

ETS 4/9

Assignment Sheet

Date _____

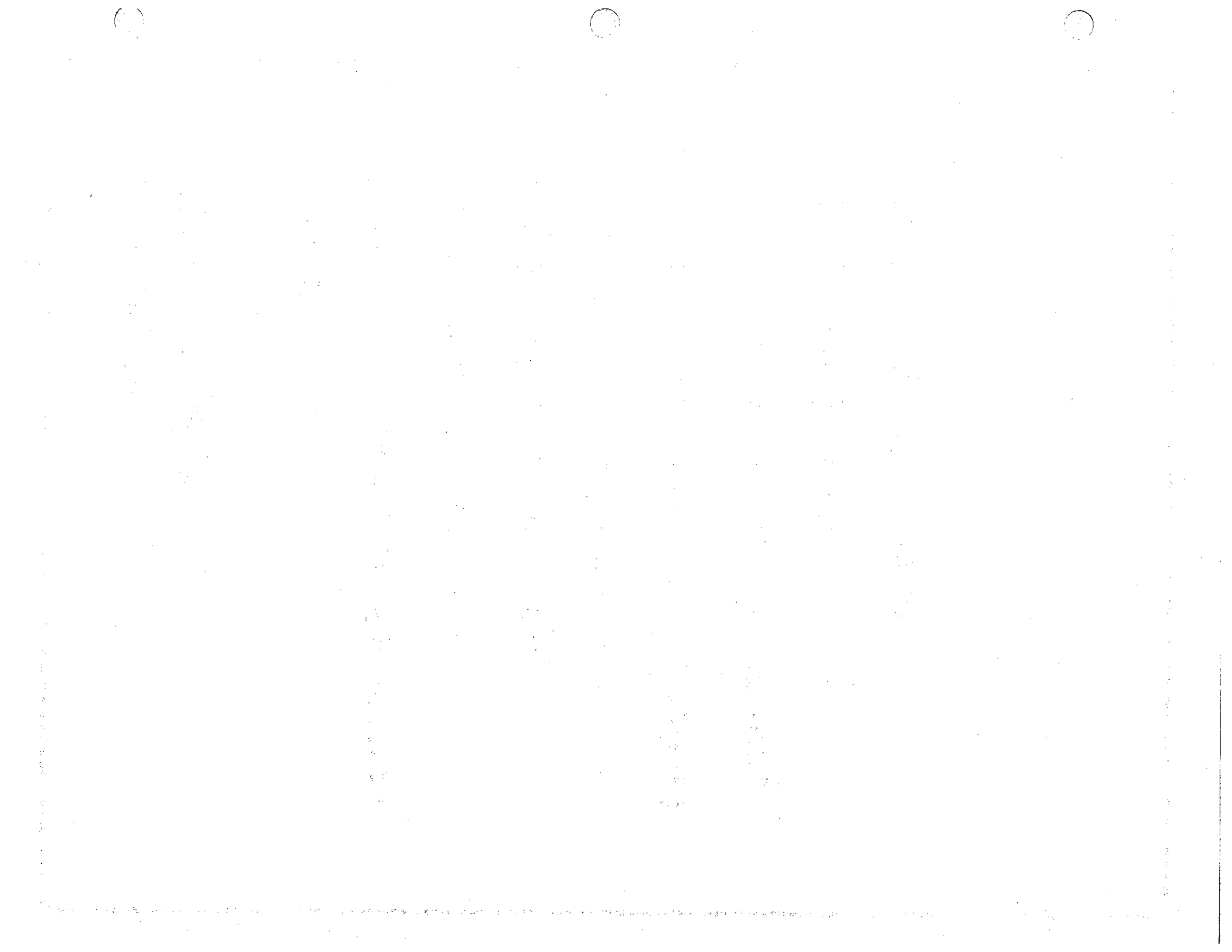
Name _____ Topic A Survey of the Bible

Lesson Overview: Genesis to Revelation Class _____

Lecture	Completed	
	Yes	No
Review "Overview: Genesis to Revelation"		
Bible Study		
I John 5		
PSMA		
Do 5 PSMA		
Reading		
Bible Reading Chart		
Pursuit of Holiness--Chapter 9		
Evangelism/Follow-Up/Discipleship		
Pray for 1 person to win to Christ.		
Pray for your disciple.		
Meet with your disciple.		
Scripture Memory		
Write in 2 verses you memorized.		
Review previous verses.		

A SURVEY OF THE BIBLE

- **Pictorial Survey**
- **Overview: Genesis to Revelation**
- **The Promise to Adam**
- **The Promise to Abraham**
- **The Promise to David**
- **The Promise of a New Covenant**
- **The Promise Through Prophecy**
- **The Promise Fulfilled**
- **The Promise Expanded**



OVERVIEW: GENESIS TO REVELATION

Introduction

Many people think of the Bible as a Holy Book which contains the message of God. It seems to them an assortment of nice stories that somehow relate to God, but just HOW they relate is not very clear. Many fail to understand the Bible's central message, or to see how all of the parts fit together or relate to one another.

In reality the Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man--which tells the most amazing story the world has ever known. It is the story of how God created man, how man rebelled against God, and how God in His love made a way for man to be restored to fellowship with Him through the Person of Jesus Christ.

The Bible has sixty-six books which are divided into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. These books were written by some forty authors over a period of some 1,500 years, but they are amazingly integrated into one story--the story of God's love and man's salvation.

Old Testament

In our English Bibles the Old Testament contains thirty-nine books that may be divided into four sections:

- The Law--5 books
- History--12 books
- Poetry--5 books
- Prophecy--17 books

New Testament

The New Testament contains twenty-seven books that may be divided into four sections:

- The Gospels--4 books
- History--1 book
- Epistles--21 books (13 of which were written by Paul)
- Prophecy--1 book

"The New Testament is in the Old concealed..."

The Bible at a Glance (66 Books)

"... The Old Testament is in the New revealed."

Old Testament (39 Books)

New Testament (27 Books)

Law-
Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

Prophecy
Major Prophets
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

Gospels
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

History
Acts

Prophecy
Revelation

History and Government -

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
I Samuel
II Samuel
I Kings
II Kings
I Chronicles
II Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

Minor Prophets

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

Epistles

Paul's Letters

Romans
I Corinthians
II Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
I Thessalonians
II Thessalonians
I Timothy
II Timothy
Titus
Philemon

General Letters

Hebrews
James
I Peter
II Peter
I John
II John
III John
Jude

Poetry

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

--God used different men over a period of about 1,500 years in writing the Bible (1400 B.C. to A.D.100).--

Adam and Eve

NOTES

If one is to understand the Bible, he must comprehend the first three chapters of Genesis because these chapters set the stage for understanding all the rest of the Bible from Genesis 4 through Revelation 22.

The Bible opens with the account of the creation of the universe, and how God created the light, firmament, earth, sea, sun, moon and creatures of the air, land and sea. The crowning work of God's creation was man, whom He made in His image for fellowship with Himself. God placed man in a beautiful place called the Garden of Eden and gave him dominion over all the rest of creation. Since man was created in God's image, he had a will, an intellect and emotions, and God gave man the opportunity to exercise his will by placing one restriction on him. God instructed man not to eat of the fruit of one tree called The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 2:17

Since no suitable companion was found for Adam, God caused a deep sleep to fall on him and created Eve as his helpmeet from one of the man's ribs.

The Fall

Satan, in the form of a serpent, deceived Eve into taking the forbidden fruit, and she gave some to Adam who also ate it. Now, because of man's disobedience and rebellion, he was cut off and separated from God.

The Promise

If the story had ended here, the Bible would have been a very short book. However, God did not abandon mankind in his sin. He gave Adam and Eve a promise that one day the seed of the woman whom Satan had deceived would destroy the power of Satan and make a way for man to return to God.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:15

All the rest of the Bible is the story of how God fulfilled this promise and made a way to restore man to fellowship with Himself. Only the events which are relevant to the fulfillment of this promise are recorded in the Bible.

Cain and Abel

After Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden in punishment for their sin, God made them coats from the skin of an animal. This was the first shedding of blood for sin and is the forerunner of a system which God would establish at a later date under Old Testament Law. Adam and Eve had two sons named Cain and Abel. One day when they were offering sacrifices to God, Cain's gift of fruits and vegetables was rejected by God while Abel's animal sacrifice of blood was accepted. In anger Cain killed Abel. Soon after this God gave Adam and Eve another son named Seth.

Men Multiply for Many Years

For centuries men multiplied on the earth, and became more and more corrupt. The Bible records that "the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). There were some good men, like Enoch, who walked with God, but most were evil. God decided to destroy all of mankind through a great flood, but because of His promise to Adam and Eve, He preserved man's seed. This He did through Noah and his family.

Noah and the Ark

Noah was a man who loved and obeyed God. God warned Noah of the coming flood and told him to build an ark which would carry pairs of each kind of animal in the world to preserve the species.

Noah and his sons labored at this great task for 120 years until they had completed the ark. It was 450

feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Then Noah loaded it with the animals and provisions, and the rain began to fall. It continued for 40 days and nights, and in addition water came from the lower parts of the earth. All the world was covered, and all life died except for Noah and his family and animals. The ark came to rest 150 days later on Mount Ararat where it is believed to remain to this day. It took another three months for the water to recede so that Noah could leave the ark and free the animals. Immediately after leaving the ark, Noah made a sacrifice to the Lord. At that time God promised that He would never again destroy the world by flood and gave the rainbow as a sign to all mankind. We are all descendants of Noah and his sons.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth--Noah's Sons

As men began to multiply again, their hearts were still in rebellion to God. Ham, Noah's son, had a son named Cush who in turn had a son named Nimrod. Nimrod led his people out into the plains of Shinar where he set up the first organized false religion. He and the people began to build a tower to reach into Heaven. The tower displeased God, who put a stop to it by confusing the language of the builders so that they could no longer continue. The people divided up and went separate ways. The sons of Ham became the fathers of the dark-skinned African races. The descendants of Japheth populated Asia Minor and Europe. The promise of God was carried through the sons of Shem, among whose descendants were God's chosen nation, the Hebrews.

