

# The Christian In His Community



CHRISTIAN LIFE SERIES



# The Christian in His Community

sixth edition

by Donald Stuckless



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## Christian Life Series

Your New Life

Your Bible

Who Jesus Is

The Church

Personal Evangelism

Bible Ethics

When You Pray

How to Study the Bible

Your Helpful Friend

Christian Worship

Christian Workers

Marriage and the Home

God's Design—Your Choice

John's Gospel

We Believe

What Churches Do

The Teaching Ministry

**The Christian in His Community**

## **PREFACE**

If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you have already experienced changes in your life. One of these changes probably was a change in your attitudes toward others. All of us are involved in relationships with other people. In other words, we all live in community with others.

We usually think of community as the place where we live. But you will learn that community is much more than the place where we live—it is a spirit or an attitude that we have toward others.

Do you know that you can be part of more than one community? You may be part of a school community, a church community, or a working community. All of these together may make up the community where you live.

In this course, we will discover principles of living in community with others. One of the underlying principles in making this course practical in your everyday life is to depend on the Holy Spirit. He will help you receive the teaching and turn it into life actions. Ask Him to help you as you study and as you put into practice the things you learn. A modern method of teaching yourself helps you to learn the principles easily and put them into practice immediately.





## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE SERIES

*The Christian in His Community* is one of 18 courses in this practical discipleship program for new believers. The Christian Life Series is a study to help students grow in their relationship with Christ, interact with the Word of God, and better understand God's purposes for their life.

Students will study basic Christian topics under six reoccurring themes. The courses are conversational in style and easy to read. The following chart illustrates how the units of study are organized for the Christian Life Series.

|                         | <b>Unit 1</b>       | <b>Unit 2</b>          | <b>Unit 3</b>                  |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Spiritual Life</b>   | Your New Life       | When You Pray          | God's Design, Your Choice      |
| <b>The Bible</b>        | Your Bible          | How to Study the Bible | John's Gospel                  |
| <b>Theology</b>         | Who Jesus Is        | Your Helpful Friend    | We Believe                     |
| <b>The Church</b>       | The Church          | Christian Worship      | What Churches Do               |
| <b>Service</b>          | Personal Evangelism | Christian Workers      | The Teaching Ministry          |
| <b>Christian Ethics</b> | Bible Ethics        | Marriage and the Home  | The Christian in His Community |

# Before You Begin

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## How to Use this Book

This book is divided into lessons instead of chapters. Each lesson begins with two important pages. After the lesson number are the title and a short introduction to the lesson. On the next page is the outline or **The Plan** for the lesson. It is a list of what you can expect to study in the lesson.

Next are lesson goals. **The Goals** are guidelines for what you should be able to do after studying the lesson. Read them carefully; they will help you focus on the most important points in the lesson.

To help you achieve your goals, each lesson has questions and activities. The subheading **Application** signals you to answer questions on the material learned. Do not skip over this part. Writing out the answers will help you apply what you have learned. Most of the questions can be answered right in your book. If there is not enough room to write your answers in the book, write them in a notebook or journal that you can use to review the lessons later.

After answering a question, check the answer at the end of the lesson in the section marked **Check Your Answers**. Do not look ahead at the answers until you have written your own answer. This will help you remember what you study much better. Correct those you did not answer correctly. The answers are in a jumbled order so that you will not easily see the answer to the next question.

## How to Answer Study Questions

This course uses many different kinds of questions. Below are samples of the three most common types and how to answer them.

### MULTIPLE-CHOICE

A multiple-choice question asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

#### *Example*

- 1** The Bible has a total of
- a)** 100 books.
  - b)** 66 books.
  - c)** 27 books.

The correct answer is **b)** 66 books.

In your study guide, make a circle around **b)** as shown here:

- 1** The Bible has a total of
- a)** 100 books.
  - (b)** 66 books.
  - c)** 27 books.
  - d)** 2 books.

### TRUE-FALSE

A true-false question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are TRUE.

#### *Example*

- 2** Which statements below are TRUE?
- a)** The Bible has a total of 120 books.
  - (b)** The Bible is a message for believers today.
  - c)** All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
  - (d)** The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.

Statements **b)** and **d)** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices, as you see above.

### MATCHING

A matching question or item asks you to match things that go together, such as names with descriptions, or Bible books with their authors.

#### Example

**3** Write the number for the leader's name in front of each phrase that describes something he did.

...1... **a)** Received the Law at Mt. Sinai 1) Moses

...2... **b)** Led the Israelites across the Jordan 2) Joshua

...2... **c)** Marched around Jericho

...1... **d)** Lived in Pharaoh's court

Phrases **a)** and **d)** refer to Moses, and phrases **b)** and **c)** refer to Joshua. You would write 1 beside **a)** and **d)**, and 2 beside **b)** and **c)**, as you see above.

### Suggestions for Studying

1. Set aside quiet and regular times for your study. It will be easier to concentrate if study is part of your daily habits.
2. Pray as you begin each study session. With an open Bible, the Holy Spirit, and this course, you are in the classroom of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord to help you understand the lesson and apply it to your life.
3. Carefully read the lesson introduction, the lesson plan, and the goals.
4. Begin to carefully read the lesson. Look up Bible references and take any notes that may be helpful. The Bible verses reinforce important points in the lesson.
5. Answer the study questions in the spaces provided. Use your notebook or journal when necessary.

6. Think about what you have learned and look for ways to apply it in discussion with family and friends, in a Bible study, or other opportunity.
7. Take your time. No bell will ring to force you to move on to new material.

## Unit Evaluations

At the end of this course, you will find the Unit Evaluations. Questions and Answer Sheets are clearly marked for each unit. Carefully follow the directions given. You should complete and send your answer sheets to your instructor for corrections. If you are not studying with a Global University office you will still benefit by completing the Unit Evaluations.

## Ways to Study this Course

This course has been written so that you can study it by yourself. We like to say that the teacher is in the book. However, you may also study this course in various group settings such as mid-week Bible studies, learning centers, home groups, and youth programs. This course can be used as a correspondence or resource tool for prison ministries as well as special ethnic or other community outreach programs. You will find both the content and study methods excellent for these purposes.

If you study this course by yourself, all of your work can be completed by mail. Be sure to use the address of your Global University office. If you are studying in a group or through a Discipleship Training Center, be sure to follow any additional instructions that your instructor may give.

In addition, your church may partner with Global University to open a Discipleship Training Center. Visit us online at [www.globaluniversity.edu](http://www.globaluniversity.edu) for more information and start-up helps.

## Certificate

Unit or individual certificates are available to students upon successful completion of our courses. For instance, if you are studying through a National Office or Discipleship Training Center, you may receive a certificate from your Global University instructor. If you are studying on your own, you may mail your completed Unit Evaluation Answer Sheets to your local office. National Offices and Discipleship Training Centers may order certificates through the International Office or through Gospel Publishing House in the USA.

## Additional Helps

The School for Evangelism and Discipleship (SED) Catalog, Discipleship Training Center Manual, the Study Center Agreement Form, and the SED Order Form are available online for print downloads. Other materials available for this course include supplemental audiocassettes.

Visit us at [www.globaluniversity.edu](http://www.globaluniversity.edu)  
and [www.globalreach.org](http://www.globalreach.org) for additional resources.

## About the Author

Donald Stuckless is an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God. He served as a missionary for eight years, during which time he was an instructor in the Assemblies of God Bible Institutes in Bogota, Colombia, and Panama City, Panama. He presently pastors a church in the United States.

