 1:13-16).

C. We cannot control our bodies without first preparing our minds.

1. Our physical actions originate in our minds (Matt. 15:15-20).
 - a. To control our bodies, we must first control our minds (Rom. 7:14-25).
 - b. Only Christians can control their minds and therefore control their actions because

they walk according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-17).

2. We must prepare our minds to be obedient children of God (1 Pet. 1:13-14).

D. Unless we prepare, we will not be ready to worship and serve God.

1. Example of Israel:
 - a. Israel prepared to keep the Sabbath (Ex. 16:5; 1 Ch. 9:30-32).
 1. Today, we keep the first day of the week. We must make preparations personally and as a church to be ready to assemble on the first day of the week.
 - b. The Israelites prepared themselves (purified themselves) to assemble before God (Ex. 19:11, 15).
 1. Today, we must prepare ourselves (purify ourselves) to assemble before God for the judgment and to enter heaven (cf. Rev. 21-22).
 - c. Israel prepared to worship (Lev. 5:10; Num. 15:8, 12; 2 Ch. 35:6).
 1. Today, we must prepare to worship God in every aspect of our lives (cf. Jn. 4:24).
 - d. Israel prepared a place of worship (2 Ch. 1:4; 2:9; 29:19; 31:11).
 1. Today, we must have a place to assemble for worship (Heb. 10:24-25). Preparations must be made for the place to be ready.
2. Example of Jesus and the apostles:
 - a. Jesus commanded the apostles to prepare for observing the Passover during which He instituted the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:17; Mk. 14:12, 15-16; Lk. 22:8-9, 12-13).
 1. Today, we must make preparations to be ready to partake of the Lord's Supper. We must be mentally prepared (1 Cor. 11:27-32). And there must be physical preparations for the supper and assembly of the church (1 Cor. 11:17f).
3. Apostolic examples:
 - a. We must prepare to be benevolent (2 Cor. 9:2-5).
 - b. We must prepare to spread the gospel (2 Cor. 12:14; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:12; Ph'm. 1:22).
 - c. We must be prepared to suffer (Acts 21:13).

E. Unless we make preparations and obey God, we will not enjoy the blessings God has prepared for the faithful.

1. Unless we make preparations and obey God, we will not enjoy the temporal and spiritual blessings while on earth (Ps. 23:5; Matt. 6:24-34; Eph. 1:3).
2. Unless we make preparations and obey God, we will not be prepared for Christ's return (Matt. 24:44; 25:10; Lk. 12:40; 1 Th. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10).
3. Unless we make preparations and obey God, we will not be prepared by God for the resurrection and eternal life (2 Cor. 5:5).
 - a. Faithful members of the Lord's church are prepared for the resurrection and

eternal life (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-27; Rev. 21:1-27).

F. Review:

1. We are commanded to prepare our minds (1 Pet. 1:13-14). Therefore, when we do the things necessary to prepare ourselves, we are obeying God (cf. Heb. 11:7).
2. We cannot control our bodies without first preparing our minds (Matt. 15:15-20).
3. Unless we prepare, we will not be ready to worship and serve God.
4. Unless we make preparations and obey God, we will not enjoy the blessings God has prepared for the faithful.

VI. Beware of False Teachers

A. Introduction:

1. Christians are warned to beware of people (false teachers) who teach false religious doctrines (Matt. 7:15; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; 3:16).
2. In this lesson, we study the identity, methods, and doctrines of false teachers.

B. Who is a teacher? Who is a false teacher?

1. A teacher is someone who instructs. It is used of:
 - a. God (Job 36:22).
 - b. Christ (Matt. 8:19; 9:11; 10:24; 26:18).
 - c. Jewish religious leaders who taught the Law of Moses (Jn. 3:10; Acts 5:34; Rom. 2:20).
 - d. apostles (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11).
 - e. pastors (Eph. 4:11).
 1. "Pastor," "elder," and "bishop" are all three used interchangeably identifying one office in the church, not three separate offices (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:5-7; 1 Pet. 5:1-2).
 - f. people who instruct others in the church (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28; Heb. 5:12).
 - g. people who teach religious error not according to sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3).
 1. This group of people includes false Christs, false prophets, false teachers, and false brethren (Matt. 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:26; 2 Pet. 2:1).
2. A false teacher is a teacher of falsehood (Hab. 2:18-19).
 - a. A false teacher does not teach the way of God in truth (cf. Matt. 22:16; Mk. 12:14).
 1. God's word is truth (Jn. 17:17).
 - b. Generally speaking, a false teacher is anyone teaching a doctrine that would separate the adherents from God (2 Jn. 1:9).

C. False teachers deceive people into believing false doctrines.

1. False teachers secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves (2 Pet. 2:1).
 - a. They exploit people with false words (2 Pet. 2:3).
 - b. They twist the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16).
2. False prophets and false teachers come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Pet. 2:1).
 - a. They mislead (Matt. 24:11) and exploit (2 Pet. 2:3) people. They draw away the disciples after themselves (Acts 20:30).

D. Christians who teach false doctrines are false brethren.

1. Christians who teach false doctrines are false brethren (Gal. 2:4; Acts 15:1, 24; 2 Cor. 11:13, 26).

2. They distort (pervert) the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7).
 - a. Christians who adhere to their teachings desert Christ, turning away to a different gospel (Gal. 1:6).
 - b. False brethren are accursed (Gal. 1:8-9; 2:4).
 - c. False brethren and their followers have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

E. Methods employed by false teachers:

1. False teachers are **secretive** about their motives and doctrines (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Jude 1:4, 12).
2. False prophets use **signs and false wonders** to deceive people (Matt. 24:11; 2 Th. 2:9-11).
 - a. The signs and wonders false prophets perform (Acts 13:6-11; 2 Th. 2:6-12) are magic (Acts 13:6). They do not possess miraculous power from God, but use magic trying to convince people that they possessed miraculous power from God to deceive them (Rev. 2:20; 19:20; 20:10; cf. Acts 8:9-10; 2 Th. 2:6-12).
3. False teachers employ **persuasive arguments** (Col. 2:4).
 - a. Their doctrines are affirmed with arguments which seem to make sense on the surface. But, upon thorough investigation they contradict the word of God.
 - b. "Persuasive arguments" do not require absolute proof. They only require that the argument be plausible.
 1. False doctrines are often explained through a difficult chain of thoughts usually imploring a new vocabulary and twisting Scriptures to such a degree that the things suggested become plausible through confusion (2 Pet. 3:16; cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15).
 2. The apostles did not teach with persuasive words (1 Cor. 2:1-5).
4. False teachers employ **philosophy** (Col. 2:8).
 - a. Paul says that their philosophy is empty deception (Col. 2:8). It is vain and worthless because it deceives people into believing a false doctrine (Col. 2:20-23).
5. False teachers try to deceive Christians by **passing judgment** on them for not adhering to man-made religious doctrines (Col. 2:16-17, 20-23).
6. False teachers deceive people by claiming to have **special knowledge** that others do not have (1 Tim. 6:20-21).
7. False teachers try to entice Christians through **sensuality, greed, vanity, and fleshly desires (lusts)** (2 Pet. 2:2-3, 7, 14, 18; cf. Jude).
8. False teachers **grumble, find fault, follow after their own lusts, speak arrogantly, and flatter people for the sake of gaining an advantage** (Jude 1:16).
9. False teachers are **mockers** (2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 1:18).
10. False teachers draw people away by **causing divisions** (Jude 1:17-19).

F. Doctrines of false teachers:

1. The doctrines of false teachers are self-made (self-imposed) **traditions of men** (Col. 2:8, 23).
 - a. They are human philosophy (Col. 2:8).