Abraham--2000 B. C.

One of Shem's descendants was named Abraham. He was personally visited by God while living in Ur of the Chaldees and was commanded to leave that sinful place and go to a place where God would direct him. Abraham and his wife, Sarah, obeyed and left Ur with their household to follow God. God promised Abraham that He would make him a great nation, and that he would be a blessing to the whole world. The only problem was that Sarah was barren, and Abraham didn't even have one son. Abraham had a son (Ishmael) by Sarah's servant Hagar, which was not God's plan because Abraham and Sarah had not trusted God to fulfill His promise and had instead taken things into their own hands. However, because of His promise, God now would also make a great nation out of a seed

that never should have been. Ishmael became the father of the Arabic people, many of whom are in great opposition to Christianity. God's plan was to give Abraham a child through Sarah, which He did. Isaac was born, the son through whom the promise would come. God gave the land that Israel later occupied as an eternal inheritance to Abraham and his descendants.

Isaac and Rebekah/Jacob and Esau

Isaac married Rebekah, and they had two sons: Jacob and Esau.

Although Esau was the eldest son, Jacob tricked him into selling his birthright to him for a bowl of porridge. He also stole Esau's blessing from Isaac and had to run for his life from his enraged brother. One night Jacob personally encountered the angel of God who wrestled with him and put his hip out of joint. This was a life-changing experience for Jacob, whose name was then changed by God to Israel. Jacob had twelve sons who eventually became the twelve tribes of Israel. He was also told by God that his descendants would spend four hundred years in Egypt.

Joseph

Joseph was one of Jacob's younger sons and was loved by his father. However, his ten older brothers were jealous of his favored position, so they sold him to some slave traders who brought him to Egypt and sold him as a slave. This was part of God's plan to prepare the way for the Israelites' four-hundred-year stay in Egypt. Joseph, because of his obedience to God and his integrity, rose to the position of Prime Minister by the time his family was finally reunited with him in Egypt. Because of Joseph, Jacob and his sons were allowed to stay in Egypt and thereby survive the famine that had swept the entire region. However, after Joseph's death new Pharaohs came to power, who eventually enslaved the Hebrews and caused them to serve the Egyptians for many years.

Moses and the Exodus

In spite of their slavery and mistreatment, the Hebrews continued to multiply until they numbered some 2 1/2 to 3 million. Because of their bondage they cried out to God, and He raised up a man named Moses.

Moses was a Hebrew who had been raised and educated by Pharaoh's daughter as her own son. Moses became the leader of the Israelites, and after God sent ten plagues, Pharaoh decided to let the Hebrews leave Egypt. Moses led them out as far as the Red Sea, where God miraculously caused the sea to be held back so that His people could pass on dry ground. Then when Pharaoh's army tried to pursue them, God caused the sea to close up--drowning the Egyptians. At Mount Sinai God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. At Kadesh-barnea the people refused to enter the Promised Land through lack of faith and disobedience and, therefore, were doomed by God to wander in the wilderness for forty years. Even Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land because of disobedience to God, but at the end of forty years he was allowed by God to see the land at a distance from Mount Pisgah before he died.

Joshua--1400 B.C.

After Moses' death God chose Joshua, who had been Moses' assistant, to lead the people into the Promised Land that God had sworn to Abraham. The walls of Jericho fell, and the Israelites, under Joshua's leadership, conquered much of the Promised Land. However, at the end of Joshua's life part of the land was still in the hands of the enemy. After Joshua's death there wasn't a trained leader to replace him. Israel was left in confusion with no leader to follow.

Time of the Judges--1390-1050 B.C.

Because Israel's tribal leaders were rebellious, they inevitably fell into sin and, therefore, under the punishment of God. The Bible records of this period that "every man did what was right in his own eyes." When the Israelites cried out to God for deliverance, God would raise up a judge--or military leader--who would deliver Israel from oppression. The people were not happy with this system and demanded a king, like all the other nations. So Samuel the prophet anointed Saul as king of Israel.

Saul--Israel's First King--1050 B.C.

Saul ruled Israel for forty years and took control of more of the Promised Land. When Saul became disobedient, God raised up David, the son of Jesse, to rule in his place.

David--1010 B.C.

NOTES

David was a humble shepherd, whom God chose to be the king of Israel. David's family line went right back to Abraham, and through him God renewed His promise that one day his seed would rule Israel forever. David was "the man after God's own heart" who truly loved God and desired to obey Him. David conquered more of the Promised Land and brought Israel to great heights of power. In his later years he committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband, Uriah, murdered. But he truly repented, and God forgave him and allowed him to continue his rule until the end of his life. However, his sin had costly consequences in causing rebellion within his own family and repercussions within the rule of his son, Solomon, who assumed the throne after him.

Solomon--970 B.C.

Solomon brought Israel to its Golden Age. Israel had conquered almost all of the Promised Land and was at peace for the first time in many years. Solomon built the beautiful Temple for God which had been David's dream. In his early years Solomon walked with God, and God blessed him with great wisdom and riches more than the world had ever known. For many years he ruled Israel in godliness, but Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines who drew his heart away from God, so that at the end of his life the kingdom was divided.

The Divided Kingdom--930 B.C.

After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam assumed the throne, but he dealt harshly with the people of Israel, and Jeroboam, son of Nebat, led a rebellion against him. Ten of the tribes of Israel followed Jeroboam. Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam's leadership. Unfortunately, neither Jeroboam nor Rehoboam were godly leaders, and both kingdoms were plunged into sin and idolatry. Both kingdoms were later taken into captivity because of their sins.

Jeroboam--930 B.C.

Jeroboam became the leader of the ten northern tribes of Israel. Their capital eventually became the city of Samaria. There was war and dissension between the

ten northern tribes of Israel and the two southern tribes of Judah most of the time they existed. The ten tribes of Israel lasted until 721 B.C. when they were marched into exile by the Assyrian king Sargon II. They were ruled by some nineteen kings who were all bad. The entire kingdom only lasted for 200 years.

Rehoboam--930 B.C.

The fulfilling of the promise that God first gave to Adam, reaffirmed in Abraham, and renewed in David, was to be continued in the southern kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam, who remained leader of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, kept Jerusalem the capital city of Judah. Much of the time, Judah was at war with the northern ten tribes of Israel as well as with Egypt, Assyria and Babylon. During the next 344 years, Judah (or the southern kingdom) had nineteen kings and one queen. Because eight of these leaders were good and drove idol worship out of the land, God blessed Judah and caused it to be extended longer than the northern kingdom. But in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple and took the southern kingdom into captivity just as the prophets had warned many times before. The Hebrews did, however, retain their national identity and religion while in exile in Babylon.

The Restoration--539 B.C.

King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and offered to allow the Jews to return to their homeland. (The returning exiles were now called Jews because of the prominence of their territory--Judah. "Jews" comes from "Judah-ites.") Zerubabel led about 50,000 Jews back to Jerusalem with orders to rebuild the Temple. In 458 B.C. another Jew named Ezra brought a small band of about 6,000 Jews back to Jerusalem to restore the religious life of the community. Then, in 444 B.C. Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in fifty-two days. The city was now completed, and the Jews were restored, but the land no longer belonged to them.

Malachi--400 B.C.

Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet. He foretold the coming of a messenger--like Elijah--who would be sent from God to prepare the Way of the Lord.

400 Years of Silence

After Malachi's prophecy, no word was heard from God for 400 years. During this time the world was ruled by the Greek and Roman Empires, who successively dominated the Middle East, but even during this time the Jews amazingly retained their national identity and religious worship.

The New Testament

God was now ready to begin the fulfillment of the long awaited promise. The New Testament tells the amazing story of how God actually and historically accomplished it.

John the Baptist

This was the Elijah that Malachi had prophesied about 400 years earlier. John's mission was to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah. He called people to repent, be baptized for the remission of sins, and await the coming of the Messiah.

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus was the Son of God--God Himself Incarnate--born of the Virgin Mary. He came into the world to die for our sins. He was baptized by John the Baptist and at the age of thirty began a public ministry which lasted three years until His death. Great masses and multitudes followed Him as He called people to repent and turn to God. He taught them simply the deep truths of God. In His lifetime He called twelve men to be His apostles, and He trained them to go out into the world proclaiming His message. At the end of His three-year ministry He had risen to such popularity among the Jews that the people wanted to proclaim Him king as He rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey.

The Jewish leaders turned against Him because of His popularity and because He exposed their hypocrisy and religiosity with His simple but profound teachings. He was arrested, tried, and crucified in less than twenty-four hours. As He hung on the cross, God placed upon Him the sin of the whole world. He who was sinless became sin itself to free man from the age-old penalty imposed in the Garden of Eden. Because He was the Son of God, God raised Him from the

dead on the third day--thereby vanquishing forever the power of death and hell for all who accept Christ's sacrifice for sins. (The head of the serpent had been forever bruised by the seed of the woman.) After His resurrection, Jesus spent forty days preparing His disciples for the task of carrying the Good News of salvation into all the world. When He ascended bodily into Heaven, two angels appeared promising that one day He would return. As we wait for that return, we have been commanded to carry the Gospel into the ends of the earth.