Mr. Stuckless is a graduate of Central Bible College, Springfield, Missouri, where he received his bachelor of arts degree, and of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Chicago, where he received his master of arts degree.



A stylized globe composed of several overlapping wireframe spheres in a light gray color, serving as a background for the text.

# Unit 1

# Unit

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## **Lessons**

- 1 The Idea of Community**
- 2 The Christian's Community**
- 3 Growing in Community**
- 4 Standing in Community**
- 5 Building in Community**

# 1 The Idea of Community

---

A baby is born and the family rejoices. A neighbor comes with food for the family, and a friend arrives to help care for the new family member.

Perhaps you have experienced a happy occasion like this. How encouraging to see such kindness and concern for the well-being of the entire family! This is the spirit of community.

In this lesson we will study the background and biblical basis of community. The spirit of community was one of the first principles taught in the early church. It was also a principle of Christ, who taught us to love one another and care for one another. This lesson will give you a clearer understanding of how wonderful it is to be a part of the Christian community.

As you study this lesson, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to express the spirit of community in all of your activities with others.

## **The Plan**

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- A. The Meaning of Community
- B. The Completeness of Community
- C. The Biblical Basis for Community

## **The Goals**

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- 1. Define *community*.
- 2. Indicate what is required to make community possible.
- 3. Give examples of community as seen in the Bible.

## **A. THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY**

### **Goal 1.** Define *community*.

In the English language, *community* usually refers to people with common interests who live in a certain place. However, in the Spanish language, the word *comunidad* does not refer to the area or place in which a person lives. It refers to love and concern that one person feels for another. This is a higher use of the word *community*.

Community can also be used to describe a group of people held together by a common cause. For example, in some countries, people doing the same type of work form an organization known as a trade union to better advance their common interests.

The second section of the Bible, the New Testament, was first written in the Greek language. The Greek word *koinonia* in the New Testament is often translated as “fellowship” or “partnership.” It implies being involved in something with someone else and indicates a two-way relationship with emphasis placed either on the giving or the receiving. *Koinonia* is also translated as “participation,” “communion,” or “contribution.” The word is used for a close partnership such as a marriage relationship.

Here are some important examples of how *koinonia* is used in the Bible. Read the Scriptures carefully.

1. John 12:6—a common purse which Jesus and the disciples shared (a fund which they used to pay their expenses)
2. First Corinthians 10:16—sharing in the blood of Christ as we take part in a communion service
3. First John 1:3, 6–7—fellowship between believers and God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ
4. First Corinthians 10:20—partners; a warning not to be partners with demons
5. Romans 15:26—an offering or gift of money which was taken to Jerusalem from the Greek Christians

In these references, the ideas of sharing, fellowship, and participation are seen. This is a good explanation of community.

### **Application**

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1. Circle the letters in front of those words listed below that define *koinonia* or community.

- a) An offering
- b) A desire
- c) Partners
- d) Fellowship
- e) To govern
- f) To share

Check your answers with those given at the end of this lesson.

---

## **B. THE COMPLETENESS OF COMMUNITY**

**Goal 2.** Indicate what is required to make community possible.

Certain ideas are understood by almost everyone. Most of us understand the basic idea for farming. Soil must always be prepared to receive the seed. In some countries, people with

hoes prepare the soil. In others, a team of oxen pulls a wooden plow. In still other places, tractors are used. However, the basic idea of plowing remains the same—loosen and turn the soil so that seeds can be buried and the rain can cause the seeds to grow. Then comes the hard work of keeping weeds out of the soil so that plants will have room to develop. Then, when the plant is mature or ripe, the crop is harvested.

This basic concept of plowing, planting, waiting, and reaping is found in almost every country. The methods may not be the same, but the end result is similar.

We can say the same thing about community. It makes no difference if you live in a small family group or in a big city. The basic idea of community is the same—it is people living with people. Community is possible where 500,000 people live together or where only two live together.

Community is expressed by concern. Jesus told a story about a man named Lazarus and a rich man (Luke 16:19–31). There is no indication that the rich man was ever cruel to Lazarus. He simply was never concerned about Lazarus or his condition. In the story, the unconcerned rich man died and went to hell, because he did not accept the truth about God while he was alive. God teaches us to have concern for others.

Jesus told another story about a Jewish man who was attacked by robbers and badly beaten. He was left to die by the side of the road (Luke 10:30–37). Two very religious people came by, but they did nothing to help the injured man. At last a man from Samaria came by. It was not the custom for Jews and Samaritans to associate with each other. But immediately the Samaritan stopped, bandaged the Jewish man's wounds, put him on his own donkey, and took him to a hotel. He told the owner to take care of the injured man and that he would pay for his care. This is a beautiful example of the spirit of community.

Love and concern show the spirit of community. We must have concern for people who live around us, as well as a universal or worldwide concern for those who live in other parts of the world. Jesus said, ““By this all men will know that

you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35). This is the spirit of community.

### Application

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**2** Read in the Bible the stories of Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) and of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37). Circle the letter in front of the example that shows the spirit of community.

- a) The story of Lazarus and the rich man
- b) The story of the Good Samaritan

**3** What attitude makes the difference in these two stories?

.....  
.....

**4** Circle the letter in front of those places where the idea of community is possible.

- a) In large cities
- b) In isolated villages
- c) In small groups
- d) Where a person lives alone
- e) Between two people



## C. THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR COMMUNITY

**Goal 3.** Give examples of community as seen in the Bible.

The earliest example of community is found in Genesis 2 and 3—in the story of the creation of the first man, Adam. Community at this time was only possible between Adam and God. Because Adam was without sin, his communion or fellowship (*koinonia*) with God was very personal. Every day they talked together and shared with each other. Therefore, God and Adam shared community.

In a short time God created a wife for Adam, and Adam called her woman (Genesis 2:23). Now community was possible between two humans as Adam and the woman Eve

were in harmony with each other. They were also in fellowship with God and at peace with all of God's creation. A three-way community existed then. This was a perfect state of community!

However, this perfect state of community did not continue because sin entered the community when Adam and Eve disobeyed God (Genesis 3). As a result of their sin, Adam and Eve disrupted this perfect communion and were separated from God.

The story of the children of Israel wandering in the wilderness is another example of community. (Read Exodus 3 and onwards.) For 40 years the Israelites traveled from Egypt, where they were in captivity, to freedom in the Promised Land. During this time they were wandering people without a permanent home. But even in this time of constant moving from place to place, they lived in a spirit of community. Exodus 17:1 records, "The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin." Israel was a community nation because community—a sharing, loving relationship—existed between the people. As you read the complete story in the book of Exodus, you will see that the Israelites shared many difficult situations as well as victories.

We read in Exodus 20 that God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments. These rules of behavior showed them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments were binding laws of God that were not to be broken. They taught that people should have love and respect for God first, and then for each other. This is one of the earliest teachings that we have on community relations. God was saying, "Obey these laws and you shall live in perfect community."

In addition to the Ten Commandments, God gave many other instructions that would help Israel live in community. There were laws about altars, sacrifices, feast days, eating habits, personal conduct, and behavior toward others. These laws were given to help people live with devotion to God and

with a spirit of community—fellowship, love, and concern toward each other.