- b. The doctrines of false teachers are composed of arrogant words of vanity (2 Pet. 2:18) by which they promise freedom while enslaving their followers (2 Pet. 2:19).
2. Some false doctrines include components of the **Mosaic Law** (Col. 2:16-17).
 - a. For example, Sabbatarian doctrines.
3. Some false doctrines include components of **self-abasement (false humility)** (Col. 2:18).
 - a. For example, religious doctrines requiring their adherents to participate in repetitive acts such as reciting prescribed prayers and eating a prescribed diet (cf. Col. 2:20-23; 1 Tim. 4:3-5).
 - b. For example, monastic doctrines (1 Tim. 4:3).
4. The doctrines of false teachers are **destructive heresies** (2 Pet. 2:1).
 - a. False teachers and their followers will be destroyed (2 Pet. 2:4-10; 3:16; cf. 2 Jn. 1:9).
5. The doctrines of false teachers are **not according to knowledge** (2 Pet. 2:12; Jude 1:10; cf. 2 Pet. 2:20-22).
 - a. True knowledge is revealed in God's word (2 Pet. 1:3, 19-21).
 - b. False teachers twist the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16).
6. The doctrines of false teachers are **"feel good" doctrines** (2 Tim. 4:3; Jude 1:16).

G. Purpose of false teachers' doctrines:

1. False teachers **deceive (delude)** Christians (Col. 2:4).
 - a. "Deceive" is a verb meaning *to misreckon, miscount*; hence, *to deceive by reckoning wrongly*.
 - b. A person who is a hearer only and not a doer of the word is deceived (Ja. 1:22).
2. False teachers take Christians **captive (cheat Christians)** (Col. 2:8).
 - a. "Captive" ("cheat") is a verb meaning *to carry off as booty, rob*; hence, *to lead captive*.
3. False teachers **defraud** Christians of their prize (Col. 2:18-19).
4. False teachers **malign (blaspheme)** the truth (2 Pet. 2:2).
5. False teachers **exploit** Christians with false words (2 Pet. 2:3).
6. False teachers **entice** Christians by fleshly desires and sensuality (2 Pet. 2:18).
7. False teachers **turn the grace of God into licentiousness** (Jude 1:4).

H. Characteristics of false teachers and their followers:

1. 2 Tim. 3:1-16:
 - a. lovers of themselves (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - b. lovers of money (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - c. boastful (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - d. arrogant (proud) (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - e. revilers (blasphemers) (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - f. disobedient to parents (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - g. ungrateful (unthankful) (2 Tim. 3:2).
 - h. unholy (2 Tim. 3:2).

- i. unloving (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - j. irreconcilable (unforgiving) (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - k. malicious gossips (slanderers) (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - l. without self-control (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - m. brutal (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - n. haters (despisers) of good (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - o. treacherous (traitors) (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - p. reckless (headstrong) (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - q. conceited (haughty) (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - r. lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - s. holding a form of godliness although they have denied its power (2 Tim. 3:5).
 - t. they enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins (2 Tim. 3:6).
 - u. led away by various impulses (lusts) (2 Tim. 3:6).
 - v. they are always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Tim. 3:7).
 - w. they are not suffering persecution for the gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - x. they are evil men and impostors (2 Tim. 3:13).
 - y. they are deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim. 3:13).
 - z. they are not obeying the word of God (2 Tim. 3:14-16).
2. 2 Pet. 2:1-22:
- a. they follow their sensuality (destructive ways) (2 Pet. 2:2, 7).
 - b. they malign (blaspheme) the truth (2 Pet. 2:2).
 - c. in their greed they exploit Christians with false words (2 Pet. 2:3).
 - d. they indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires (2 Pet. 2:10).
 - e. they despise authority (2 Pet. 2:10).
 - f. they are self-willed (2 Pet. 2:10).
 - g. they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties (2 Pet. 2:10).
 - h. they are like unreasoning animals born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed (2 Pet. 2:12).
 - i. they are reviling where they have no knowledge (2 Pet. 2:12).
 - j. they count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime (2 Pet. 2:13).
 - k. they are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse (2 Pet. 2:13).
 - l. they have eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - m. they entice unstable souls (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - n. they have a heart trained in greed (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - o. they are accursed children (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - p. they have forsaken the right way (2 Pet. 2:15).
 - q. they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15).
 - r. they are springs without water and mists driven by a storm for whom the black darkness has been reserved (2 Pet. 2:17).
 - s. they speak arrogant words of vanity (2 Pet. 2:18).

- t. they entice by fleshly desires and sensuality (2 Pet. 2:18).
- 3. Jude 1:7-19:
 - a. they indulged in gross immorality (Jude 1:7).
 - b. by dreaming they defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile angelic majesties (Jude 1:8).
 - c. they revile the things which they do not understand (Jude 1:10).
 - d. they only care for themselves (Jude 1:12).
 - e. they are clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever (Jude 1:12-13).
 - f. they are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts (Jude 1:16).
 - g. they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage (Jude 1:16).
 - h. they are mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts (Jude 1:18).
 - i. they cause divisions (Jude 1:19).
 - j. they are worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit (Jude 1:19).

I. False teachers and their followers will be punished.

1. God's people hate every false way (Ps. 119:104, 128) because they love God's word (Ps. 119:163).
 - a. Righteous men hate falsehood, but wicked men act disgustingly and shamefully (Pr. 13:5).
2. False teachers are **accursed** (Gal. 1:6-9).
 - a. "Accursed" denotes a person doomed to destruction having no hope of salvation.
3. False teachers and their followers will be **punished** (2 Th. 1:8-10; 2 Pet. 2:3-10, 12, 17; 3:16; Jude 1:4-7, 15).
 - a. cf. Pr. 19:5, 9; 21:28; Rev. 21:8.
4. Satan is the originator of the doctrines taught by false teachers (Jn. 8:44).
 - a. Everyone who does not believe God is a liar (1 Jn. 5:10; cf. 1 Jn. 3:10).

J. Review:

1. A false teacher is a teacher of falsehood (Hab. 2:18-19).
 - a. He does not teach the way of God in truth (cf. Matt. 22:16; Mk. 12:14).
 - b. Generally speaking, a false teacher is anyone who teaching a doctrine that would separate the adherents from God (2 Jn. 1:9).
2. False teachers deceive people into believing false doctrines.
3. False brethren are Christians who teach false doctrines.
4. False teachers employ numerous methods to entice and seduce Christians to adhere to their doctrines. We must be aware of their methods and be on guard at all times.
5. The doctrines of false teachers include self-made (self-imposed) traditions of men (Col. 2:8, 23), components of the Mosaic Law (Col. 2:16-17), components of self-abasement (Col. 2:18), destructive heresies (2 Pet. 2:1), doctrines not according to knowledge (2 Pet.

- 2:12; Jude 1:10; cf. 2 Pet. 2:20-22), and "feel good" doctrines (2 Tim. 4:3; Jude 16).
6. The purpose of false teachers' doctrines is to deceive Christians (Col. 2:4), take Christians captive (Col. 2:8), defraud Christians of their prize (Col. 2:18-19), malign the truth (2 Pet. 2:2), exploit Christians with false words (2 Pet. 2:3), entice Christians by fleshly desires and sensuality (2 Pet. 2:18), and turn the grace of God into licentiousness (Jude 1:4).
 7. Characteristics of false teachers and their followers are numerous. Recognizing the characteristics can help us identify false teachers (2 Tim. 3:1-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-22; Jude 1:7-19)
 8. False teachers and their followers will be punished (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Pet. 2:3-10, 12, 17; 3:16; Jude 1:4-7, 15).

VII. Do Not Love the World, Love God

A. Introduction:

1. Love is the highest expression of devotion. Therefore, it is fundamental to religion. That which a man loves is what he worships.
2. In this lesson, we study John's exhortation to not love the world (1 Jn. 2:15) but to love God (1 Jn. 5:3).