The Acts of the Apostles

This historical book records the birth of the Christian Church through the coming of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus had promised would indwell believers after His return to Heaven. In the early days of the Church, God made it very clear that the Gospel should be preached to all people--Jews and Gentiles--without the restrictions of Jewish religion being imposed on new believers. With the conversion of the Apostle Paul, God began the expansion of the Church into Asia Minor and Europe.

The Epistles

These are letters written to the young congregations of Christians which were established through the missionary outreach of the early Church. Thirteen of the twenty-one letters were written by Saint Paul. The others were written by Saint John, Saint Peter, Saint James and Saint Jude. The epistles established the doctrines of the Christian Church and set the standard of Christian conduct for all believers. Through the epistles Christian doctrines were distinctly separated from the perversions of heresy which grew up soon after Christ's death.

The Revelation

This book is a longer letter of the Apostle John; it is, however, more than an ordinary epistle in that it is prophetic in nature. The book gives us a glimpse into the end times, which include the sudden coming again of Jesus Christ. It is important to note that Bible scholars and theologians differ widely concerning the eschatological events (events of the last days) primarily outlined in this book. The various interpretations and details of different eschatological positions will be discussed in detail in the chapter entitled The Promise Through Prophecy.

All interpretations committed to the integrity of the Scriptures agree that the Book of Revelation includes the following:

- A picture of seven representative Churches
- A time of tribulation
- The personal, visible, glorious Second Coming of Christ
- The millennium (views differ as to when it occurs)
- The Great White Throne Judgment
- The new heaven and the new earth (the eternal state)

A Picture of Seven Representative Churches

The first three chapters of the book mention seven real Churches of that period of time (around A.D. 95), which serve as representative Churches of any age. They are examined by Christ and a report, both good and bad, is given for each Church (with some exceptions).

A Time of Tribulation

Much of the book is given to a vivid description of times that are hard on the human race and the people of God. The tribulation period is subject to a variety of interpretations.

The Personal Return of Christ

The description that is given of the return of Jesus Christ shows Him coming personally, visibly, and gloriously. The chronology of His coming is subject to the various interpretations.

The Millennium (Latin word for 1,000)

This is mentioned in chapter 20, and is a period when Satan is bound and Christ reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords. The specifics and when this occurs have a variety of interpretations.

The Great White Throne Judgment

This is mentioned also in chapter 20, and is a time when sinners will be judged for their sins. Anyone whose name does not appear in the Lamb's Book of Life is cast forth into the Lake of Fire.

The New Heaven and the New Earth

This is described in chapters 21 and 22, and is the abode of the righteous in which they will live for all eternity in the presence of God.



I JOHN 5

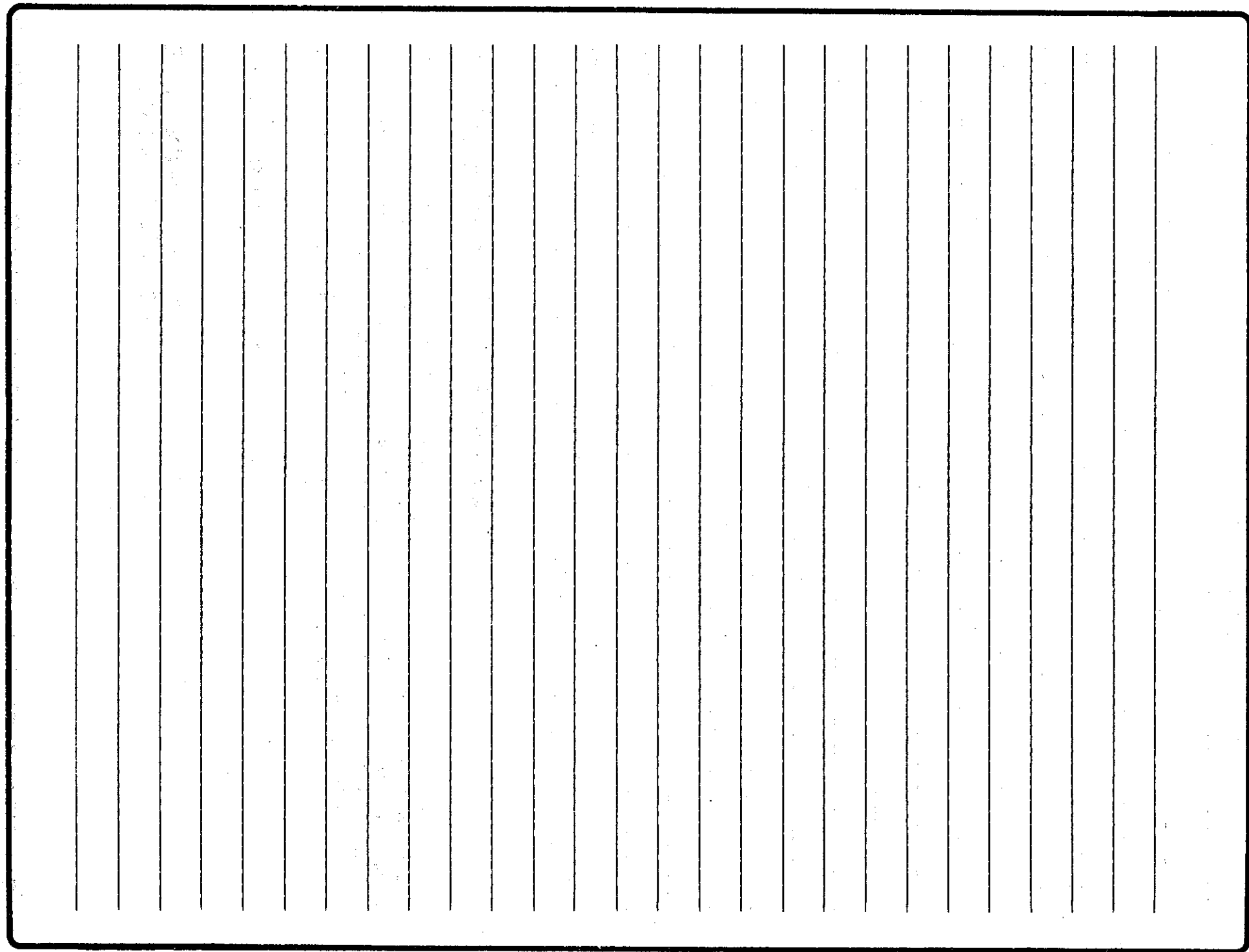
PRELIMINARY STUDY

Review your summaries of the first four chapters before you read Chapter 5. As you begin on I John 5 try to get an overall view of the chapter in several rapid readings. Then as you read it slowly, meditate and pray through the chapter verse by verse. As you meditate, ask questions like, what does the chapter say, what does it say that I don't understand, what does it say to me?

WHAT THE CHAPTER SAYS

Summarize the chapter by paragraphs averaging 5-10 words per verse (105-210 words for I John 5). Leave one line blank before each paragraph.

5:1-



Read over each of your paragraph summaries in this chapter and make a brief title for each. For example, a title for paragraph 1 could be "Obedience proves love, and faith gives victory," or "God requires obedience and faith." Write in your titles at the beginning of each paragraph.

WHAT IT SAYS THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND

List questions or problems that come up as you examine Chapter 5. When your study is completed, you may want to come back and search for answers. Use the methods suggested on page 16.

Verse

Questions

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

WHAT OTHER SCRIPTURES SAY

Find three more cross references for important verses in Chapter 5. Look for a parallel truth, an example, or perhaps a contrast to the truth stated. Sometimes you may want to find more than one cross reference for certain verses.

Verse

Cross Reference

Key Thought

3

II John 6

13

John 5:24

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

WHAT IT SAYS TO ME

Verse

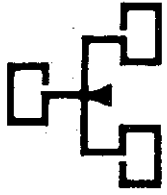
Statement of Application

Prayerfully go over the possible application verses above and choose the one which applies most to you now. Summarize your need, then meditate and pray about how you plan to put this new challenge into practice. Write a brief paragraph below (using "I," "me" and "my").

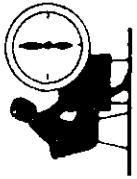
SUGGESTION

As a special project you may want to read over your applications from the previous chapters and check yourself on the progress you've made in applying them to your life. Pray and plan about putting them more into practice.

"For a Christian, fellowship with Christ is like air to a diver. No matter his sincerity or his experience--without this essential he will be useless."