Look at an example of community in the New Testament. In the early church, after the Holy Spirit was outpoured on the Day of Pentecost, a strong spirit of unity and community existed. Read Acts 2:43–47. Verse 44 states that these people had “everything in common” and shared their belongings. Now think back to our definition of community. These words show that “love and concern” and “close fellowship” were present in the early church. The New Testament church was a church of community because the people cared and shared. Let us do this also.

### **Application**

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- 5** Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.
  - a)** The Ten Commandments are one of the earliest sets of rules for living in community.
  - b)** The Israelites could not live in a spirit of community in the wilderness because they had no permanent home.
  - c)** Adam and Eve had perfect community with God, with each other, and with all of creation until they sinned.
  - d)** We know community existed in the early church because the Christians had love and concern for each other.

**6** List four ways the spirit of community is seen in the examples we have studied in this section.

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**7** What does this lesson tell you about how you can show a spirit of community?

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If you are a Christian, you are a part of God's wonderful community of believers. Do you care for other members of the community? Do you share with those in need?

## **Check Your Answers**

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The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order, so that you will not easily see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 4 a)** In large cities
- b)** In isolated villages
- c)** In small groups
- e)** Between two people

- 1 a)** An offering
- c)** Partners
- d)** Fellowship
- f)** To share

**5** Statements **a)**, **c)**, and **d)** are true.

**2 b)** The story of the Good Samaritan

**6** Any of these: Sharing, fellowship, showing love and concern, showing respect, caring

**3** Love or concern

**7** Your answer



# LESSON 2 The Christian's Community

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A chief is the head of a village. A mayor is the director of a town. A policeman maintains law and order within a certain area. The chief and the mayor have nothing to say about what is done in the next village or town. The policeman cannot enforce law outside his or her own area. All of these have boundaries or limits. They have no authority outside their own boundaries.

It is different for a Christian. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus told His disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations.” This command is for us too. We do not have a limited area in which to work. Jesus sends us to the whole world. That includes all people everywhere.

In Lesson 1 we studied the spirit of community. In this lesson we will see how your community is a place where you can show this spirit. But as you study, remember that community is a group of people more than it is a place. No matter where you go, you can be part of a community as you share Christ with others!

## ***The Plan***

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The Four Communities of Acts 1:8

## ***The Goal***

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Identify and relate the four communities of Acts 1:8.

## **THE FOUR COMMUNITIES OF ACTS 1:8**

**Goal 1.** Identify and relate the four communities of Acts 1:8.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.  
(Acts 1:8)

In the Scripture quoted above, Jesus was talking to His followers. He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit. He said that after they received this power they would be witnesses. A witness is a person who has seen an event and tells what he or she has seen. Jesus wanted His followers to tell others about all the wonderful things they had seen Him do—He healed the sick, raised the dead, died for the sins of the world, arose from death, and returned to heaven victoriously. The disciples were to be witnesses to these events—first in Jerusalem, then in Judea and Samaria and beyond, until they had witnessed to the whole world. Jesus set no boundaries for their witnessing.

## ***Application***

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- 1** Jesus' instruction in Matthew 28:19–20 is greater than that given to chiefs, mayors, and policemen because it
- a)** has boundaries.
  - b)** does not have boundaries.

- 2** The spirit of community studied in Lesson 1 can be found
- a)** anywhere.
  - b)** only in certain places.
- 3** Read Acts 1:8 again, then list the places Jesus told the disciples to be witnesses.

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## Jerusalem—Your Personal World

It is important to understand the setting of Acts 1:8. Jesus was in Jerusalem talking to His disciples and about 500 other followers. He told them that something exciting would happen to them on the Day of Pentecost. These followers did not fully understand that their ministry was to continue the ministry Jesus began. It is not even clear they understood their Lord was about to leave them. Then suddenly, after giving this promise that they would be filled with power as the Holy Spirit came upon them, Jesus disappeared into heaven, and they did not see Him anymore.

The account of what happened next, on the Day of Pentecost, is recorded in Acts 2:1–6. Read these verses, and you will see that the believers received the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised. The people who saw and heard them were amazed.

Later, Peter had an opportunity to explain to the people what was happening (Acts 2:14–32). He reminded them of the resurrection of Jesus and said, ““God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact”” (Acts 2:32). About 3,000 people responded to his message and believed in Christ.

The third chapter of Acts records many miracles. The apostles witnessed that the miracles took place through “faith in the name of Jesus” (Acts 3:16). Chapter 4 tells about Peter and John preaching to the people, and the number who believed increased to about 5,000. The message was always about the death and resurrection of Jesus. In Acts 3:15 and 5:32, Peter

stated again, “We are witnesses of this.” Thus, they became witnesses in Jerusalem just as Jesus said they would.

Every Christian has a responsibility to tell others of the new life in Jesus. The gospel was spread to the ends of the earth by other Christians, and not just by the apostles (Acts 8:1–4). These Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit and had a strong desire to show Christian community to the world. They preached and told the gospel story everywhere.

In our fulfillment of Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations, where do we begin? We must start where the Christians in Jerusalem started—at home in our community, among our own family and neighbors. Let your personal world, your Jerusalem, your own people, those you live with, see the spirit of Christian community in you.

### ***Application***

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**4** Read Acts 1:8, 8:1–4, 3:12–16, and 5:30–32. What are these verses talking about?

.....

**5** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.

- a)** Only those called to be ministers or preachers have a responsibility to spread the gospel.
- b)** According to this lesson, my first responsibility as a Christian is to witness about Christ to those I am with every day.

**6** Your Jerusalem is the place where you live and spend most of your time. Write in a notebook the names of people that you have contact with from day to day. Then write ways you can witness to them and show a spirit of community. Pray that the Lord will help you to be an effective witness in your personal world.



## Judea—Your Country

As the followers of Jesus faithfully witnessed in Jerusalem, the religious leaders became jealous and began to persecute (punish or trouble) the Christians. Acts 8:1 tells us that all of the believers in the Jerusalem church suffered persecution. Because of this, all of them except the apostles left Jerusalem and were scattered throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria. Provinces were divisions of the territory included in the Roman Empire. Luke reports that “those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went” (Acts 8:4).

Because the Christians were forced to leave Jerusalem, they fulfilled the second part of Jesus’ command—to go to Judea as witnesses. Judea was the Roman province in which Jerusalem was located. The people who lived there were Jews who needed to hear about Jesus.

Many years earlier, God had called a man named Moses to go to his own people to free them from the slavery of the Egyptians. Moses did not feel capable of doing this. But God promised that He would go with Moses and give him the words to say (Exodus 3–4). Maybe it was good that Moses did not feel he could do it alone. This caused him to trust God completely.

Perhaps you feel the same way Moses did. The same answer that was given to Moses is your answer. God will be with you and will help you. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5).

After you have been faithful in ministering to your Jerusalem, proceed to your Judea—your own province, state, or country. In the Christian life, if you are faithful in the little things, God will open doors of opportunity. There are many ways to reach out to other people. For example, you can start by teaching a Sunday school class in your church. You can help your pastor visit the sick, or those in prison. You can take food to an elderly person, or to someone else in need. If you are traveling away from home, you can look for ways to show kindness or tell someone about Christ. Trust the Holy Spirit,



and He will help you find ways to show the spirit of community in your Judea.