B. Two types of love:

1. **"Agape" ("love")** is devotion resulting from a mental conviction (i.e., a determination of will and judgment).
 - a. Agape is commanded of man toward God (Matt. 22:37) and man toward his neighbor (Matt. 22:39).
 - b. Agape tempers our affections (phileo). Therefore, agape must always take precedence over phileo.
 1. By agape (love) for God, our phileo (love) is in harmony with God's will.
 2. If we do not have agape (love) for God, we will sinfully phileo (love) others and the world.
2. **"Phileo" ("love")** is devotion resulting from an emotional conviction (i.e., affection).
 - a. When phileo (love) is tempered by agape (love), it is the highest expression of godly devotion.
 1. For example, a man who has agape (love) for his wife and children has a godly relationship with them. But without phileo (love), his relationship with them is cold and unaffectionate. A man whose devotion to his family includes an affectionate commitment is stronger than a man's devotion without an affectionate commitment.
 - b. The highest expression of a godly love is exemplified by Peter's response to Jesus' questions in John 21:15-17.
 1. Trench says, "*Agapan* has more of judgment and deliberate choice; *philein* has more of attachment and peculiar personal affection. Thus the 'Lovest thou' (Gr. *agapas*) on the lips of the Lord seems to Peter at this moment too cold a word, as though his Lord were keeping him at a distance, or at least not inviting him to draw near, as in the passionate yearning of his heart he desired now to do. Therefore he puts by the word and substitutes his own stronger 'I love' (Gr. *philo*) in its room. A second time he does the same. And now he has conquered; for when the Lord demands a third time whether he loves him, he does it in the word which alone will satisfy Peter ('Lovest thou,' Gr. *phileis*), which alone claims from him that personal attachment and affection with which indeed he knows that his heart is full" ("Love," *Easton's Bible Dictionary*).
3. Christians must have both agape (love) (Matt. 22:37) and phileo (love) (1 Cor. 16:22) for the Lord.

- a. Anyone who does not have *phileo* (love) for the Lord is accursed (1 Cor. 16:22; cf. 1 Cor. 12:3).
 1. "Accursed" denotes a person doomed to destruction. He has no hope of salvation.

C. Christians do not love the world (1 Jn. 2:15).

1. People who love the world do not love God (Jn. 3:19-21).
 - a. To love God, we must stop loving the world (Matt. 6:24).
2. Christians do not love the world (1 Jn. 2:15).
 - a. The world loves its own, it neither loves God nor Christians (Jn. 15:19; cf. 1 Jn. 3:1).
3. To love the world is to engage in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 Jn. 2:15-16).
 - a. People who love the world will perish. They will not live forever (1 Jn. 2:17).
4. Christians are lovers of God rather than lovers of pleasure (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - a. "Lovers of God" is the Greek word *philotheos*. It denotes affection toward God as one would have toward a friend or companion. It only appears in 2 Tim. 3:4.
 - b. "Lovers of pleasure" is the Greek word *philedonos*. It denotes affection toward pleasure as one would have toward a friend or companion. It only appears in 2 Tim. 3:4.

D. Christians love God (1 Jn. 2:15; 5:3).

1. Christians have *agape* (love) (Matt. 22:37) and *phileo* (love) (1 Cor. 16:22; 2 Tim. 3:4) for God.
 - a. Love for God takes precedence over all other commitments and affections (Matt. 6:24-34; Lk. 14:26).
2. Christians love God because of God's love for them (1 Jn. 4:7-19).
 - a. Knowing the love of Christ (Eph. 3:19) is a source of spiritual strength (Eph. 3:14-20).
3. Christians obey God because they love Him (1 Jn. 5:3; cf. Jn. 14:15; 15:10).
 - a. Therefore, Christians are sons of God and not sons of the devil (1 Jn. 3:10).
 - b. We either love and serve God or love and serve the world (i.e., Satan) (Matt. 6:24).
 1. People who do not love Jesus do not keep His word (Jn. 14:23-24).
4. Christians love God (1 Jn. 5:3). They know that they are in God because they keep His commandments and word (1 Jn. 2:4-5). Therefore, they know that they are saved (1 Jn. 3:2; 5:13) and will live forever (1 Jn. 2:17).
 - a. Christians do not fear judgment because they have been perfected in love (1 Jn. 4:17-18).

E. Because Christians love God, they love their brethren (1 Jn. 3:14-18; 4:7-12).

1. Christians love Christians (1 Jn. 2:3-11). The world hates Christians (Jn. 15:19; cf. 1 Jn.

- 3:1, 10).
- a. The world knows that we are Jesus' disciples because we love one another (Jn. 13:35).
2. We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren (1 Jn. 3:14). We know that we are of the truth (1 Jn. 3:19).
 - a. To love our brethren is to lay down our lives for one another (1 Jn. 3:16-19; cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-8; Col. 2:2).

F. Review:

1. Love is the highest expression of devotion. Therefore, it is fundamental to religion. That which a man loves is what he worships.
2. There are two types of love in the New Testament.
 - a. "Agape" ("love") is devotion resulting from a mental conviction (i.e., a determination of will and judgment).
 - b. "Phileo" ("love") is devotion resulting from an emotional conviction (i.e., affection).
 - c. Christians must have both agape (love) (Matt. 22:37) and phileo (love) (1 Cor. 16:22) for the Lord.
3. Christians do not love the world (1 Jn. 2:15). Christians are lovers of God rather than lovers of pleasure (2 Tim. 3:4).
4. Christians love God and therefore obey Him (1 Jn. 2:15; 5:3).
5. Because Christians love God, they love their brethren (1 Jn. 4:7-12).

VIII. Flee Lusts

A. Introduction:

1. Paul commanded Timothy to flee youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22). This command is applicable to all Christians to flee all lusts (Rom. 6:12; 13:14).
2. In this lesson, we study Paul's exhortation to flee (youthful) lusts (2 Tim. 2:22).

B. Lust and licentiousness:

1. "Lust" is a *strong sinful desire*.
 - a. Lust, sin, and eternal death:
 1. Do not love the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life (1 Jn. 2:15-16).
 2. Sin reigns in our mortal bodies if we obey it in its lusts (Rom. 6:12).
 3. Those who desire to be rich fall into many foolish and harmful lusts (1 Tim. 6:9).
 4. We sinfully lust for the flesh (worldly lusts) (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 5:16, 24; Eph. 2:3; 2 Pet. 2:18; 1 Jn. 2:16).
 5. People who are fulfilling the desires of the flesh are children of wrath (Eph. 2:3; Col. 3:5-7).
 6. Sinners serve (are enslaved by) various lusts and pleasures (2 Tim. 3:6; Tit. 3:3).
 7. We are tempted when we are carried away and enticed by our own lusts. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death (Ja. 1:14-15).
 - a. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
 - b. Christians:
 1. We must put to death (crucify) our passions and evil desires (Col. 3:5; cf. 1 Th. 4:5).
 2. We must flee lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22; cf. 1 Tim. 6:11).
 3. We must behave properly by putting on Christ and not making provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14).
 4. We should not have evil companions (1 Cor. 15:33).
 - c. Conclusion:
 1. We must control our minds so that we do not lust.
 2. As much as possible, we should avoid activities that could result in lust.
2. "Licentiousness" ("lasciviousness" KJV) is *unbridled lust, excess, absence of restraint, indecency, wantonness, and sensual conduct*.
 - a. Scriptures:
 1. Mk. 7:21-23 Licentiousness (sensuality) proceeds from the heart.
 - a. Our actions reflect our hearts (Pr. 23:7).