PERSONAL & SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT AID

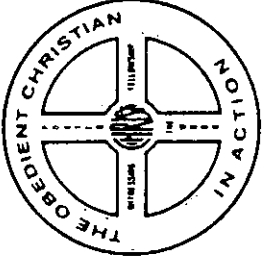


QUIET TIME

OBSERVATIONS

DATE

APPLICATION



BASICS

DESCRIPTION

CHECK

CURRENT REVIEW

BACK REVIEW

NEW VERSES

SCRIPTURE
MEMORY

BIBLE READING

BIBLE STUDY

PRAYER

WITNESSING

FOLLOW UP

EXERCISE

SLEEP

WAKE UP

MANAGEMENT

6 AM

Do List

Priorities

8

10

12 PM

2

4

6

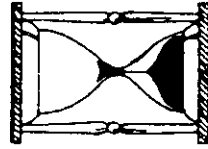
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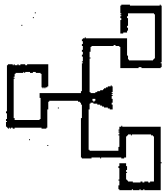
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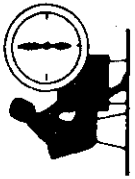
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PERSONAL & SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT AID

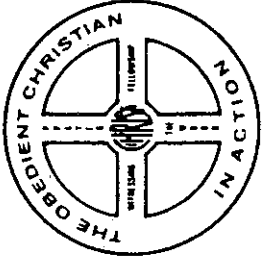


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FOLLOW UP

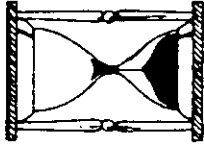
EXERCISE

SLEEP WAKE UP

MANAGEMENT

Do List

Priorities



WRITE

PHONE

SEE

6 AM

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12 PM

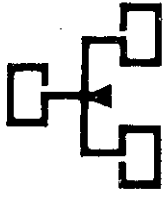
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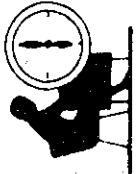
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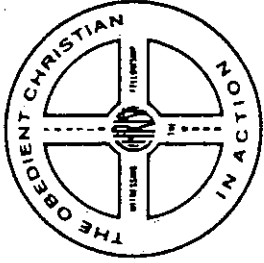
PERSONAL & SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT AID



QUIET TIME
OBSERVATIONS

DATE

APPLICATION



BASICS

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CURRENT REVIEW

BACK REVIEW

NEW VERSES

SCRIPTURE
MEMORY

BIBLE READING

BIBLE STUDY

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FOLLOW UP

EXERCISE

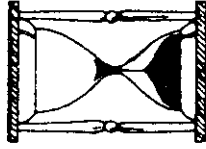
SLEEP

WAKE UP

MANAGEMENT

Do List

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WRITE

PHONE

SEE

6 AM

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12 PM

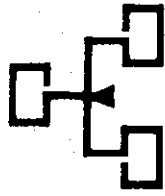
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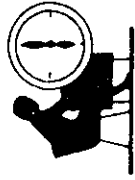
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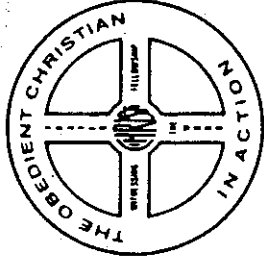
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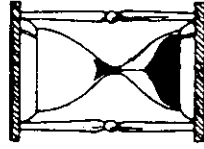
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MANAGEMENT

Do List

Priorities



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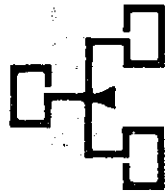
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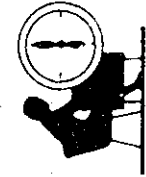
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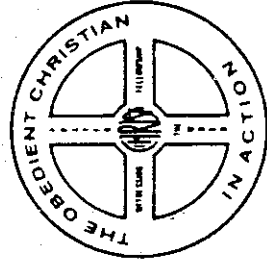
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BASICS

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SCRIPTURE
MEMORY

BIBLE READING

BIBLE STUDY

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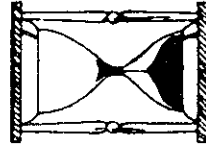
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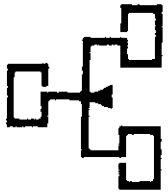
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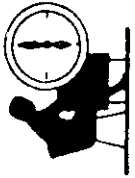
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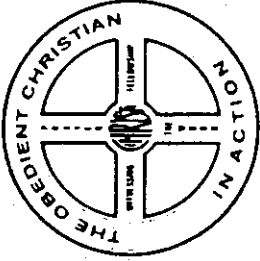
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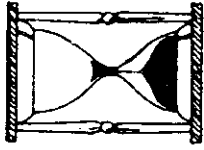
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	BIBLE STUDY		
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	EXERCISE		
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MANAGEMENT

Do List

Priorities



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Putting Sin to Death

Put to death, therefore,
Whatever belongs to
Your earthly nature:
Sexual immorality,
Impurity, lust, evil desires,
And greed, which is
Idolatry.

Colossians 3:5

The New Testament leaves no doubt that holiness is our responsibility. If we are to pursue holiness, we must take some decisive action. I once discussed a particular sin problem with a person who said, "I've been praying that God would motivate me to stop." Motivate him to stop? What if this person was saying in effect was that God had not done enough. It is so easy to ask God to do something more because that postpones facing up to our own responsibility.

The action we are to take is to put to death the misdeeds of the body (Romans 8:13). Paul uses the same expression in another book: "put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature" (Colossians 3:5). What does the expression put to death mean? The King James version uses the term "mortify." According to the dictionary, mortify means "to destroy the strength, vitality, or functioning of; to subdue or deaden."¹ To put to death the misdeeds of the body, then, is to destroy the strength and vitality of sin as it tries to reign in our bodies.

It must be clear to us that mortification, though, is something we do, cannot be carried out in our own strength. Well did the Puritan John Owen say, "Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, unto the end of a self-righteousness is the soul and substance of all false religion."² Mortification must be done by the strength and under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Owen says further, "The Spirit alone is sufficient for this work. All ways and means without Him are useless. He is the great efficient. He is the One who gives life and strength to our efforts."³

But though mortification must be done by the strength and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, it is nevertheless a work which we must do. Without the Holy Spirit's strength there will be no mortification, but without our working in His strength there will also be no mortification.

The crucial question then is, "How do we destroy the strength and vitality of sin?" If we are to work at this difficult task, we must first have conviction. We must be persuaded that a holy life of God's will for every Christian is important. We must believe that the pursuit of holiness is worth the effort and pain required to mortify the misdeeds of the body. We must be convinced that "without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Not only must we develop conviction for living a holy life in general, we must also develop convictions in specific areas of obedience.

These convictions are developed through exposure to the Word of God. Our minds have far too long been accustomed to the world's values. Even after we become Christians, the world around us constantly seeks to conform us to its value system. We are bombarded on every hand by temptations to indulge our sinful natures. That is why Paul said, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remake you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed" (Romans 12:2, JBP).

Only through God's Word are our minds remolded and our values renewed. When giving instructions for future kings of Israel, God said that a copy of His Law "shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes" (Deuteronomy 17:19). The king was to read God's law all the days of his life to learn to fear the Lord. In that way he could learn the necessity of holiness, and how he might know God's specific will in various situations.

Jesus said, "Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me" (John 14:21). Obedience is the pathway to holiness, but it is only as we have His commands that we can obey them. God's Word must be so strongly fixed in our minds that it becomes the dominant influence in our thoughts, our attitudes, and our actions. One of the most effective ways of influencing our minds is through memorizing Scripture. David said, "Thy word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against Thee" (Psalm 119:11).

To memorize Scripture effectively, you must have a plan. The plan should include a selection of well-chosen verses, a practical system for learning those verses, a systematic means of reviewing them to keep them fresh in your memory, and simple rules for continuing Scripture memory on your own.

I know from personal experience how important such a plan is. I instinctively realized the importance of God's Word for my life as a young Christian at college, but I did not know what to do about it. I memorized a few verses in a spasmodic and haphazard fashion, but they were of little profit to me. Then one day I was introduced to The Navigators Topical Memory System, and began a plan of regular Scripture memorization. Twenty-eight years later I am still profiting from this simple but effective plan of hiding God's Word in my heart.⁴

Of course, the goal of memorization is application of the Scripture to one's daily life. It is through the application of Scripture to specific life situations that we develop the kind of conviction to see us through the temptations that trip us up so easily.

A number of years ago my wife and I lived in Kansas City, Missouri, while I worked across the river in Kansas City, Kansas. As an employee working in Kansas, I was subject to Kansas state income tax, but as a resident of Missouri I did not have to pay the tax bill till the end of the year. We moved to Colorado in July of one year, and at the end of the year I realized that I owed Kansas for seven months of income tax. My first thought was to forget it; after all, the amount was fairly small and they wouldn't come all the way to Colorado to collect. But then the Holy Spirit brought to my mind a verse I had previously memorized, "Give everyone what you owe him; if you owe taxes, pay taxes" (Romans 13:7). God brought conviction to my heart that I must pay the State of Kansas the tax I owed out of obedience to God. God gave conviction that day regarding the payment of taxes, and this conviction has influenced and governed my actions ever since.

This is the way we develop conviction--by bringing God's Word to bear on specific situations that arise in our lives and determining God's will in that situation from the Word.

Many issues of life are clearly addressed in the Bible, and we would do well to memorize verses that speak to those issues. For example, God's will concerning honesty is plainly spelled out: "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor...He who has been stealing must steal no longer" (Ephesians 4:25,28). His will concerning abstinence from sexual immorality also is described clearly: "It is God's will that you should be holy; that you should avoid sexual immorality" (I Thessalonians 4:3). These are clearly stated issues where we should have no difficulty developing convictions as to God's will if we are willing to obey His Word.

But what about issues that are not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures--how do we determine God's will and develop conviction in those areas?

Years ago a friend gave me what he called his "Formula: How to Know Right from Wrong." The formula asks four questions based on three verses in I Corinthians:

- "Everything is permissible for me"--but not everything is beneficial" (I Corinthians 6:12). Question 1: Is it helpful--physically, spiritually, and mentally?
- "Everything is permissible for me"--but I will not be mastered by anything" (I Corinthians 6:12). Question 2: Does it bring me under its power?
- "Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall" (I Corinthians 8:13). Question 3: Does it hurt others?

- "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). Question 4: Does it glorify God?

As simple as this formula may appear, it is powerful in developing conviction--if we are willing to use it. These questions can get rather searching. But they must be asked if we are to pursue holiness as a total way of life. Let's apply these principles to some typical situations. Take the television programs you watch, for example. Are they helpful--physically, spiritually, or mentally? For some programs the answer may be yes, but for those to which you must honestly answer no, you should consider not viewing them.