## ***Application***

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- 7** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.
- a)** The best way you can show community to your country is to make big plans and preach to large crowds.
  - b)** Your Judea is your province, state, or country.
  - c)** You must be faithful in small things before God will use you for greater things.
- 8** Pray for the people in your country. Pray that God will use you to minister to others. Write down ways you can show the spirit of community outside of your personal world. (Use your notebook.)
- 9** What does the example of Moses teach us about trusting God?

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## **Samaria—Your Surrounding Countries**

One thing is for certain—Samaria seemed a long way off for people living in Jerusalem. In fact, the Jews considered the Samaritans to be foreign people. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritan people even though they were related. But in Acts 8, after Philip was filled with the Holy Spirit, he went to Samaria to preach the good news about Christ. Furthermore, Acts 10 indicates that God told Peter to go to a city in Samaria and witness to a man about Jesus. Peter did not want to go, but God showed him that he was to reach the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

A similar example is in the Old Testament book of Jonah. The prophet Jonah was a very proud and self-centered man. He received a message from the Lord to go and preach to the city

of Nineveh, which was located in the country of Assyria. Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh because the people there were aliens to him.

Because Jonah was not concerned about these people, he went in the opposite direction on a ship. The Lord sent a great storm, and the ship was about to sink. Jonah told the men on the ship that the storm had come because he had disobeyed God. He said, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea... and it will become calm” (Jonah 1:12). This was done, and right away the sea was quiet.

Then the Lord sent a large fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah prayed from inside the fish and repented of his disobedience. After the fish spat him out, Jonah went to the wicked Nineveh and preached the Word of the Lord. Many people repented of their sin and were saved. The Lord spared the city and taught Jonah a lesson in obedience.

God loves everyone. The Lord was merciful to the people of Nineveh, and is merciful to all people. If we obey Him, He will help us reach those who live in countries near us. God does not favor one person over another; He will forgive all who call upon Him.

How can you share Christian community with people who live in nearby countries? First you can pray for them. You can give of your money or goods to help reach them with the gospel story. Some of you will even be able to go to them. Do not limit God. Allow Him to work out His plan in your life. You do not need a lot of money to win those in other places to Christ. If all Christians would obey the command of Jesus, the need would be met and the gospel would be taken to the ends of the earth!

### Application

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**10** Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.

- a) I can share Christian community with people in other countries by praying for them and giving money to spread the gospel.
- b) God did not care about Nineveh because the people there did not serve Him.
- c) God does not expect me to care about people unless I can speak their language.
- d) Jonah learned a lesson in obedience.

**11** Is there a group of people that you consider foreigners or strangers? Who are they, and how can you help them?

.....

.....

.....

Pray that these people will come to know God. Ask God how you can help to reach them for Him.



### Ends of the Earth—Your World

The apostle Paul was the greatest missionary the world has ever known. He moved out of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and went to the ends of the earth. On each missionary trip he reached further into the known world. His first journey took him into Asia Minor, near his home in Palestine. His second and third journeys took him as far as Greece. On his last journey he went all the way to distant Rome, and possibly to Spain. Truly Paul had a concern that reached to the ends of the earth—to tell everyone, everywhere, about Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). The boundaries of community are unlimited. They reach from your personal world to the ends of the earth. They touch all people everywhere. Let

us reach out with arms of love and show our spirit of Christian community to the whole world.

Consider a woman from England who had an ends-of-the-earth idea of community. Her name was Gladys Aylward. In 1920, she was a servant to a rich family in London. However, she had a great desire to tell Chinese people about Jesus. But she did not know where the country of China was located.

Finally she learned that she could make the long journey to China by train. She bought a ticket and crossed Europe, then took another train through Siberia. She finally arrived in China after many days and nights of travel.

Gladys Aylward worked in China for more than 40 years telling the people about Christ. Once she stopped a prison riot. She helped many people find Jesus Christ as their Savior and took care of many hundreds of orphans. During the Second World War she led 100 of these children to safety by taking them on foot over the mountains away from the fighting area. This little woman had a spirit of community that reached far beyond her own city or country. Her beginning was humble, but her love was God-like. It reached from England to far off China.

***Application***

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**12** For Gladys Aylward the ends-of-the-earth was to go to

.....

**13** I can have an ends-of-the-earth spirit of community by

.....

.....

**14** In the space before each area of community listed on the left, write the number from the right that represents the group of people who live in that area.

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ... <b>a</b> Samaria           | 1) My compatriots             |
| ... <b>b</b> Judea             | 2) People in nearby countries |
| ... <b>c</b> Ends of the Earth | 3) My family and neighbors    |
| ... <b>d</b> Jerusalem         | 4) People in distant lands    |

**15** Now go back to the illustration at the beginning of this lesson. On the line under each area, write down what group of people it represents.



## **Check Your Answers**

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- 8** Your answer. As you pray, God will show you ways to reach out in ministry to more people.
- 1 b)** does not have boundaries.
- 9** That whenever God asks us to do something, we can trust Him to help us do it.
- 2 a)** anywhere.
- 10** Statements **a)** and **d)** are true.
- 3** Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.
- 11** Your answer. You can pray for them, and ask God to show you ways to help them receive the gospel.
- 4** How the believers witnessed about Christ.
- 12** China.
- 5** Statement **b)** is true.
- 13** showing love and concern for all people everywhere.
- 6** Your answer. I hope you are becoming more aware of the need to show a spirit of community and Christian love in all of your activities with other people.
- 14 a)** 2) People in nearby countries  
**b)** 1) My compatriots  
**c)** 4) People in distant lands  
**d)** 3) My family and neighbors
- 7** Statements **b)** and **c)** are true.



# LESSON 3 Growing in Community

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Human life is a miracle that most of us pay little attention to. Babies grow because they eat and they learn because those who take care of them teach them. Their physical and mental growth continues for many years until finally they are adults. When they become adults, we say that they are mature.

In lesson 2 we learned about Jesus' command to witness. In order to witness effectively, we must develop spiritually. In this lesson you will study how to become spiritually mature. God wants us to become mature, "attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). Then we will be able to grow in community with others.



## ***The Plan***

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- A. Ways to Grow
- B. Principles for Growth

## ***The Goals***

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1. Explain how you can grow in the Lord.
2. Describe the principle of separation unto God and from the world.

### **A. WAYS TO GROW**

#### **Know the Scriptures**

**Goal 1.** Explain how you can grow in the Lord.

The Sadducees told Jesus a fictional story of a certain woman who married a man and he died. Then she married his brother, but he died too. This happened seven times. The Sadducees then asked Jesus whose wife this woman would be in heaven. (See Matthew 22:28.)

The Sadducees invented this story to test Jesus. They did not believe in the resurrection. They wanted Jesus to oppose their beliefs so they could reject His teaching. However, instead of answering the Sadducees, Jesus went to the root of the problem. He exposed their lack of understanding of the Scriptures. ““You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God”” (Matthew 22:29). Notice the order Jesus used. He put knowledge of the Scriptures first and God’s power second.

There is much to learn here. People seem to have a great desire for God’s power, but there is not a great desire to know the Scriptures. Do you want to have the power of God? Then you must live by the teachings of the Scriptures. The apostle Peter advises, “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation” (1 Peter 2:2).

Psalm 119 has 176 verses. In almost all of these verses, the Scriptures are mentioned in one way or another. Among other things, these verses show the Word of God to be our guide, our wisdom, our joy, and our defense against sin.