2. Gal. 5:19 Licentiousness (sensuality) is a work of the flesh.
 3. Eph. 4:19 People who are past feeling (callous) give themselves over to licentiousness (sensuality) to work all uncleanness with greediness.
 4. 1 Pet. 4:3 Sinners walk in licentiousness (sensuality).
 5. Jude 1:4 Ungodly men turn God's grace into licentiousness.
 - a. They twist the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16) to advocate licentious behaviors.
 - b. The doctrine of once saved always saved exemplifies men turning God's grace into licentiousness.
 6. Rom. 13:13 Christians cannot walk in licentiousness (sensuality). They cannot participate in sensuous behaviors.
 7. 2 Pet. 2:7, 18 Licentiousness is sensual conduct.
 - a. 2 Pet. 2:7 The Greek translated *licentious* in the NRSV is translated in other versions of the Bible: *filthy conversation* (KJV), *filthy conduct* (NKJV), *sensual conduct* (NASB), *filthy lives* (NIV).
 1. From the context we understand that homosexuality is licentiousness.
 - b. 2 Pet. 2:18 The Greek is translated *licentious desires* (NRSV), *wantonness* (KJV), *sensuality* (NASB).
3. Application:
- a. "Lust" is the mental desire. "Licentiousness" is doing that for which one lusts.
 1. The desire (i.e., lust) precedes the act (i.e., licentiousness) (cf. Mk. 7:21-23; Ja. 1:14-15).
 - b. "Licentious" (i.e., "sensual") behaviors are sinful acts often displayed to attract lustful attention to oneself.
 - c. If we obey sin in its lusts, we will die (Rom. 6:12, 23; Ja. 1:15). But if we obey God, we will live eternally (Rom. 6:16-23).

C. "Flee" lusts (2 Tim. 2:22).

1. "Flee" means *to seek safety by swiftly running away*. It is used metaphorically to avoid Satan and sin by running away (i.e., staying far away).
 - a. Christians must examine everything carefully; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil (1 Th. 5:21-22). Christians must stay far away from sin.
2. Examples of fleeing:
 - a. Lot fled Sodom (Gen. 19:20). He escaped Sodom and fled to the mountains.
 1. Lot had to flee to safety or die. Likewise, we must flee lusts or we will die (Ja. 1:14-15).
 - b. Israel's six cities of refuge were the places where a person who had unintentionally killed someone could flee for safety and live (Num. 35:11, 15, 26; Deut. 19:5).
 1. A man who unintentionally killed another person and did not flee to a city of refuge died. Likewise, we must flee lusts or we will die (Ja. 1:14-15).
 - c. God commanded Joseph to flee to Egypt with Mary and Jesus because Herod

- was going to search for Jesus to destroy Him (Matt. 2:13).
1. Satan is a roaring lion seeking to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8). We must flee lusts or we will be destroyed (Ja. 1:14-15).
 - d. Jesus commanded Christians to flee to the mountains when they saw the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15-16).
 1. They were to swiftly go to the mountains. They were not to even get their things out of their house (Matt. 24:17-18).
 2. Likewise, we must flee lusts or we will die (Ja. 1:14-15).
 - e. We cannot flee from God's presence (Ps. 139:7; cf. Jonah 1:3).
3. We must flee:
- a. immorality (sexual immorality) (1 Cor. 6:18).
 - b. idolatry (1 Cor. 10:14).
 - c. advocating different doctrines, conceit, envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, constant friction between men of depraved minds and deprived of the truth, the desire to get rich, the love of money, wandering away from the truth (1 Tim. 6:3-11).
 - d. youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22).
4. To flee lusts, we should avoid the conception of lust in our minds (Ja. 1:15). We must:
- a. pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness, and peace from a pure heart (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22).
 - b. refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels (2 Tim. 2:23).
 - c. fight the good fight of faith, lay hold of eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12).
 - d. confess the good confession (1 Tim. 6:13-14).
 - e. behave properly putting on Christ and making no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; cf. Gal. 3:27).
 - f. keep our minds on godly things (Phil. 4:4-8; Col. 3:1-4).
 - g. grow spiritually every day (2 Pet. 1:3-11; Heb. 5:11-14; cf. Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Th. 2:13).
 - h. pray all the time, hold fast to that which is good, and abstain from every form of evil (1 Th. 5:16-22).
 - i. put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-18).
 - j. resist the devil (Ja. 4:7).

C. Application:

1. By applying the principles associated with lust and licentiousness, answer these questions. What authority do we have for engaging in the following activities? Under what conditions could we engage in the activity (if any), and under what conditions could we not engage in the activity?
 - a. joke telling
 - b. dancing
 - c. swimming
 - d. sunbathing

- e. smoking tobacco
 - f. drinking alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, mixed drinks, hard liquor)
 - g. using drugs
 - h. pornography
 - i. watching TV and movies
 - j. playing video games
 - k. listening to music
 - l. gambling (at home, in a casino, playing the lottery)
2. By applying the principles associated with lust and licentiousness, answer these questions.
 - a. What clothes are not appropriate for Christians to wear? Why?
 - b. What behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate for Christians on a date?
Explain.
 3. Think of other moral questions which plague our society and answer them from God's word.

D. Review:

1. Paul commanded Timothy to flee youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22). This command is applicable to all Christians to flee all lusts (Rom. 6:12; 13:14).
2. "Lust" is a strong sinful desire. "Licentiousness" ("lasciviousness" KJV) is unbridled lust, excess, absence of restraint, indecency, wantonness, and sensual conduct.
 - a. "Lust" is the mental desire, "licentiousness" is physically doing that which one lusts after.
 1. The desire (i.e., lust) precedes the act (i.e., licentiousness) (cf. Mk. 7:21-23; Ja. 1:14-15).
3. "Flee" means to seek safety by swiftly running away. It is used metaphorically to avoid Satan and sin by running away (i.e., staying far away).
4. We must flee all lust (2 Tim. 2:22) and avoid every form of evil (1 Th. 5:22).
5. To flee lusts, we must never allow lust to be conceived in our minds (Ja. 1:15). We must pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness, and peace from a pure heart (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22); refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels (2 Tim. 2:23); fight the good fight of faith, lay hold of eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12); confess the good confession (1 Tim. 6:13-14); behave properly putting on Christ and making no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14); keep our minds on godly things (Phil. 4:4-8; Col. 3:1-4); grow spiritually every day (2 Pet. 1:3-11; Heb. 5:11-14); pray all the time, hold fast to that which is good, and abstain from every form of evil (1 Th. 5:16-22); put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-18); and we must resist the devil (Ja. 4:7).
6. We must diligently apply the godly principles associated with lust and licentiousness to many aspects of life to fulfill the law of Christ and please God in every respect.

IX. Bridle the Tongue, Bridle the Whole Body

A. Introduction:

1. If we do not bridle our tongue, we deceive ourselves and our religion is worthless (Ja. 1:26). But if we bridle our tongue and do not stumble in word, we are able to bridle our whole body (Ja. 3:2).
2. In this lesson, we study James' exhortation to bridle our tongue and whole body (Ja. 1:26; 3:2).

B. Bridle:

1. A bridle is used to exercise control over an animal (Pr. 26:3; Rev. 14:20).
2. Metaphorically, "bridle" denotes:
 - a. God's control over **Israel's enemies** (2 Ki. 19:28; Is. 30:28; 37:29; cf. Rom. 13:1).
 - b. **understanding** (Ps. 32:9).
 1. God's people have understanding and do not need a bridle as does a horse or mule. God's people bridle themselves with understanding and are, therefore, obedient to God (cf. Ps. 49:3, 20; 111:10; 119:34, 73).
 2. Christians bridle their tongue and whole body with wisdom and understanding (Ja. 3:2, 13, 17-18).
 - c. the **control Christians must exercise** over their tongue (Ja. 1:26) and whole body (Ja. 3:2).
 1. Licentiousness is unbridled lust and absence of restraint. Christians are not licentious because they restrain (bridle) themselves (Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:19).