What about the question, "Does it bring me under its power?" You may instantly apply that question to such habits as drinking, taking drugs, or smoking, and feel it doesn't apply to you. But again, what about the television set? Have certain programs "grabbed" you so that you just cannot miss them? If so, they have brought you under their power. I know a Christian woman who as a teenager was a national junior tennis champion. She was so caught up in tennis that it was her whole life, even though she was a Christian. When she began to consider the claims of Christian discipleship seriously, she realized tennis held a certain power over her which was keeping her from wholly following Christ. She then made a decision to hang up her tennis racket to break that power. Not till a number of years later, when the pull was totally gone, did she begin to play tennis again solely for recreational value, and with freedom of conscience.

This illustration of the tennis player emphasizes an important fact. It may not be the activity itself that determines whether something is sinful for us, but rather our response to that activity. Certainly the game of tennis is morally neutral and, under the right conditions, physically beneficial. But because this woman had made it an idol in her life, it had become sinful for her.

Let's examine the next question, "Does it hurt others?" with this same story of my tennis-playing friend. Suppose another Christian who enjoyed playing tennis purely for recreational value had insisted to this woman that there's nothing wrong with tennis. Technically that person would be correct, but he would be insisting on a view that would likely be harmful to the young woman's spiritual life. Many activities, strictly speaking, are morally neutral, but because of some immoral associations in a person's past may be detrimental to that person, at least for a time. Those of us who do not have that immoral association must be considerate of these people lest we cause them to slip back into an activity that is sinful for them.

But what about those areas in which Christians differ in their convictions as to God's will? Paul speaks to this question in Romans 14, where he takes up the problem of eating certain food. He lays down three general principles to guide us. The first is that we should not judge those whose convictions are different from ours (verses 1-4).

The second principle is that whatever convictions we have developed as "to the Lord," we must be true to them (verse 23). If we go against our convictions, we are sinning, even though others may have perfect freedom in that particular thing.

For several years I struggled with the question of how my family and I should observe Sunday as the Lord's Day. Early in my Christian life I was taught that Sunday was a sacred day and that its activities should be governed accordingly. I soon came to realize, however, that there is genuine disagreement among sincere Christians as to how Sunday is to be observed. Applying the principles of Romans 14 to this question, then, I must first of all not judge those who observe Sunday differently than I do. Secondly, whatever my own convictions, they must be out of a sincere response of obedience to how God is leading me. And then, having developed my own convictions, I must be careful not to violate them, regardless of what other Christians may do.

The question we must ask in a serious pursuit of holiness is this:

"Am I willing to develop convictions from Scripture, and to live by these convictions?" This is often where the rub comes. We hesitate to face up to God's standard of holiness in a specific area of life. We know that to do so will require obedience that we are unwilling to give.

This leads us to the second quality we must develop if we are to put to death the misdeeds of the body. That quality is commitment. Jesus said, "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). We must honestly face the question, "Am I willing to give up a certain practice or habit that is keeping me from holiness?" It is at this point of commitment that most of us fail. We prefer to dally with sin, to try to stay with it a little without getting too deeply involved.

We have the "just one more time" syndrome. We will take just one more lustful look, eat just one more rich dessert before starting on our diet, watch just one more television program before sitting down to our Bible study. In all of this we are postponing the day of commitment, the day when we say to sin, "Enough!"

I well recall when God spoke to me about indulging my sweet tooth. It wasn't that I was overweight; it was just that I couldn't resist any dessert that came along. I was the one who always went back for seconds at the church pie socials! Then one morning right in the middle of the Christmas festivities, when all the fudge and cookies were so plentiful, God spoke to my heart about this problem. My initial response was, "Lord, wait till after Christmas and I will deal with it." I wasn't willing to make a commitment that day.

Solomon tells us that the eyes of man are never satisfied (Proverbs 27:20). One more lustful look or one more piece of pie never satisfies. In fact, quite the opposite takes place. Everytime we say yes to temptation, we make it harder to say no the next time.

We must recognize that we have developed habit patterns of sin. We have developed the habit of shading the facts a little bit when it is to our advantage. We have developed the habit of giving in to the inertia that refuses to let us get up in the morning. These habits must be broken, but they never will till we make a basic commitment to a life of holiness without exceptions.

The Apostle John said, "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin" (I John 2:1). The whole purpose of John's letter, he says, is that we not sin. One day as I was studying this chapter I realized that my personal life's objective regarding holiness was less than that of John's. He was saying, in effect "Make it your aim not to sin." As I thought about this, I realized that deep within my heart my real aim was not to sin very much. I found it difficult to say, "Yes, Lord, from here on I will make it my aim not to sin." I realized God was calling me that day to a deeper level of commitment to holiness than I had previously been willing to make.

Can you imagine a soldier going into battle with the aim of "not getting hit very much?" The very suggestion is ridiculous. His aim is not to get hit at all! Yet if we have not made a commitment to holiness without exception, we are like a soldier going into battle with the aim of not getting hit very much. We can be sure if that is our aim, we will be hit--not with bullets, but with temptation over and over again.

Jonathan Edwards, one of the great preachers of early American history, used to make resolutions. One of his was, "Resolved, never to do anything which I would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life."⁵ Dare we 20th-century Christians make such a resolution? Are we willing to commit ourselves to the practice of holiness without exceptions? There is no point in praying for victory over temptation if we are not willing to make a commitment to say no to it.

It is only by learning to deny temptation that we will ever put to death the misdeeds of the body. Learning this is usually a slow and painful process, fraught with much failure. Our old desires and our sinful habits are not easily dislodged. To break them requires persistence, often in the face of little success. But this is the path we must tread, painful though it may be.

Footnotes

¹By permission. From Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary 1977 by G. & C. Merriam Co., Publishers of the Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, page 750.

²John Owen, Temptation and Sin, page 7.

³Owen, Temptation and Sin, page 26. Author's paraphrase.

⁴The Navigators Topical Memory System may be obtained from your local Christian bookstore or from NavPress, Customer Services, P.O. Box 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901.

⁵Jonathan Edwards--Representative Selections, with Introduction, Bibliography, and Notes, Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson, editors (revised edition, New York: Hill and Wang, 1962), page 38.



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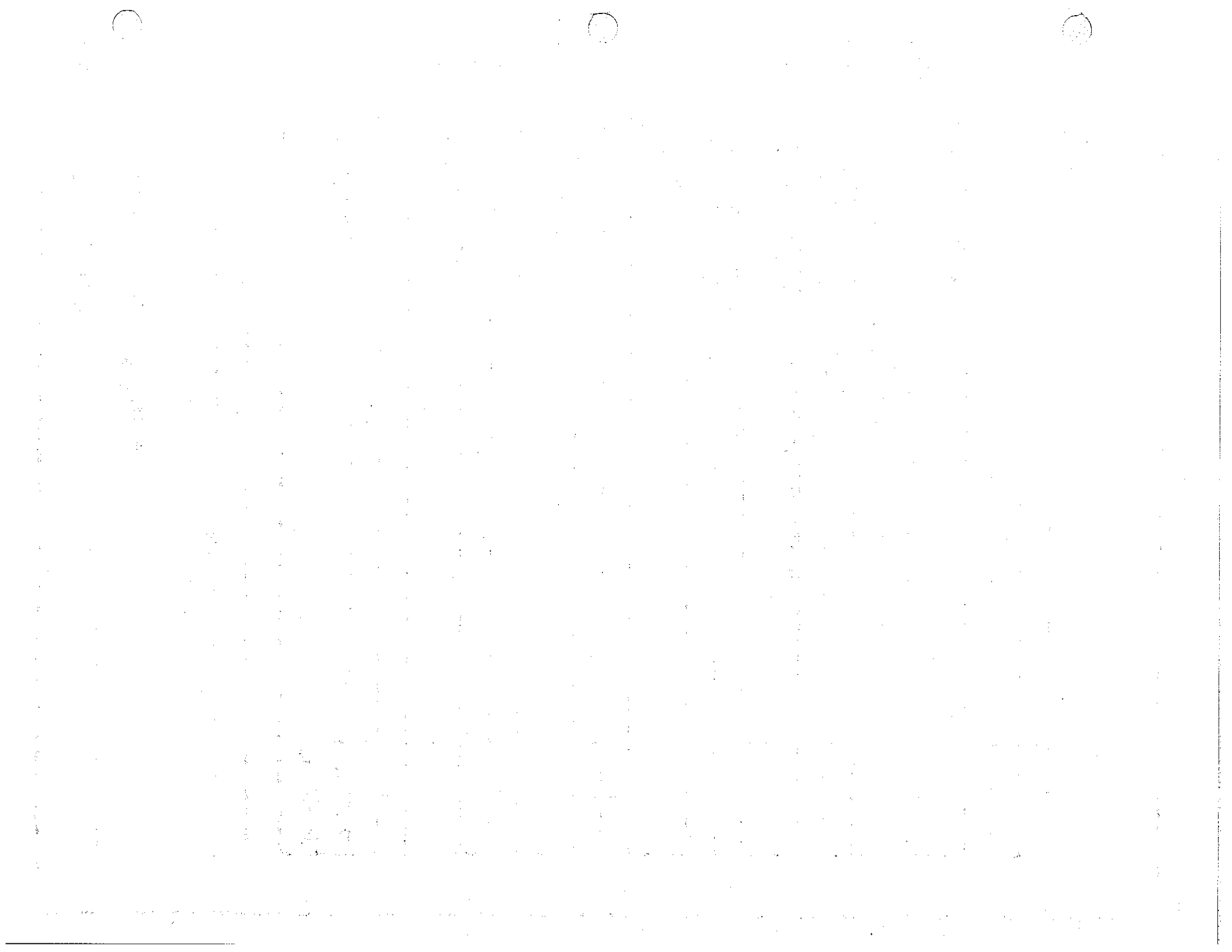
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Assignment Sheet

Name _____ Topic A Survey of the Bible

Lesson The Promise to Adam Class _____

Lecture	Completed	
	Yes	No
Review "The Promise to Adam"		
Bible Study		
Epistle to Philipians Introduction		
PSMA		
Do 5 PSMA		
Reading		
Bible Reading Chart		
Pursuit of Holiness--Chapter 10		
Evangelism/Follow-Up/Discipleship		
Share "Bridge" with non-Christian.		
Pray for your disciple.		
Meet with your disciple.		
Scripture Memory		
Write in 2 verses you memorized.		
Review previous verses.		