If reading the Word of God is not a regular part of your life, ask the Lord to help you have the wisdom to read and understand the Scriptures. Sometimes we do not do what we should because we lack discipline. There are certain things that only God can do for me. There are other things that I must do for myself. For example, when it comes to daily prayer and Bible reading, I have to do it. This calls for an act of my will. No one is ever going to force me to do it. I must make myself do it. And as I read the Word daily, I will experience the satisfaction and growth that it brings.

Babies only grow as they receive proper milk and food. It is the same in the life of the believer. If you expect to grow in the Lord you have to let Him feed you through His Word. Plan a regular time each day for this purpose, just as you plan a regular time to eat every day. The Holy Spirit will help you understand what you read, and you will grow in the Lord.

### Application

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- 1 Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.
  - a) Jesus exposed the Sadducees because they did not understand the Scriptures.
  - b) God feeds us spiritually when we read the Bible.
  - c) Jesus said that knowing the power of God is more important than knowing the Scriptures.

2 What is the result of regular Scripture reading?

.....

.....



## Think About the Lord

Another aid to Christian growth is prayer and meditation, or thinking about the Lord. The apostle Paul, in Philippians 4:8, tells us to fill our minds with “whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable.” We have a promise in Isaiah that God will keep us in perfect peace if we keep our minds on Him (Isaiah 26:3). Thinking about the Lord makes our faith in Him grow.

We also need to pray that God will teach us His ways and direct our paths. He wants us to pray for a better understanding of His Word. We are instructed in Philippians 4:6 to ask God for what we need. And we read in Ephesians 6:18 to “be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” When we pray for other Christians, we are showing the spirit of community towards them. We should also pray for those who do not know Christ, that they may be drawn to Him.

### ***Application***

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**3** Why are prayer and meditation important?

.....  
.....

**4** Name two things the Bible tells us to pray about.

.....  
.....

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## Be Ruled by Christian Love

God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites as one of the earliest sets of rules for true community living (Exodus 20). The Ten Commandments deal with relationships between God and people, and with relationships between people. Everything the Israelites did had to be compared to these laws. Not one

of them was to be disobeyed. However, Israelites found it very difficult to follow these rules.

The people who received these commandments disobeyed them. So God sent Jesus Christ to make a way to restore the relationship between God and humanity. Read Romans 8:3 and Galatians 4:4–5. These verses show the mercy of God and His desire to have perfect communion (community) with humankind. People's relationships with others are improved when they have the right kind of relationship with God.

When I was young, I was assigned to work with an older man who was an expert in his work. But he was not an easy person to work with. I treated him with love no matter how badly he treated me. When he saw that his unpleasant way did not affect me, he changed his attitude toward me. He responded to my love. From him I learned many valuable lessons, one of which is that most people will not resist love.

When we accept Christ as our Lord, we get a different view of God, the Bible, and other people. Jesus does for us what the Ten Commandments, the Law, could not do. We become new beings when we enter into community with Him (2 Corinthians 5:17). He writes His law of love on our hearts (2 Corinthians 3:3). This new law of love urges us to obey God because we love Him. His law of love rules our relationships with other people. Our conscience is made clean and our mind is renewed. Now we do by nature the things that are commanded by the Law.

Has someone treated you badly since you became a Christian? Did you feel angry? If you are a Christian, the power of God has changed your nature. His law of love becomes your rule of life and behavior. This is the way to have a spirit of community.

### Application

---

**5** Complete the following sentences with the correct words.

**a)** God gave Israel a set of rules called

.....

**b)** Jesus taught the law of

.....

**c)** It is possible to obey Christ's law because we

.....

**d)** Christ writes His law on our

.....

**6** Now that I am a Christian, it is easier to forgive someone who has wronged me because

**a)** the Law tells me I must forgive.

**b)** when I became a Christian my nature was changed.



### Worship With Others

Worshipping with other Christians will help you grow. We need to meet together to study God's Word. Regular church attendance and teaching build us up in the Lord. Sharing with others their problems and joys, and having them share ours, is a great help. A basic principle of community is that we need each other. We need to spend time with others who know and love the Lord as we do. Do you meet with other Christians? Do you share their joy and encourage them when they are sad? If you do, you are showing the spirit of community and love in its fullest sense.

## Application

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- 7** Which statement best explains how worshipping with others helps us to grow spiritually?
- a)** When we share the joys and sorrows of others, we realize that they need us.
  - b)** Worshipping and sharing with other Christians gives us strength and builds us up in the Lord.
- 

## B. PRINCIPLES FOR GROWTH

**Goal 2.** Describe the principle of separation unto God and from the world.

As we mature in our Christian walk through studying God’s Word, praying, thinking about God, worshipping Him, and loving others, God leads us into a life of holiness. The Bible sometimes speaks of this as being separated. The New Testament talks about two sides of separation—separation unto God and separation from the world. Both are very important.

### Separation Unto God

God is calling you to be separated unto himself. He wants you to be dedicated, set apart for His use. Romans 12:1 says,

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

This is the positive side of separation. Look at Acts 13:2: “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Also read Romans 1:1. Notice that the separation was unto God. Separation unto God calls for total dedication or commitment to Him so that He can help us to live holy.

## Separation From the World

Second Corinthians 6:14 states, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” Here the message is that true partnership (community) cannot exist between a believer and an unbeliever, for there is little basis for the spirit of community between Christians and unbelievers. Concerning relating with unbelievers, this verse commands us not to have close relationships such as marriage or business partnerships. It is not talking about daily contacts with unbelievers in the world.

We are often with people who have no faith in God. These people are the ones we are to win to Him. The secret in being a child of God in a wicked world is knowing God. You must allow the Holy Spirit to rule your life. You are living in the world, but you are a citizen of heaven. You can be with unbelievers, but you must not be like them.

### ***Application***

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**8** Write YES in front of those activities that illustrate the principles of separation unto God or separation from the world.

- ... **a** Daily reading of the Bible
  - ... **b** Choosing Christian friends for times of fellowship
  - ... **c** Participating in activity that is not pleasing to the Lord
  - ... **d** Marrying someone who is not a Christian
  - ... **e** Being too busy to pray regularly
  - ... **f** Asking God to give you guidance
  - ... **g** Showing love and concern for someone who has a need
-

## Tolerance and Moderation

It is sometimes difficult for Christians to know the standards of behavior they should have. We should let the Bible be our guide in areas where it gives specific direction, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in other areas.

Some Christians say that we are no longer under the Law, so we are free to live according to our own standards. Others have a more legalistic attitude. That is, they try to gain favor with God by the things they do or do not do. They try to make themselves acceptable to God by following a list of rules, rather than by living in faith in Christ. Christianity is not a set of rules that one must follow. It is receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and allowing Him to become Lord of our lives. Jesus himself said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matthew 5:17).

When Jesus Christ is Lord of our lives, we do things that are pleasing to Him. We do not want to do those things that harm our Christian testimony. We are not bound by legalistic rules, nor do we feel that the grace of Christ permits us to do whatever pleases us. Christ’s law of love helps us to practice moderation or balance in our standards of behavior. God deals with us as individuals. He knows what we need. He will help us to be balanced in our Christian behavior.

Since God does deal with us as individuals, we must be careful not to judge others by our own standards. An explanation is found in Romans chapters 14 and 15, in relationship to eating certain foods and honoring certain days. However, the principles taught in these chapters apply to any other questionable areas of our lives. Here are some of these principles:

1. “Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way” (Romans 14:13).



2. “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification” (Romans 14:19).
3. “It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall. So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves” (Romans 14:21–22).
4. “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Romans 15:7).