C. If we do not stumble in word, we are perfect, able to bridle the whole body as well (Ja. 3:2).

1. If we do not bridle our tongue, our religion is worthless (Ja. 1:26). We are not keeping ourselves unstained by the world (Ja. 1:27).
 - a. We will be judged for every idle word (Matt. 12:36).
2. Before we can be perfect by bridling (controlling) our whole body, we must first control our tongue (Ja. 3:2).
 - a. As we control a horse with his mouth and a ship with a rudder, we can control our body when we control our tongue (Ja. 3:3-5).
 - b. If we do not control our tongue, our entire body is defiled (Ja. 3:6).
 - c. We can control our whole body when we control our tongue (Ja. 3:7-12).
3. We control our tongue and whole body with godly wisdom and understanding (Ja. 3:17-18) through God's word (Ps. 19:7; Eph. 3:4; 5:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:2-11).

D. How do we bridle (control) our tongue and whole body?

1. Licentiousness (i.e., sensuality, unbridled lust, absence of restraint) proceeds from the **heart** (Mk. 7:21-23). To control our body, our heart must be right with God (Acts 8:21). Reference, Lesson Eight.
 - a. We must have a pure heart (Matt. 5:8; 2 Tim. 2:22).
 1. Our actions reflect our hearts (Pr. 23:7).
 - b. Our heart must be in heaven (Matt. 6:21; cf. Phil. 4:8-9; Col. 3:1-4).
 - c. Our mind must be set on God's interests (Matt. 16:23).
 - d. We must love God with all our heart (Matt. 22:37).
 - e. Our heart must not be hard (Mk. 8:17; Eph. 4:18; Heb. 3:15; 4:7).
 - f. We must have good treasure in our heart (Lk. 6:45).
 - g. We must have the word in our heart (Lk. 8:12, 15; Rom. 10:8).
 - h. We must have a repentant heart (Rom. 2:5).
 - i. We must be obedient from our heart (Rom. 6:17).
 - j. We must believe with our heart (Rom. 10:9-10; cf. Heb. 3:12).
 - k. We must do the will of God from the heart (Eph. 6:6).
 - l. We must be humble (Phil. 2:3) having the same attitude as Christ (Phil. 2:5).
 - m. We must not put confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:4). We must count all things as loss for the sake of Christ (Phil. 3:7).
 - n. We must have a heart of compassion (Col. 3:12). If we have a compassionate heart, we will be kind, humble, gentle, patient, forbearing, forgiving, loving, and peaceable (Col. 3:12-15).
 - o. We must draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith (Heb. 10:22).
 - p. We must not grow weary and lose heart (Heb. 12:3).
 - q. Our heart must be strengthened by grace (Heb. 13:9).
2. We must be **partakers of the divine nature** (2 Pet. 1:2-11) through the true knowledge revealed in God's word (2 Pet. 1:3, 19-21).
 - a. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) and works in those who believe (1 Th. 2:13).
 - b. God's word gives us the power we need to control our tongue and our whole body.

E. Characteristics of having control of our tongue:

1. We guard our ways and **restrain** our mouths (Ps. 39:1).
 - a. We do not speak falsehoods with flattering lips and a double (proud) heart (Ps. 12:2).
 - b. We do not backbite (slander) (Ps. 15:3; cf. Rom. 1:30).
 - c. We speak righteousness and praise God. We talk justice (Ps. 35:28; 37:30).
2. We **speak of God's word** (His commandments) (Ps. 119:172).
3. We **confess to God** (Rom. 14:11).
4. We **confess that Jesus Christ is Lord** (Phil. 2:11).
5. We are **quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger** (Ja. 1:19, 26).

6. We do not **boast** in our arrogance (Ja. 3:5; 4:16).
7. We are **wise and understanding** (Ja. 3:13). We are **doers of the word** and not hearers only (Ja. 1:19-27); therefore, we bridle our tongue (Ja. 1:26).
8. We **refrain our tongue** from evil and our lips from speaking deceit (1 Pet. 3:10).
9. We do not **love** others in tongue only (1 Jn. 3:18).

F. Review:

1. If we do not bridle our tongue, we deceive ourselves and our religion is worthless (Ja. 1:26). But if we bridle our tongue and do not stumble in word, we are able to bridle our whole body (Ja. 3:2).
2. Christians must exercise control over their tongue (Ja. 1:26) and whole body (Ja. 3:2).
3. If we do not stumble in word, we are perfect, able to bridle the whole body as well (Ja. 3:2).
4. To control our body, our heart must be right with God (Acts 8:21).
5. If we control our tongues, we will exhibit appropriate characteristics in every aspect of life.

X. Keep Seeking the Things Above

A. Introduction:

1. We should never stop seeking the things above (Col. 3:1, 3). We have died and our life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).
2. In this lesson, we study Paul's exhortation to keep seeking the things above (Col. 3:1).

B. Seek:

1. "Seek" means *to seek in order to find*.
2. Examples of seeking:
 - a. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls (Matt. 13:45-46).
 1. We must seek the kingdom of heaven like a merchant who sells all that he has to purchase one pearl of great value (Matt. 16:24-26).
 - b. A man with one hundred sheep who loses one, leaves the ninety-nine to seek (search for) the one that is lost (Matt. 18:12; cf. Lk. 15:4). And, a woman with ten coins who loses one, lights a lamp and sweeps the house seeking (searching for) the lost coin (Lk. 15:8).
 - c. Andrew followed Jesus seeking the place where Jesus was staying (Jn. 1:38).
 1. Today, Jesus is in heaven (Heb. 8:1). We follow Him (1 Pet. 2:21) seeking the place He is staying (heaven) (Col. 3:1).

C. Christians seek the things above (heaven, God's throne) (Col. 3:1).

1. Christians seek God by faith (Heb. 11:6; cf. Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Th. 2:13).
 - a. Faith is the **instrument** by which we seek things above.
2. Christians seek first God's kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33).
 - a. God's kingdom (i.e., things above) and righteousness are **what** we are seeking.
3. Christians ask, seek, and knock. God gives to them, they find what they seek, and doors are opened to them (Matt. 7:7-11).
 - a. We must be **diligent** to seek things above.
4. Christians seek and strive to enter the narrow door (Lk. 13:24).
 - a. It is **difficult** to seek things above.
5. Christians do not seek to save their life; therefore, they preserve their life (Lk. 17:33).
 - a. It requires a **sacrifice** to seek things above.
6. Christians seek glory from God; therefore, they can believe (Jn. 5:44; Acts 15:17; 17:27).
 - a. We must be **humble** to seek things above.
7. Christians seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life (Rom. 2:7). Therefore, they obey the truth (Rom. 2:8; 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:22-23; cf. Jn. 17:17; 2 Th. 1:8-10).
 - a. We seek the **eternal** when we seek things above.
8. Christians seek the things that edify others (1 Cor. 10:23-24).
 - a. We seek to **edify others** when we seek the things above.
9. Christians seek after **Christ's interests**, not their own interests (Phil. 2:21).

10. Christians have turned away from evil and do good. They seek **peace** and pursue it (1 Pet. 3:11).
 - a. Therefore, the eyes of the Lord are toward them and His ears attend to their prayers (1 Pet. 3:12).