THE PROMISE TO ADAM

Introduction

The Bible is primarily the story of how God promised and then restored man to fellowship after he had rebelled against God. To understand the Bible as a whole you must understand the promise that God gave to Adam, and be able to trace it through the history of the Bible. In this brief survey an honest effort is made to outline the promise so that a layman can understand the basic message of the Bible. This study aid, with the Bible Chart, should help a person put the stories of the Bible together in a chronological order and see how God fulfills His promise.

The Creation

The story of the creation is given in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Man is given specific instruction concerning the garden God placed him in.

The Fall

Adam is warned not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge lest he die spiritually and be separated from God. Man was created in the image of God with a will, intellect and emotions. God put him in a situation where these faculties could be operative. Eve was deceived into thinking she would become more like God if she ate from the tree. When Satan was successful in getting her to eat the forbidden fruit she gave some to Adam, and he also ate. Now man was cut off from his fellowship with God because of his disobedience and sin.

The Curse

Because of their sin God brought a curse on all three: Satan, Eve, and Adam.

SatanCursed above all created animals. His head was to be crushed by the woman's seed.

WomanWould bring forth her children in sorrow and pain. God reinforced that Adam was to rule over her.

ManThe earth was cursed, and by the sweat of his own labor man would extract his needs.

The Promise to Adam

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:15

In this passage God gives a promise. One day from the woman, whom Satan had deceived, God would bring forth a seed (Jesus Christ). This seed would be Satan's enemy and would crush or bruise his head. In the process Satan would bruise Christ's heel. This seed, Jesus Christ, would make a way for man to be restored to fellowship with God.

If there had been no promise, the Bible would have ended with Genesis 3. All the rest of the Bible is the simple story of how God fulfilled this promise to Adam and his wife.

The seed was given to restore mankind back to fellowship with God. This Jesus did when He died upon the cross as a substitute in our place and for our sins. Satan's head was crushed, and Jesus was bruised for our iniquities. Isaiah reminds us:

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5

The promise has to do with the seed of the woman. All the way through the Old Testament this promise is carried forward, amplified, and explained. It is this sacred thread that turns the books of the Bible into one book.

The Flood

NOTES

For many years men looked to God for the seed that would restore them to God, but He didn't come. During this time men were continually in rebellion to God, and God was sorry that He had created them. God decided to destroy mankind by a flood, but because of His promise to Adam, God chose to preserve the seed. He did this through a righteous man named Noah and his family. The rest of mankind was destroyed.

The Tower

Noah and his three sons once again began to repopulate the earth. One of Ham's sons, Cush, had a son by the name of Nimrod who led his people to the plains of Shinar and built a tower to reach into the heavens. God hated this tower and destroyed it because Nimrod led the people away from the place of revelation and the truth of revelation. This was the first organized false religion in the world. At this point God destroyed the tower and confused man's language, and they dispersed by language groups.

Abram

Abram was one of Shem's descendants, and the one through whom the promise was to be carried forward. Thousands of years had passed since God gave the promise to Adam and Eve. At this point God was ready to make His next step towards man's redemption by giving Abram a promise.

Important Factors Concerning Abram's Promise

- This is an extension of Adam's promise in Genesis 3:15. It has to do with the seed which would restore man to fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.
- This promise deals with the future of Israel, the people that God was about to bring forth through Abram. A clear understanding of His promise is necessary for understanding Biblical Eschatology (a study of the events of the end time).
- The rest of the Old and New Testament show how God fulfilled this promise. If we don't have a clear understanding of this promise it will be hard to see the relevance of the rest of the Old Testament history.

Since the promise is the foundation stone on which the Bible is built, it is important that it be accurately laid. The story is told about the building of the St. Louis arch--a 64-story stainless steel structure overlooking the Mississippi River. Two towers were being built separately, and they hoped to place a keystone to join them together. One day someone figured out that if the foundation were off 1/16 of an inch the two towers would be off by eight feet when the keystone was to join them. The work was stopped, and the foundation was checked. It was accurate, and the keystone joined the two arches just as it was designed. Our foundation must be just as accurate if all the facts of the Bible are to fit together according to God's plan.

Just as the promise to Adam is repeated and amplified in the promise given to Abram (whose name was changed to Abraham by God, meaning "a father of many nations"), we need to understand that this promise is repeated, explained and amplified in the rest of the Scriptures.

Abraham's Promise

In this promise there are several elements that we need to comprehend if we are to see how all the parts fit together, since these things will be amplified in later promises. The three elements that are dealt with are land, seed, and blessing.

- Land.....Deuteronomy 30:1-8
- Seed.....II Samuel 7:12-16
- Blessing.....Jeremiah 31:31-34

We also need to understand that this promise is to be taken literally, eternally, unconditionally, and that it was at least made with the nation of Israel and perhaps with the Church.

- **Literally**Just what it says.
- **Eternally**Never passes away.
- **Unconditionally**Without qualifications.
- **Made with nation of Israel** ..Abraham and his seed.

The Amillennialists and Historical Premillennialists believe this was made with Abraham and his spiritual seed the Church. The Dispensationalists believe it was made with Abraham and his physical seed the nation of Israel. In the Old Testament it does refer to the nation of Israel.

The Gentiles are affected because of what we are taught in Galatians.

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Galatians 3:14

Now with this introduction, we are ready to look at the promise itself.

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 12:1-3

- "I will make thee a great nation."

If Abraham were to be a great nation he would need to have land which belonged to him and his descendants. He also would need to have many descendants who followed him--seed, progeny, and people.

- "I will bless thee and make thy name great."

As we study Abraham's life we see that God blessed him with great wealth (Genesis 13:2) and material possessions. He was also blessed spiritually since he was the man known as the friend of God. His name has been made great since three major religions trace their foundation back to him (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

- "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

He was to bring forth from his seed a Savior who could save all people from their sins and separation from God.

Now there were two problems which Abraham had with this promise. First, he had no land since God had commanded him to leave his home in Ur of Chaldees and go to the land of Canaan. Second, Abraham had no seed since Sarah was barren and not able to give him any children.

Land

The land element of Abraham's problem is dealt with first. Because of Abraham's obedience God gave him the land of Canaan as he passed through.

And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said
Unto thy seed will I give this land: and
there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who
appeared unto him.

Genesis 12:7

In Genesis 13, after Lot and Abraham had departed, God appeared and spoke to Abraham.

And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was
separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and
look from the place where thou art northward, and
southward, and eastward, and westward, For all
the land which thou seest, to thee will I give
it, and to thy seed for ever.

Genesis 13:14-15

So here Abraham is given by God the land of Canaan as
an eternal inheritance. It is to belong to him and
his seed forever. From this we can see why the Jews
and Arabs are fighting over the land of Israel.

Again arises the question as to his physical or
spiritual seed.

Here we see that God promised literal real estate.
Now two questions must come to mind.

- What did Abraham do to deserve it? Nothing!
- Did God have the right to do this? Yes, He created it.

Now with one part of the problem solved, we turn to
the second part which deals with Abraham's offspring
and his seed. Sarah was barren and old.

Seed

The seed element of Abraham's problem is dealt with
in the next verse.

NOTES

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Genesis 13:16

So here God says Abraham's seed will be as numerous as the dust of the earth. For years Abraham waited and nothing happened. Sarah remained barren. Then God again appeared to Abraham.

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

And Abram said, Lord God, what will thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Genesis 15:1-6

In verse 1, God says He will be a shield. This means that God would protect Abraham since that is what a shield does. Abraham didn't live in a walled city like so many others but out in the open. So he needed this kind of protection from God.

Now this was as far as God got because Abraham had a problem he wanted to take up with God. Sarah was still barren, and he had no seed. Years earlier God had promised to give him children, but the only thing Abraham had was a band of servants. Under law, his chief steward would inherit all his goods when he was dead if Abraham had no children.

In verse 4, God again reaffirmed that promise concerning the seed, "Eliezer will not be your heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." Then He told Abraham to go out and count the stars. So Abraham went out, and as he began to count he realized there were millions and millions of them in the heavens. Now God said, "Abraham, that is how many children you are going to have."

Now verse 6 is an amazing verse. It says that he believed the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness. This means that sinful Abraham was made right with God. He had become righteous in the eyes of God.

Abraham's Righteousness

This word righteousness is a bookkeeping term. Because of the sinfulness of man, Abraham was on the minus side of God's ledger book. Now because of believing God he was put on the plus side of the ledger. This was possible because Revelation 13:8 tells us that Jesus Christ was slain from the foundation of the world in the mind of God. Abraham had to look ahead 2,000 years in history. We must look back some 2,000 years. Both of us are saved by believing God.