These passages of Scripture make it very clear that we should be tolerant towards others whose standards of behavior are different from ours. To be tolerant means to be patient and accepting of others even when we are not in complete agreement with them.

God knows how to deal with us as individuals. He deals with us on a personal basis because He is bringing us into a closer relationship with himself. He knows the areas in which we need help. He may require one thing of you, and something entirely different of another person. He can impress us to do certain things, and He can also impress us not to do other things. We should not try to make everyone do exactly as we feel God is telling us to do. We must accept other Christians as they are and expect God to lead them. We must be tolerant.

Jesus said, ““For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you”” (Matthew 7:2). Therefore, it is not wise to be harsh or critical in our judgment of others. Tolerance toward others is an example of the law of love and is present wherever there is a spirit of community.

### Application

---

**9** What two things do Romans 14:19 and Romans 15:7 tell us to do?

.....  
.....

**10** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.

- a)** The Bible clearly states what our behavior should be in all situations.
- b)** The Holy Spirit is able to show us what is right and wrong.
- c)** Christians should separate from other Christians whose standards are different.
- d)** If we judge others harshly, God will judge us harshly.
- e)** We should try to get other Christians to live by our standards.

**11** What principle have you learned in this lesson about each of the following?

**a)** Christian behavior

.....

**b)** Legalism

.....

**c)** Tolerance

.....



## Check Your Answers

---

- 7 b)** Worshipping and sharing with other Christians gives us strength and builds us up in the Lord.
- 1** Statements **a)** and **b)** are true.
- 8** The principles of separation are seen in **a)**, **b)**, **f)**, and **g)**.
- 2** We grow spiritually.
- 3** They help us to grow spiritually, and we have a greater spirit of community.
- 9** Do things that make peace; accept each other
- 4** Any of the following: For God's direction; to understand God's Word; for our needs; for other Christians; for unbelievers
- 10** Statements **b)** and **d)** are true.
- 5 a)** the Ten Commandments.  
**b)** love.  
**c)** love Him and want to obey Him.  
**d)** hearts.
- 11** Your answer. Here are some possible answers:
- a)** We should let the Bible be our guide in areas where it gives specific direction, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in other areas.
- b)** We should let Christ's law of love guide our actions, rather than follow a list of rules.
- c)** We should accept others whose opinions may be different from ours, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide them.
- 6 b)** when I became a Christian my nature was changed.

# 4 Standing in Community

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“Thank you, and here is your change.”

“But sir, you have given me too much change. Here, this is yours.”

“You are right. You are an honest man! There are not many people who would do that.”

“The Bible teaches that we must always be honest.”

You probably have had an experience similar to this. Have you shown a high Christian principle when you could have done otherwise? Taking a stand for integrity and righteousness is an example of showing a true spirit of community.

## ***The Plan***

---

- A. Standing and the Word of God
- B. Standing and Tradition
- C. Standing and Regulations

## ***The Goals***

---

1. Explain the importance of taking a stand for righteousness.
2. Show how you can use tradition in your community to honor the Lord.
3. Identify ways to show Christian attitudes toward community functions.

## **A. STANDING AND THE WORD OF GOD**

**Goal 1.** Explain the importance of taking a stand for righteousness.

The apostle Paul urges, “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes” (Ephesians 6:11). What does it mean to take a stand? Does it mean just being against something, or does it also mean being for something? In most cases the Bible encourages us to take a stand against certain things. Certainly, when we are Christians we will be in favor of godly things. To stand means to obey God’s will, as you have learned from the Scriptures.

In the Scripture quoted above, we are told to put on God’s armor. Armor in the military sense is metal clothing worn for protection. Notice that we are told why we should put on God’s armor: to stand against the devil’s schemes.

God’s armor is given for our protection. Paul mentions every piece of armor to illustrate how completely prepared we are to fight the enemy. This infers that we will not deny what we believe.

Standing fast is being firm. It is deciding that a bad act or teaching will not influence your life. It is putting into practice good acts or teachings that will strengthen your Christian life.

We could illustrate this kind of action by a good Christian habit—going to church. You know that when it is time to go to church to worship the Lord, you will do so. You do not have to decide this over and over. It is already the pattern for your life. However, some situations call for standing against something. Paul advises, “After you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then” (Ephesians 6:13–14).

Daniel 3 tells of the king who built a statue and said that all the people in Babylon should bow down and worship it. Three young men refused. Even after they were told that the penalty for disobedience would be confinement in a furnace or oven, they would not change their action. The king became irate and had the fire in the furnace intensified. The young men had taken a stand and refused to change, so they were thrown into the furnace. It seemed like certain death.

However, God did not let them die. Greatly amazed, the king released the young men and declared, “No other god can save in this way” (Daniel 3:29). These young men had taken a stand not to bow and worship a false god. Because of the young men’s determination and faith, the king and his people saw the great power of God. Do you have that kind of determination to serve God?

Your faith must be from the heart. When your friends see your spirit of community and your firm stand for what is right, they will respect you, and they will be aware of God’s power in your life. When some practice would cause you to deny a part of your Christianity, stand firm for what is right!

## ***Application***

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- 1** To take a stand means to be against anything that
  - a)** does not start in the church.
  - b)** opposes what the Bible teaches.

- 2** Taking a stand requires us
    - a)** always to be against something.
    - b)** often to be in favor of something.
  - 3** The story of the three young men in Daniel 3 teaches that we should
    - a)** obey God more than people.
    - b)** obey our rulers no matter what they demand.
  - 4** We are taking a firm stand when we
    - a)** obey God’s Word even when it is not easy to do so.
    - b)** do that which will cause the least difficulty.
- 

## **B. STANDING AND TRADITION**

**Goal 2.** Show how you can use tradition in your community to honor the Lord.

A tradition is a belief or custom handed down from one generation to another. Although it is not always written down, it is very important to the members of the community. Many traditions are good and useful as they help people to remember their past. Other traditions are wrong for Christians. There may be times when traditions would lead us to do something that the Bible teaches against. At such times, we must defend what is right.

For example, in some parts of the world dead relatives are highly respected. This is not in itself a bad thing. We should remember with respect our relatives who have died. But we should not respect them to the point of worshipping them. When we worship our ancestors, we disobey God’s Word. In Exodus 20:3, God instructed, “You shall have no other gods before me.” Those who have died have lived their lives and gone. We must leave them with God. Now we should live in such a way that we are sure of our own spiritual condition when we face death.

## Application

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**5** Traditions are

- a)** customs handed down from one generation to the next.
- b)** written family laws that must be obeyed.

**6** Christians should

- a)** try to find ways of using good traditions for a Christian witness.
- b)** have nothing to do with traditions in their community.

**7** Answer the following questions.

- a)** What is one tradition practiced in your community?

.....

- b)** Is there a way that you can observe it without destroying your Christian testimony? Explain.

.....

.....

- c)** Are there traditional practices in your community that are not suitable for Christians? What should you do about them?

.....

.....



## C. STANDING AND REGULATIONS

**Goal 3.** Identify ways to show Christian attitudes toward community functions.

Governments, rulers, and authorities are given to us by God. In 1 Timothy 2:1–2 we are instructed to pray for those who are in authority over us. As we pray for them, God will help them to be a blessing.

The Bible also teaches us to honor and obey the laws our rulers make. Titus 3:1 records, “Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good.” A Christian will obey government



regulations even if he or she personally disagrees with them, unless they are contrary to Christian teaching and God's Word.