D. We can seek the things above because we are Christians.

1. We can seek things above because we have **died** (Col. 3:3).
 - a. We die and are buried with Christ when we are baptized (Rom. 6:2; Col. 2:11-12; Rom. 6:3-8).
 1. We die daily from that day forward (1 Cor. 15:31).
 - b. Our old man is crucified, put to death (Rom. 6:6-7).
 1. Having died, we are united with Christ (Rom. 6:5; 7:4).
 2. Therefore, Christ lives in us (Gal. 2:20) and we are complete (Col. 2:10).
 - c. We are circumcised with the circumcision of Christ (Col. 2:10-11).
 1. The body of the flesh (i.e., the fleshly man) is removed (Col. 2:10-11).
 2. We no longer live in the flesh (Rom. 7:5) but serve in newness of the Spirit (Rom. 7:6).
 - a. We are no longer condemned (Rom. 8:1) because we live according to the law of the Spirit having been set free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).
 - b. Therefore, we are sons and heirs of God (Rom. 8:14-17).
2. We can seek things above because we have been **raised up** with Christ (Col. 3:1).
 - a. We are raised up with Christ when we are baptized (Col. 2:12-13; Rom. 6:3-4).
 - b. Just as Christ was raised from the dead to walk in newness of life, we are raised up (Col. 2:12; 3:1) to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), the newness of the Spirit (Rom. 7:4-6; 8:1-17).

E. As Christians, what must we do to keep seeking the things above?

1. We must have the correct **attitude**.
 - a. We set our mind (affections) on things above, not on the things that are on the earth (Col. 3:2; cf. Phil. 4:8-9).
 - b. We consider our earthly members as dead (Col. 3:5, 8-9; 1 Cor. 15:31).
 1. We consider ourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11).
 2. We put sinful things aside (Col. 3:8-9; Rom. 6:13).
2. We put on the new man renewed in **knowledge** (Col. 3:10-17; Rom. 12:2; cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3-11).
3. We are **prayerful** (Phil. 4:6-7; 1 Th. 5:16-22; 1 Pet. 5:6-7).
4. We do all in the name (by the **authority** of) of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17).
 - a. We must only do the things authorized by Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 4:6).
5. We **press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ (Phil. 3:14; cf. 2 Pet. 1:3-11).

- a. We store up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:20-21; 1 Tim. 6:18-19).
 - b. We fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith (2 Tim. 4:7).
6. We **assemble** with the saints and are stimulated to love and good works (Heb. 10:24-25).

F. What is the result of seeking the things above?

1. When Christ is revealed, we will be revealed with Him in glory (Col. 3:4; cf. 1 Th. 4:13-17; 1 Jn. 3:2).
2. We will live eternally in the heavenly city of God (1 Cor. 15:20-58; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Rev. 20-22).

G. What is the result of not seeking the things above?

1. God's wrath will come upon us, the sons of disobedience (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; cf. Rom. 1:18).
2. The people who do not obey the gospel will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of God (2 Th. 1:8-10).

H. Review:

1. We should never stop seeking the things above (Col. 3:1, 3). We have died and our life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).
 - a. "Seek" means *to seek in order to find*.
2. We consider our earthly members as dead (Col. 3:5, 8-9), put on the new man renewed in knowledge (Col. 3:10-17), do all in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17), and press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ (Phil. 3:14).
3. If we keep seeking the things above, we will be revealed with Christ in glory (Col. 3:4).
4. If we do not keep seeking the things above, the wrath of God will come upon us (Col. 3:6).

XI. Remember Your Former Separation From Christ

A. Introduction:

1. Before becoming a Christian, we were lost in sin being separated from Christ (Eph. 2:1, 11-12; cf. Jn. 14:6).
2. In this lesson, we study Paul's exhortation to remember our previous separation from Christ (Eph. 2:11-12).

B. We must remember that we were dead in our trespasses and sins when separated from Christ (Eph. 2:1, 11-12).

1. We derive important benefits from remembering our lost condition prior to being united with Christ (Rom. 6:5; Eph. 2:5).
 - a. We should not glory or boast in the thought of our previous life of sin (Ja. 4:10-16; 2 Ch. 17:6; Ps. 34:2; Gal. 6:12-15). But on the contrary, we are reminded of the shame associated with our sins if we have repentant hearts (1 Cor. 15:34; 2 Cor. 4:2; Phil. 3:19; Rev. 3:18).
2. When teaching, Paul occasionally refers to his manner of life before becoming a Christian (Acts 26:1-18; 1 Cor. 15:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:15). And, he occasionally reminds others of their manner of life and lost condition (Eph. 2:1-3, 11-12; 4:22; cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

C. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us:

1. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us that we were **dead** in our trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).
 - a. We were redeemed (forgiven of our trespasses) through Christ's blood (Eph. 1:7).
 1. We were justified by Christ's blood (Rom. 5:9).
 2. We were redeemed with Christ's blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
 3. We were cleansed from all sin by Christ's blood (1 Jn. 1:7).
 - b. Our sins were forgiven (washed away) when we were baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
 1. We were united with Christ when we were baptized (Rom. 6:3-5).
2. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us of our former **disobedience** (Eph. 2:2-3).
 - a. We were children of wrath (Eph. 2:3) and sons of disobedience (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6).
 - b. We would have been punished with eternal destruction from God's presence if we had not obeyed the gospel (2 Th. 1:8-10).
3. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us of God's **mercy, love, and grace** (Eph. 2:4-9).
 - a. We are saved because God loved us enough to send Jesus to die for our sins (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:7-10).

- b. We are saved because of God's grace and mercy to make us alive together with Christ (Eph. 2:5) when we are baptized (Col. 2:12-14; Rom. 6:3-11).
 - 1. God's grace is granted to us in Christ (2 Tim. 1:9; 2:1, 10).
- 4. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us of our **responsibility** to walk in the good works (Eph. 2:10).
 - a. We must walk in a manner worthy of God's calling (Eph. 4:1). We must walk in love (Eph. 5:2; cf. 1 Jn. 5:3) as children of Light (Eph. 5:8).
 - 1. Thus, we walk as wise men (Eph. 5:15).
 - b. We walk:
 - 1. in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) created in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10).
 - 2. according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16, 25).
 - 3. by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).
 - 4. according to the apostolic pattern (Phil. 3:17).
 - 5. in a manner worthy of the Lord (Col. 1:10; 2:6).
 - 6. in the Light (1 Jn. 1:7; cf. 1 Jn. 2:6).
 - 7. according to God's commandments (2 Jn. 1:6).
 - 8. in the truth (3 Jn. 1:4; cf. Jn. 17:17).
- 5. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us of the **price** Jesus paid to reconcile us to God (Eph. 2:11-16).
 - a. Jesus reconciled us to God through His blood (Eph. 2:13-16).
 - 1. Jesus shed His blood on the cross to reconcile us to God (Col. 1:20).
 - a. Jesus was a propitiation by His blood (Rom. 3:25; cf. 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10).
 - 2. We are reconciled to God when we are baptized (Col. 2:12-14).
 - b. Jesus died for our sins (1 Pet. 3:18). He gave Himself for our sins (Gal. 1:4).

D. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us:

- 1. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us be **thankful** for the spiritual blessings we enjoy in Christ (Eph. 1:3; cf. Eph. 2:5; Rom. 6:3-5).
 - a. This constant reminder helps in our daily walk of life.
 - 1. We walk as people who owe an unpayable debt (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).
 - 2. We walk as people whose confidence abides in the Lord (Rom. 8:28-39; Phil. 4:4-13).
 - 3. We rejoice all the time, pray all the time, give thanks all the time, hold fast to what is good, and abstain from every form of evil (1 Th. 5:16-22).
- 2. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us remain **humble** (Phil. 2:5-8; cf. Eph. 4:1-2) knowing that we are not saved by our own works (Eph. 2:8-9). We are saved because of God's work and Jesus' work.
 - a. We must be humble to be saved (Ja. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).
 - b. We must remain humble to remain faithful to God (1 Cor. 10:12; cf. Pr. 16:18).
- 3. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us **love** God. We love God and

- Jesus because of they loved us first (1 Jn. 4:19).
- a. Because of love, we obey God (1 Jn. 5:3) and Jesus (Jn. 14:15).
 - b. Because we obey Jesus, we are saved (Heb. 5:9).
4. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us **diligently serve** God being mindful of our purification (2 Pet. 1:9).
 5. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us be **forgiving** toward others (Col. 3:13).
 - a. If we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us (Matt. 6:12; 18:21-35).
 6. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us be concerned for other people's **souls** (Eph. 2:1; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - a. We will be diligent to teach the lost (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16).
 - b. We will fulfill the law of Christ by restoring brethren in a spirit of gentleness (Gal. 6:1-2; cf. Ja. 5:19-20).