Now this believing means "fully convinced, persuaded, trusting in." It was an absolute belief, not a relative belief. The story is told about the man who walked across the Niagara Falls on a tight rope wire. When he reached the other side, he asked one of his cheering fans, "Do you think I could push a man in a wheelbarrow across to the other side?" The man said, "Yes, I believe you could." The tight rope walker then asked him to please let him push him across to the other side. The man said that he believed, but he refused to get into the wheelbarrow. This is what I call relative belief. This was not how Abraham believed. His was an absolute belief or trust in what God said. The only way anyone gets on the plus side of God's ledger book is by believing God. We are then counted righteous in God's eyes.

Most of the world tries to become righteous through good works or a good life. They fail to understand that good works or a good life can never make us righteous in the eyes of God. We become righteous only by believing God. Because we believe God, He declares us righteous because of the righteousness of Christ.

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

First look up the facts about the epistle, getting the background of the book before you analyze it chapter by chapter. Begin by looking up the following information, using the notes in your Bible or a Bible handbook.

Writer of Philippians _____

Approximate date he wrote the letter _____

Written before or after I Thessalonians? _____

To whom written? _____

Where was Philippi in relation to Thessalonica? _____

When was the church founded? _____

THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI

The account of the beginning of the church at Philippi is found in Acts 16:9-40. Read this carefully and answer the following:

1. How is the city of Philippi described? (verse 12) _____

2. Where did Paul first speak to people about the Lord? (verse 13) _____

3. Who was the first to respond to his message? _____

4. What were Paul and Silas accused of? (verses 20, 21) _____

5. How were they punished for this supposed crime? _____

6. In your own words describe their reaction to their imprisonment.

7. What did the jailor urgently want to know?

What answer was he given?

8. What did the officials finally ask Paul and Silas to do?

WHY PAUL WROTE

Now read through Philipians several times--at least once at one sitting. As you read, decide what you consider to be the main purpose or theme of the letter and list it below. Then go through more slowly, listing the verses which touch on the main theme. State briefly what each of these passages says in connection with the theme. If you list two or three themes, trace them one at a time through the whole letter.

Purpose or theme of the letter

Theme Verses Key Thought

[The page contains faint, illegible markings and noise.]

List any other important topics in Philipians that are not covered in the theme or themes you have chosen.

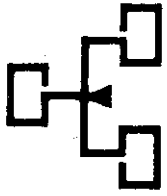
Now that you have finished your own survey study, you may want to check a reference book for additional thoughts on the background and theme of Philipians.

PERSONAL PROFIT

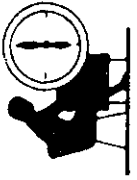
Review the theme verses you have listed on the four chapters of Philipians and pray over possible applications. Select one you feel most needed in your life now. Write a short paragraph stating the way the truth of the verse applies to your life, and what steps you can take toward putting it into practice.

"Here is one of the greatest secrets of prevailing prayer: Study the Word to find God's will as revealed in the promises; then simply take these promises and spread them out before God in prayer with the unwavering expectation that He will do what He has promised in His Word."

--R. A. Torrey



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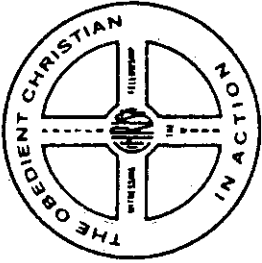


QUIET TIME

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BASICS

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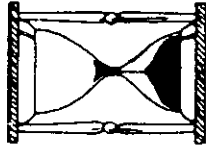
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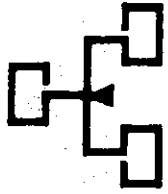
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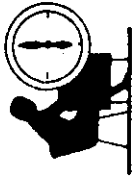
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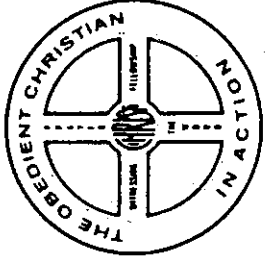
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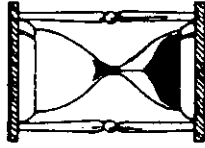
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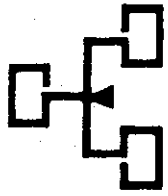
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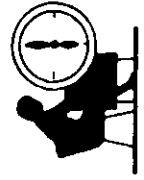
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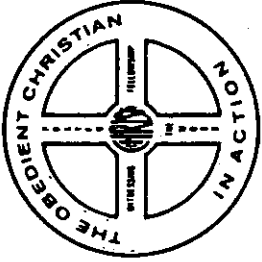
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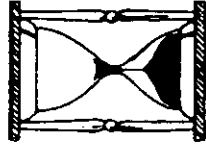
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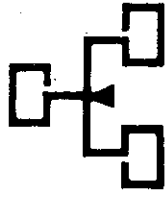
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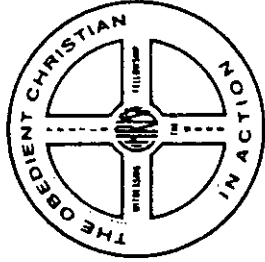


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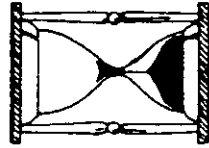
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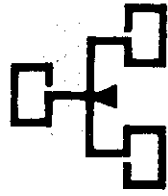
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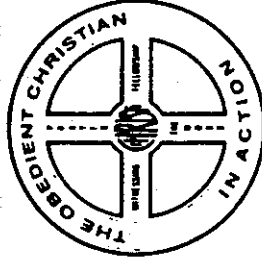
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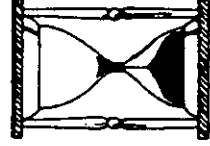
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The Place of Personal Discipline

Have nothing to do with
Godless myths and old
wives' tales; rather train
yourself to be godly.

I Timothy 4:7

It is possible to establish convictions regarding a life of holiness, and even make a definite commitment to that end, yet fail to achieve the goal. Life is strewn with broken resolutions. We may determine by God's grace to stop a particular sinful habit--entertaining lustful thoughts, criticizing our Christian brother, or whatever. But alas, only too frequently we find we don't succeed. We do not achieve that progress in holiness we so intensely desire.

Jay Adams puts his finger on the problem when he says, "You may have sought and tried to obtain instant godliness. There is no such thing ... We want somebody to give us three easy steps to godliness, and we'll take them next Friday and be godly. The trouble is, godliness doesn't come that way."¹

Adams goes on to show that the way to obtain godliness is through Christian discipline.² But the concept of discipline is suspect in our society today. It appears counter to our emphasis on freedom in Christ, and often smacks of legalism and harshness.

Yet Paul says we are to train or discipline ourselves to be godly (I Timothy 4:7). The figure of speech he uses comes from the physical training that Greek athletes went through. Paul also said, "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training" (I Corinthians 9:25). He said this was an attitude of his life, and one that each Christian should have (I Corinthians 9:24-27). If an athlete disciplines himself to obtain a temporal prize, he said, how much more should we Christians discipline ourselves to obtain a crown that lasts forever.

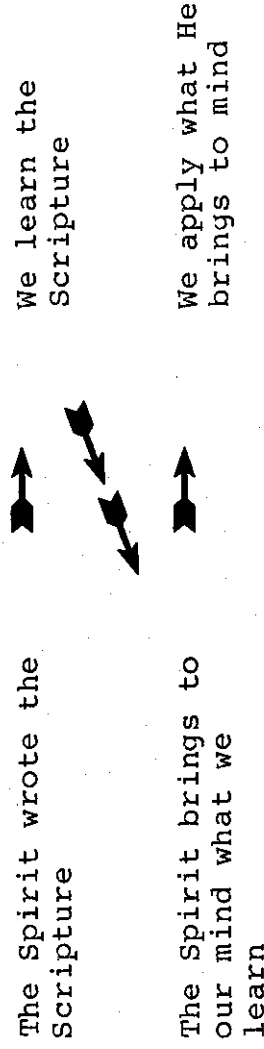
As these verses indicate, discipline is structured training. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary lists as one definition of discipline, "training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character."³ This is what we must do if we pursue holiness: We must correct, mold, and train our moral character.

Discipline toward holiness begins with the Word of God. Paul said, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16). The

last item he mentions is training or discipline in doing righteousness. This is what the Scriptures will do for us if we use them. Jay Adams says, "It is by willing, prayerful and persistent obedience to the requirements of the Scriptures that godly patterns are developed and come to be a part of us."⁴

We read in Scripture, "You were taught...to put off your old self...to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness: (Ephesians 4:22-24). Where are we taught these things? Only in the Word of God. Discipline toward holiness begins then with the Scriptures--with a disciplined plan for regular intake of the Scriptures and a disciplined plan for applying them to our daily lives.

Here our cooperation with the Holy Spirit is very clear. A diagram of our interaction with the Spirit looks like this:



The Holy Spirit has already done a good part of His work by providing us with the Scriptures to discipline us. And as we learn them, He will faithfully bring them to our minds as we need them to face temptations. As we seek to apply His Word to daily situations, He will work in us to strengthen us. But we must respond to what the Holy Spirit has already done if we are to expect Him to do more.

So we see that we must discipline our lives for a regular healthy diet of the Word of God. We need a planned time each day for reading or studying the Bible. Every Christian who makes progress in holiness is a person who has disciplined his life so that he spends regular time in the Bible. There simply is no other way.