Governments must decide which days are official holidays. Many holidays are connected with the religions of a country. Sometimes celebrations will be for days that are not special for Christians. Do not allow this to bother you. You can honor God every day of the year. When these holidays come along, take the opportunity to rest and thank the Lord for shedding His light into your heart.

In some areas, holidays provide special opportunities for the Christian. People are in the streets and they will read gospel literature. If you are allowed to do so in your area, use these holidays to distribute literature and witness to people who need Christ. It may even be possible to preach the Word in public places, if you are permitted to do so. Turn non-Christian days into workdays for the Lord!

Sometimes we may need to adjust our plans or schedules to meet government requirements. For example, in one country the government is making a practice of having political functions on Sunday mornings. Attendance is mandatory, so the churches must cooperate. What can the churches do in this case? God is not limited to being worshipped on Sundays. Most of the churches have a Saturday evening service. In this way Christians can obey the law and still have a special time to worship the Lord.

## ***Application***

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- 8** Laws should be obeyed
  - a)** under all circumstances.
  - b)** unless they oppose God's Word.
- 9** Legal holidays should be
  - a)** observed only when there is a religious reason for them.
  - b)** looked upon as an opportunity to witness.

**10** When government functions affect church functions, the Christian should

- a)** cooperate with the government as much as possible.
- b)** pay no attention to the demands of the government.

---

If we want our Christian testimony to be effective, we must stand firmly for what is right. As much as possible, we should be loyal citizens and show respect for our government and our leaders. When regulations go against our Christian principles, we must ask God for wisdom to know what to do and be willing to take our stand for God.

## Check Your Answers

---

- 6 a)** try to find ways of using good traditions for a Christian witness.
- 1 b)** is against what the Bible teaches.
- 7** Your answer
- 2 b)** often to be in favor of something.
- 8 b)** unless they oppose God's Word.
- 3 a)** obey God more than people.
- 9 b)** looked upon as an opportunity to witness.
- 4 a)** obey God's Word even when it is not easy to do so.
- 10 a)** cooperate with the government as much as possible.
- 5 a)** beliefs or customs handed down from one generation to the next.

# LESSON 5 Building in Community

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Two men are digging a ditch. A third man walks by and asks:

“What are you doing with the shovel, sir?”

“Oh, I’m laboring over this ditch.”

“And you, sir?”

“Well, I’m building a beautiful school.”

Do you see the difference in each man’s outlook? One man looked at his job as hard work. He could not see beyond the job he had to do at the moment. The other man was looking ahead. He saw the school that was going to stand on that spot.

Are you like the first man, or the second one? Do you see a beautiful building or just mud? In this lesson we will consider the foundation on which we must build and how to build on that foundation.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. Building on Proper Foundation
- B. Building Together
- C. Building Bridges

## ***The Goals***

---

1. Indicate the appropriate foundation upon which to build.
2. Explain the importance of building with other believers.
3. Describe the difference between building “bridges” and building “walls.”

## **A. BUILDING ON PROPER FOUNDATION**

**Goal 1.** Indicate the appropriate foundation upon which to build.

Beneath every great building there must be a solid foundation. If there is no foundation, the building will collapse. It is the same way in the Christian life. Your spirit of community must be based on the solid rock, Jesus Christ. He is your foundation. Paul writes, “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

A biblical foundation is necessary for spiritual growth. In Matthew 7:24–27, Jesus told the story of two builders. One built his house upon a rock; the other built his house on sand, without a proper foundation. When the floods and storm raged, the house on the sand fell. But the house built on the rock stood strong.

In this story, Jesus said the wise man who built on a rock is like a person who obeys the words of Christ. The rock that he or she builds upon is obedience to the teachings of Christ. The man who built on sand is like a person who does not obey the words of Christ.

It is one thing to say we believe in Christ and quite another to walk in obedience to His words. Jesus warned, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). You need a solid foundation to support you when the storms come. Such storms come in different ways: the death of a loved one, sickness, loss of possessions, or temptation. When we have built upon the foundation of obedience to God, we have a clear conscience and can have confidence that He will help us in the storm. First John 3:21–22 reads, “If our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.”

Only our faith and foundation in the Lord and His Word will keep us during difficult times. Is He your foundation? Are you obedient to His Word?

## ***Application***

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**1** Fill in the blanks.

- a)** If there is not a solid . . . . .  
the building will fall down.
- b)** Those who build upon the rock . . . . .  
the teachings of Christ.
- c)** A house built upon the sand will . . . . .  
during a storm.
- d)** The foundation upon which we should build our lives is  
. . . . .

**2** Think over your life since you accepted Christ as your Savior. Can you say you have been walking in obedience to Christ?  
. . . . .

If your answer to the last question is yes, you are laying a solid foundation. If not, ask God to help you to obey Him.

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## **B. BUILDING TOGETHER**

**Goal 2.** Explain the importance of building with other believers.

After the foundation is laid, we can start the actual building. We are not only building as individuals, but we are also a part of the universal church of Jesus Christ—all believers together being built into a complete structure, with Jesus Christ as its foundation. Peter writes, “you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5). In Ephesians 2:20–22, Paul says,

[You] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

We are all stones in the same building. The Scriptures give much instruction about our relationships with each other. Here are words of advice given by the apostle Paul to some of the churches:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:2–3)

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. (Ephesians 4:29)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10)

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:14)

These verses make it clear that the community of believers has a great responsibility towards each other. Among believers, more than any place else, the spirit of community should always be seen—fellowship, communion, partnership, love, concern, giving, and receiving. The early church practiced this kind of community spirit (Acts 2:43–47).

When we build in community with others, we must be adaptable. I did not say changeable! An adaptable person is one who can fit into whatever ways are most suitable to meet the needs of others with a common goal. For example, a friend that you are witnessing to asks you to go to the zoo with him on Sunday evening. You have a habit of going to church on Sunday evening. So you suggest to your friend that you will go to the zoo with him earlier on Sunday, and then you would like to take him to church with you. In this way, you have pleased your friend by sharing in a wholesome time of fellowship, and you have an opportunity to win him to the Lord.

If we want to win our community for Christ, we must have a plan. But our plan should always be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. If He wants to change it, allow Him to do so.

The city of Seoul, Korea, has a population of more than ten million people. There is a church in Seoul whose members minister to many thousands of people each week. But their building will not hold that many people, so they have learned to adapt to meet the needs of the people.



In Seoul it is common for people in the different sections of town to gather for public meetings in small “town halls.” Each section has its own leaders who meet with the people of that section. The pastor of the church has followed the same practice in ministering to the people. They could not all come to the church, so he took the church to them, thus adapted to meet their needs.

If three people live in the same part of the city, one of them opens his or her home for a weeknight meeting. They invite their friends and neighbors. As people find the Lord, the group grows. When there are 12 people, the group divides. Now there are hundreds of such small groups throughout the city, reaching 45,000 people every week.

Too often we forget that the church is not a building—it is people. It is important to worship together, but we need to be willing to adapt when necessary to reach people everywhere with the gospel.

### ***Application***

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**3** Name six attitudes that we should have towards other people.

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.....  
.....

**4** Circle any of these attitudes that you need to develop in your own life.

**5** Being adaptable means changing your method of doing something

- a)** without changing your basic purpose.
- b)** by changing your basic purpose.