E. Review:

1. We must remember that we were dead in our trespasses and sins when separated from Christ (Eph. 2:1, 11-12). We derive important benefits from remembering our lost condition prior to being united with Christ (Rom. 6:5; Eph. 2:5).
2. Remembering our former separation from Christ reminds us of the things that are most important in life.
3. Remembering our former separation from Christ helps us live in a manner pleasing to God.

XII. Be Imitators of God

A. Introduction:

1. Christians are imitators (followers) of God (Eph. 5:1). Therefore, we walk in love (Eph. 5:2), walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:3-14), are wise (Eph. 5:15-17), and are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-21).
2. In this lesson, we study Paul's exhortation to be imitators (followers) of God (Eph. 5:1).

B. Be Imitators (followers) of God (Eph. 5:1).

1. To "imitate" ("follow") means *to copy*.
 - a. We imitate (copy) God. Therefore, we walk in love (Eph. 5:2), walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:3-14), are wise (Eph. 5:15-17), and are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-21).
 - b. We imitate God as dear (beloved) children.
 1. We imitate God as children whom He loves. Our response to God's love is to walk in love (Eph. 5:2; cf. 1 Jn. 4:19).
2. Jesus is God (Jn. 1:1; 1 Jn. 1:1). Christians imitate (copy) Jesus (Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 2:21).
3. Christians are also commanded to imitate (copy):
 - a. the apostles (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; 1 Th. 1:6; cf. Phil. 3:17; 2 Th. 2:15; 3:6, 14).
 - b. the churches of God (1 Th. 2:14).
 - c. those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Heb. 6:12; cf. Phil. 3:17; Heb. 13:7).
 - d. everything that is good (3 Jn. 1:11; cf. 1 Pet. 2:21; 3:13).
4. Christians imitate God by retaining (holding fast) the standard (pattern) of sound words revealed in God's word (2 Tim. 1:13; 3:16-17; cf. 1 Tim. 6:3-5).

C. Walk in love (Eph. 5:2).

1. To imitate God (Eph. 5:1), we must walk in love (Eph. 5:2).
 - a. "Love" ("agape") is devotion resulting from a mental conviction (i.e., a determination of will and judgment). See, Lesson Seven.
 - b. God is love (1 Jn. 4:8). God saves us because he loves us (Eph. 2:4).
 1. Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God (1 Jn. 4:7-8).
 2. We love because He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19; cf. 1 Jn. 4:11).
2. We must walk in love as Jesus walked in love (Eph. 5:2).
 - a. Jesus loved God and obeyed Him (Jn. 15:10; Heb. 5:7-10; cf. Phil. 2:5-8). As Jesus, we must love God and obey Him (1 Jn. 5:3).
3. Walking in love:
 - a. we **obey God** (1 Jn. 5:3) and Jesus (Jn. 14:15; 15:10; cf. Heb. 5:9).
 - b. our **faith works through love** (Gal. 5:6, 22-23).
 - c. we are **rooted and grounded in love** (Eph. 3:17).
 - d. we are **strengthened through knowledge of Christ's love** (Eph. 3:17-19).
 - e. we **love** Christians (Eph. 4:2, 15) and our neighbor (Matt. 22:39; cf. Matt. 5:43-

48).

- f. we **assemble** to stimulate each other to love and good works (Heb. 10:24-25; cf. Eph. 4:15-16).

D. Walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:3-14).

1. To imitate God (Eph. 5:1), we must walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:3-14).
 - a. Jesus is the Light (Jn. 1:1-14; 8:12). The gospel Jesus preached is the Light (Matt. 4:14-17).
 - b. We walk as children of Light by obeying the gospel of Jesus (Jn. 3:19-21; 12:46; Eph. 5:9-10, 15-17; Heb. 5:9; 2 Jn. 1:9; cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-23; 2 Th. 1:8-10).
 1. Therefore, Christians are the light of the world (Matt. 5:14-16).
 - c. Walking in the Light, we are saints in Christ's kingdom (Col. 1:12-13) having been forgiven of our sins (Col. 2:14) and reconciled to God through the blood of Christ (Col. 1:20, 22; 1 Jn. 1:7).
2. Walking as children of Light, we cannot be partakers (have fellowship) with the sons of disobedience (Eph. 5:6-8, 11; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-18).
 - a. We do not have fellowship with immoral people in the church (1 Cor. 5:3-5, 11-14; cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Th. 3:6, 14).
 1. We have fellowship with God, Jesus, and the apostles (1 Jn. 1:1-3).
 - b. The fruit of the Light (some texts read "Spirit") is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth (Eph. 5:9; cf. Gal. 5:22-23).
 1. We are known by our fruits (Matt. 7:15-23; 12:33; 13:23).
 2. We are fruitful branches of Christ by keeping His commandments (Jn. 15:1-10).

E. As imitators of God, we are wise (Eph. 5:15-17).

1. To imitate God (Eph. 5:1), we must be **wise** (Eph. 5:15-17).
 - a. We must be careful (circumspect) not walking as fools but as wise people.
2. **Christ** is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24, 30).
 - a. We are wise because we are in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 2:3).
 - b. The word of Christ dwells in us with all wisdom (Col. 3:16-17).
 - c. We are made wise through the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15-17; cf. Rom. 1:16; 1 Th. 2:13).
 - d. We should pray for wisdom (Ja. 1:5).
 1. We must have the wisdom which is from above. Christians do not have the wisdom which is earth, natural, and demonic (Ja. 3:13-18).
 2. Wisdom is reflected by one's behavior (Ja. 3:13-18).
3. If we are wise, we will:
 - a. **make the most** of (redeem) our time (Eph. 5:16).
 1. The days are evil (Eph. 5:16); therefore, Christians make the most of their time to do good (cf. Col. 4:5-6).
 - b. **understand** what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17).
 1. "Understand" literally means *to put together*; hence, *to comprehend*,

understand. It implies, *to act piously in obedience to God's will*.

2. Christians are wise because they understand God's will and, therefore, obey.

F. Be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-21).

1. To imitate God (Eph. 5:1), we must be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-21).
2. Christians are not to get drunk with wine (Eph. 5:18).
 - a. "Drunk" is a verb meaning *to get drunk, intoxicated, filled with intoxicating drink*. Here, as a verb, it denotes the act of becoming drunk (i.e., getting drunk, drinking to get drunk) and not only the state of drunkenness.
 - b. Getting drunk with wine is dissipation (excess, debauchery) (Eph. 5:18).
 1. "Dissipation" means *unsavedness*; hence, *profligacy, riot, excess, dissipation, debauchery*.
 - a. Christians do not participate in carnal, sinful activities in the excesses of dissipation (1 Pet. 4:3-4). This includes drunkenness and drinking parties (1 Pet. 4:3).
 2. The drinking of wine to get drunk is dissipation. It is neither profitable for salvation nor for service to God.
3. Christians are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18; cf. Rom. 8:4-9).
 - a. We walk according to the Spirit. We do not walk according to the flesh (Rom. 8:4; cf. Gal. 5:16-24).
 1. People who get drunk with wine are walking according to the flesh and not according to the Spirit.
 - b. We set our minds upon the things of the Spirit. We do not set our minds upon the things of the flesh (Rom. 8:5; Phil. 4:8-9; Col. 3:1-4).
 - c. We are in the Spirit and the Spirit dwells in us (Rom. 8:9; cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20).
4. Being filled with the Spirit, we speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19).
 - a. We worship God in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:24).
 - b. God cannot be worshiped when getting drunk (Eph. 5:18).
5. Being filled with the Spirit, we have a thankful and submissive heart (Eph. 5:20).
 - a. Drunkards are unthankful and unsubmissive.