Satan will always battle us at this point. He will try to persuade us that we are too sleepy in the morning, too busy during the day, and too tired at night. It seems there is never a suitable time for the Word of God. This means we must discipline ourselves to provide this time in our daily schedules. I have found the early morning hour before breakfast to be the most profitable time for me to read the Bible and pray over areas of concern and need. That is also the only time of day when I can be consistent in my principle means of exercise--jogging. To do all this before breakfast requires that I get up at 5 o'clock. And since I need about seven hours of sleep each night, that means I must be in bed--lights out--by 10 p.m. That is hard to do and can only be done by disciplining my evening hours.

Some wives may not find this time before breakfast practical, especially if they have very young children or must get the rest of the family off to work or school at an early hour. In this case they may find the time immediately after breakfast to be most suitable for time alone with God. This, too, requires discipline to take time when the responsibilities of the day are demanding attention.

Whether before breakfast or after, morning or evening, the point is we must all arrange our schedules to provide for this daily intake of the Word of God.

A disciplined intake of the Word of God not only involves a planned time; it also involves a planned method. Usually we think of methods of intake as falling into four categories--hearing the Word taught by our pastors and teachers (Jeremiah 3:15), reading the Bible ourselves (Deuteronomy 17:19), studying the Scriptures intently (Proverbs 2:1-4), and memorizing key passages (Psalm 119:11). All of these methods are needed for a balanced intake of the Word. Pastors are gifted by God and trained to teach the "whole counsel of God." Reading the Scripture gives us the overall perspective of divine truth, while study of a passage or topic enables us to dig more deeply into a particular truth. Memorization helps us retain important truths so we can apply them in our lives.

But if we are to pursue holiness with discipline, we must do more than hear, read, study, or memorize Scripture. We must meditate on it. God said to Joshua, as he was assuming leadership over Israel, "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it" (Joshua 1:8). To meditate on the Scriptures is to think about them, turning them over in our minds, and applying them to our life's situations. Few of us practice meditation on the Scriptures. Somehow the idea of meditation sounds like something medieval monks did in monasteries. Yet Joshua, a very busy commander-in-chief of the army of Israel, was told to meditate on the law of God day and night.

The practice of meditation on the Word of God--simply thinking about it and its application to life--is a practice we develop through discipline. Most of us think we don't have time for this, but there are blocks of minutes during the day when we can meditate if we develop the habit.

I am something of a "bug" for the daily news and I enjoy listening to the news on the radio as I drive to and from work or elsewhere. One day I was challenged by the example of a friend to use that time to meditate on Scripture verses. Now I am surprised at how many minutes I can use to think about Scripture passages and their application to my life. You may not have the opportunity I have to meditate as you drive, but if you prayerfully think about it, you will probably find other opportunities in your schedule.⁵

The objective of our meditation is application--obedience to the Scriptures. This too requires discipline. Obeying the Scriptures usually requires change in our patterns of life. Because we are sinful in nature, we have developed sinful patterns, which we call habits. Discipline is required to break any habit. If a boy has developed the wrong style of swinging a baseball bat, he cannot just decide to change instantly. He has developed a certain habit, and much discipline--much correction and training--is required to break that bad habit and develop a new one.

In the same way, our patterns of disobedience to God have been developed over a number of years and are not broken easily or without discipline. Discipline does not mean gritting your teeth and saying, "I'll not do that anymore." Rather, discipline means structured, planned training. Just as you need a plan for regular Bible reading or study, so you need a plan for applying the word to your life.

As you read or study the Scriptures and meditate on them during the day, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does the passage teach concerning God's will for a holy life?
2. How does my life measure up to that Scripture; specifically, where and how do I fall short? (Be specific; don't generalize.)
3. What definite steps of action do I need to take to obey?

The most important part of this process is the specific application of the Scripture to specific life situations. We are prone to vagueness at this point because commitment to specific actions makes us uncomfortable. But we must avoid general commitments to obedience and instead aim for specific obedience in specific instances. We deceive our souls when we grow in knowledge of the truth without specifically responding to it (James 1:22). This may lead to spiritual pride (I Corinthians 8:1).

Suppose you were meditating on I Corinthians 13, the great love chapter. As you think about the chapter, you realize the importance of love and you also see the practical outworkings of love: Love is patient and kind and does not envy. You ask yourself, "Am I impatient or unkind or envious toward anyone?" As you think about this, you realize you are envious toward Joe at work who seems to be getting all the breaks. You confess this sin to God, being very specific to name Joe and your sinful reaction to his good fortune. You ask God to bless him even more and to give you a spirit of contentment so that you will not continue to envy Joe, but will instead love him. You might memorize I Corinthians 13:4 and think about it as you see Joe at work. You even look for ways to help him. Then you do the same thing tomorrow and the next day and next till finally you see God working a spirit of love in your heart toward Joe.

This is discipline toward holiness. You will never put to death that spirit of envy toward Joe without a definitely structured plan for doing it. That plan is what we call discipline.

You can readily see that this structured training in holiness is a lifelong process. So a necessary ingredient of discipline is perseverance.

Any training--physical, mental, or spiritual--is characterized at first by failure. We fail more often than we succeed. But if we persevere, we gradually see progress till we are succeeding more often than failing. This is true as we seek to put to death particular sins. At first it seems we are making no progress, so we become discouraged and think, "What's the use! I can never overcome that sin." That's exactly what Satan wants us to think.

It is at this point that we must exercise perseverance. We keep wanting instant success, but holiness doesn't come that way. Our sinful habits are not broken overnight. Follow-through is required to make any change in our lives, and follow-through requires perseverance.

Jonathan Edwards, who resolved never to do anything he would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of his life, also made this resolution: "Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken, my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be."⁷ At first glance these two resolutions seem somewhat contradictory. If Edwards had resolved never to do anything he shouldn't do, then why talk about never giving up the fight regardless of how unsuccessful he might be? Was he not sincere in making the first resolution? Yes, he was sincere, but he also knew there would be much failure, and that perseverance was required. So he first resolved to seek to live a holy life, then to persevere despite the failures he knew would come.

A verse of Scripture I often use in the face of failure with my sins is Proverbs 24:16: "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity." The person who is disciplining himself toward holiness falls many times, but he does not quit. After each failure he gets up and continues the struggle. Not so with the unrighteous. He stumbles in his sin and gives up. He has no power to overcome because he does not have the Spirit of God at work in him.

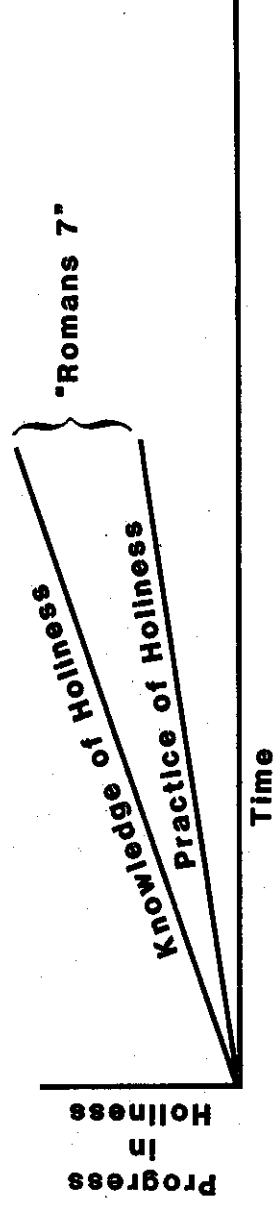
One of the chapters in the Bible we have the most trouble with is Romans 7. Christians are always trying to "get out of Romans 7 into Romans 8." The reason we don't like Romans 7 is because it so accurately mirrors our own struggle with sin. And we don't like the idea that we have to struggle with sin. We want instant victory. We want to "walk in the Spirit and let Him win the victory." But God wants us to persevere in discipline toward holiness.

Some feel that such statements of Paul's as "For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Romans 7:15) are too strong for a Christian walking in the Spirit. But what Christian can deny that

this is often his own experience? The truth is, the more we see the holiness of God and His law revealed to us in the Scripture, the more we recognize how far short we fall.

Isaiah was a prophet of God, walking in the righteousness of God's commandments. Yet on seeing the Lord God in His holiness, he was compelled to cry out, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5).

As we grow in the knowledge of God's holiness, even though we are also growing in the practice of holiness, it seems the gap between our knowledge and our practice always gets wider. This is the Holy Spirit's way of drawing us to more and more holiness. This is illustrated by the following graph:



As we progress in holiness, we come to hate sin (Psalm 119:104) and to delight in God's law (Romans 7:22). We see the perfection of God's law and the rightness of all He requires of us. We agree that "His commands are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3), but are "holy, righteous, and good" (Romans 7:12). But during this time we also see our own inner corruption and our frequent falls into sin. We cry out with Paul, "What a wretched man I am!" (Romans 7:24), and we want to give up. This we dare not do. If we would succeed in our pursuit of holiness we must persevere in spite of failure.

Footnotes

¹Jay E. Adams, Godliness Through Discipline, page 3.

²Godliness is closely akin to holiness in Scripture. Strong's Concordance lists holiness as a synonym for godliness. Vine says godliness is "that piety which is characterized by a God-ward attitude, and does that which is well pleasing to Him" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, page 162).

³Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, page 325.

⁴Adams, Godliness Through Discipline, page 14.

5The Navigators have materials to help you develop a Bible reading plan, start systematic Bible Study, and begin a Scripture memory program. For a catalog describing these materials, write to Nav-Press, Customer Services, P. O. Box 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901.

6An excellent practical book on the art of meditation is Meditation--The Bible Tells You How by Jim Downing, available from your local Christian bookstore or from the publisher at the address above.

7Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson, Jonathan Edwards, page 43.



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