F. Review:

1. We imitate God (Eph. 5:1), Jesus (Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 2:21), the apostles (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; 1 Th. 1:16; cf. Phil. 3:17), the churches of God (1 Th. 2:14), those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Heb. 6:12; cf. Phil. 3:17; Heb. 13:7), and everything that is good (1 Pet. 3:13; cf. 1 Pet. 2:21).
2. Therefore, we walk in love (Eph. 5:2), walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:3-14), are wise (Eph. 5:15-17), and are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-21).

XIII. Sow Bountifully

A. Introduction:

1. If we sow sparingly, we will reap sparingly. And if we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).
2. In this lesson, we study Paul's exhortation to sow bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).

B. Parable of the sower (Matt. 13:1-23; Mk. 4:1-20; Lk. 8:4-15):

1. We hear, accept, and understand the word of God. Therefore, we bear fruit (Matt. 13:8, 23; Mk. 4:20).
 - a. We hold fast to the word because we have good and honest hearts (Matt. 13:8; Lk. 8:15). We love the truth (2 Th. 2:10).
 - b. Christians understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17).
 1. "Understand" literally means *to put together*; hence, *to comprehend, understand*. It implies, *to act piously in obedience to God's will*.
 2. Christians are wise because they understand God's will and, therefore, obey.
2. Bearing fruit, we sow:
 - a. to the Spirit (Gal. 6:8) in obedience to Christ (Gal. 6:2).
 - b. by doing good (Gal. 6:6-10).
 - c. by being benevolent to the saints (2 Cor. 9:1-7).

C. Christians sow to the Spirit (Gal. 6:8).

1. We do **not sow to our own flesh** (Gal. 6:8).
 - a. We do not love the world and its lusts (1 Jn. 2:15-17).
 - b. We do not obey sin in its lusts (Rom. 6:12).
 - c. We do not carry out the desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:16) and do not participate in the deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
2. We **sow to the Spirit by obeying Jesus** (Gal. 6:2; cf. 1 Cor. 9:21; Heb. 5:9; 2 Jn. 1:9).
 - a. When we obey Jesus, we walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16; 6:2) and are led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18). Because, we walk by faith (Gal. 5:5; cf. Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7).
 - b. When we obey Jesus, we bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22; Jn. 15:1-10).

D. God provides Christians with seed to sow.

1. We sow spiritual things when we **teach and preach** God's word (1 Cor. 9:11).
 - a. We must be living under the law of Christ to sow spiritual things (1 Cor. 9:21).
 - b. We are sowing the word of God when we teach and preach God's word (Matt. 13:1-23).
2. We sow seed from God when we are **benevolent** (2 Cor. 9:1-7; Gal. 6:6-10).
 - a. God enriches us so that we have abundance for every good deed (2 Cor. 9:6-11).
 1. God supplies all our needs when we are benevolent (Phil. 4:19).

2. If we give, it will be given to us (Lk. 6:38).
 - a. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).
- b. God gives us the seed (financial blessings) we need to sow (be benevolent) (2 Cor. 9:10-11).
 1. Benevolence (sowing) is a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God (Phil. 4:18).
- c. Thanksgiving and prayer to God results from the Christians to whom we are benevolent (2 Cor. 9:11-15; cf. Phil. 4:18-20).

E. If we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).

1. We sow when we are benevolent. We reap when God materially blesses us to be benevolent (2 Cor. 9:1-6).
2. Principles of the collection (sowing) in the church (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8-9):
 - a. We are to give on the **first day of the week** (1 Cor. 16:1).
 1. This is the only day authorized for the church to take up a collection.
 - b. We are to give as we have **prospered** (1 Cor. 16:2). Our giving is to be in proportion to our income.
 - c. We are to give as we have **purposed** (2 Cor. 9:7). We must predetermine the amount we give so that our giving will not be grudgingly and not affected by covetousness (2 Cor. 9:5).
 - d. We should give **cheerfully** (2 Cor. 9:7).
 1. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).
 - e. Our giving is an acceptable sacrifice, **well-pleasing** to God (Phil. 4:17-18).
 1. We lay up treasure in heaven when we give (1 Tim. 6:17-19; cf. Matt. 6:19-21).
 - f. The result of our giving is the **glorification** of God (2 Cor. 9:12-15).
3. Principles of giving as individual Christians:
 - a. Individual Christians have a responsibility to take care of their own **families** so that the church is not burdened (1 Tim. 5:3-4, 8, 16).
 - b. Individual Christians are to do good **to all**, especially those who are of the **household of the faith** (Gal. 6:3-10).
 1. Christians must examine their "own" work.
 - a. Here, Paul is writing concerning Christians' "own" personal responsibilities.
 2. Christians are to share with those who teach (Gal. 6:6 cf. Phil. 1:5; 4:15).
 3. Christians are to not lose heart in doing good (Gal. 6:9).
 - c. Individual Christians are to **"visit"** orphans and widows in their distress (Ja. 1:27; cf. Matt. 25:36, 39).
 1. "Visit" (*episkeptomai*) means *to look upon or after, to inspect, to examine with the eyes in order to help*.
 - a. This command cannot be accomplished without personally seeing to their needs (cf. Matt. 25:36, 39).
 - b. An individual who does not personally see to the needs of orphans

and widows (Ja. 1:27) as he has opportunity (Gal. 6:10) has an unpure and defiled religion (Ja. 1:27; cf. Ja. 2:14-26).

1. Dorcas is an example of a believer being charitable to widows (Acts 9:36, 39).
4. God has ordained that Christians who sow bountifully will reap bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).
 - a. God, through His divine power, makes all grace abound toward us so that we have an abundance of material goods for every good deed (2 Cor. 9:8).
 1. The more we sow (benevolent), the more God financially blesses us to have sufficiency to be benevolent (2 Cor. 9:6, 10-11).
 - b. The result of Christians sowing and reaping is equality (2 Cor. 8:13-14).
 1. Brethren who gather much do not have too much, and brethren who gather little have no lack (2 Cor. 8:15).

F. We reap what we sow (Gal. 6:2-10).

1. If we sow to the flesh by disobeying the law of Christ, we will reap corruption (Gal. 6:2, 8).
 - a. If we do not obey the gospel, we will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God (2 Th. 1:8-10).
2. If we sow to the Spirit by obeying the law of Christ, we will reap eternal life (Gal. 6:2, 8).
 - a. When we obey the truth, we purify our souls and are born again (1 Pet. 1:22-23; cf. Heb. 5:9). Our names are written in the book of life (Rev. 3:5) and we will enter into the holy city of God if we are faithful until death (Rev. 2:10; 20:11-22:5).

G. Review:

1. If we sow sparingly, we will reap sparingly. And if we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).
2. Christians are the people who hear, accept, and understand the word of God. Therefore, we bear fruit (Matt. 13:8, 23; Mk. 4:20) by sowing to the Spirit (Gal. 6:8), doing good (Gal. 6:6-10), and being benevolent (2 Cor. 9:1-7).
3. God provides us with seed to sow (1 Cor. 9:11; 2 Cor. 9:1-7; Gal. 6:6-10).
4. We reap what we sow (Gal. 6:2-10). If we sow to the flesh by disobeying the law of Christ, we will reap corruption (Gal. 6:2, 8). If we sow to the Spirit by obeying the law of Christ, we will reap eternal life (Gal. 6:2, 8).