**6** If you want to win people to the Lord you should

- a)** wait until they go to church with you.
- b)** make opportunities to witness to them wherever you are.

**7** An adaptable spirit is one that is

- a)** selfish.
- b)** unselfish.

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## C. BUILDING BRIDGES

**Goal 3.** Describe the difference between building “bridges” and building “walls.”

Bricks and stones have been used as building materials for many years. The same bricks or stones that can be used to build churches, schools, and hospitals can also be used for building prisons. The same pieces used for building bridges can also be used for building walls. The difference is in the plan of the builder.

Bridges make it possible for people to move in two directions to cross over barriers. They are a means of having community, of bringing people together. Remember in our first lesson that one of the basic meanings of *koinonia* indicates a two-way relationship—a giving and receiving relationship. We build bridges by showing friendship, helping people, and being available when they need us. Or we build walls by holding back our friendship and closing ourselves off from others.

Christians should try to have friends on all levels of society. We build walls when we consider ourselves better than others. We also build walls when we refuse to reach out to those whom we consider to be on a higher level than ours. Whether you are a farmer, a laborer, a clerk, or a government official, you can have friends on different levels than your own. Then you should try to win them to the Lord. I have never won anyone to the Lord without first making him my friend.

Walls divide and separate people. Probably you have read about the Great Wall of China, which was built many hundreds of years ago and still stands. It was built to keep some people out and to keep others inside the wall. In a metaphoric sense, it is safer to build walls than bridges. When we build bridges we

take a chance on being hurt or rejected. But Jesus has reassured us: ““In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”” (John 16:33). Jesus did not pray that God would take us out of the world, but that He would keep us close to himself and safe in the world (John 17:15).

Sometimes walls must be broken down before we can reach others. There are social, ethnic, cultural, and religious walls that must be broken down in our quest to build community. Jesus himself broke down such walls when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7–9).

We must continually choose between building walls or bridges in our Christian community and in our larger community in the world. Are you showing a true spirit of love to your community? Are you winning the lost to Christ by first winning them to yourself? Your community will know the true meaning of community spirit when you minister love.

### ***Application***

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**8** Beside each statement, write *W* if the action would build a wall, and *B* if it would build a bridge.

- ... **a** Take care of someone who is sick
- ... **b** Take someone to church
- ... **c** Refuse when people different from you ask you to join them in a community project
- ... **d** Clean the house of a sick person
- ... **e** Visit people in a hospital or a prison
- ... **f** Avoid people who are not on your level
- ... **g** Invite someone to your home for fellowship
- ... **h** Talk about people who have hurt your feelings



Now that you have completed the first five lessons, you are ready to answer unit one of your student report. Review Lessons 1–5, then follow the instructions in your student report. After you have completed the unit one evaluation, send your answer sheets to your instructor, and continue with your study of the remaining lessons.

## Check Your Answers

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- 5 a)** without changing your basic purpose.
- 1 a)** foundation  
**b)** obey  
**c)** fall  
**d)** Jesus Christ
- 6 b)** make opportunities to witness to them wherever you are.
- 2** Your answer
- 7 b)** unselfish.
- 3** Possible answers: gentleness, patience, humility, tolerance, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, love, a tender heart
- 8 a)** Bridge  
**b)** Bridge  
**c)** Wall  
**d)** Bridge  
**e)** Bridge  
**f)** Wall  
**g)** Bridge  
**h)** Wall
- 4** Your answer. The Holy Spirit will help you to develop right attitudes.



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## **Lessons**

- 6 Learning from Jesus**
- 7 Shining in Your Community**
- 8 Belonging in the Church Community**
- 9 Contributing to Your Community**
- 10 Continuing in Community**

# LESSON 6 Learning from Jesus

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A mother and her small son are talking.

“Mother, where did you live when Jesus was a boy?”

“Why, I wasn’t alive then, son. Jesus lived a long time ago—more than 2,000 years ago.”

“Oh, I thought He lived when you were little. You always seem to be talking about Him.”

It is a wonderful thing to be known as someone who is always talking about Jesus. It is clear that the things we talk about the most are the things that are closest to our hearts.

In this lesson you will study about the childhood, ministry, and influence that Jesus had when He lived on earth, and the influence He is still having. He is the greatest teacher who ever lived. Following Him closely will help us to live more like Him.



## ***The Plan***

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- A. The Childhood of Jesus
- B. Jesus' Relationship to His Community
- C. The Influence of Jesus

## ***The Goals***

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1. Describe ways in which Jesus was involved in His community during childhood.
2. Indicate Jesus' involvement in His community as an adult.
3. Discuss Jesus' influence on the world.

## **A. THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS**

**Goal 1.** Describe ways in which Jesus was involved in His community during childhood.

Even as a child Jesus was involved in the activities of His community. His parents were Jews who followed Jewish customs. Luke 2:21 tells that they took Jesus to be circumcised and named when He was a week old. By doing this, they conformed to the teaching of the Old Testament. Circumcision was an important tradition in the Jewish community. It was a physical sign of God's covenant (agreement) with the nation of Israel (Genesis 17:9–14).

The time of Jesus' dedication was a happy time for His parents, Mary and Joseph. They made the trip to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. (Read about the history of this ceremony in Exodus 13:1–2 and Leviticus 12:3, 8.) While in Jerusalem, Jesus' parents sacrificed two doves or pigeons according to the Law of Moses (Luke 2:22–24). Again, we see that His parents did what was expected of them as devout Jews. They identified with their community.

At the time of Jesus' dedication, an old man named Simeon was waiting for the Lord to send the Messiah. Luke 2:27–28 say of Simeon,

Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God.

Simeon blessed Jesus, saying that Jesus was the Messiah and light to the Gentiles. He also prophesied about Jesus' ministry.

Next a woman named Anna came into the temple, and she also praised the Lord for sending this child to show the way to freedom. These expressions of joy at seeing Jesus confirm that God's will was done. God was pleased by this act of following the culture and religious tradition.

Joseph and Mary were ordinary people chosen by God to be the earthly parents of Jesus. We are told very little about Jesus' childhood. It appears that He was raised in a normal way. The Bible does not tell us anything more about Jesus until He was 12 years old. At that time, as they did each year, Jesus' family took a long journey to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast, which was a sacred Jewish holy day.

(Read the story of Jesus in the temple in Luke 2:41–51.) When the feast ended, Jesus' family started home, along with others of their community. After a day of traveling, they realized that Jesus was not with them. Mary and Joseph were very tired and worried as they searched for Jesus. When they found Him, they still did not understand why He had stayed behind. But He asked, “‘Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?’” (Luke 2:49). Even at this early age, Jesus was aware of His mission to His community and the world.

Jesus returned to Nazareth with His parents and was obedient to them (Luke 2:51). Jesus submitted to the authority of His parents—the Creator submitting to part of His creation. Truly this is amazing! Luke 2:52 is the key verse to understanding Jesus in His community: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Jesus was in touch with God and with His community.

## Application

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- 1** Jesus was taken to the temple because He was
    - a)** different from other Jewish children.
    - b)** presented to God just like the other Jewish children.
  - 2** Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Jerusalem every year because
    - a)** it was the custom to attend the feast there.
    - b)** they liked to visit friends there.
  - 3** The Bible indicates that as He grew, Jesus was
    - a)** well accepted by His community.
    - b)** not a part of the community.
  - 4** We know that Jesus
    - a)** never let people tell Him what to do.
    - b)** obeyed those who were over Him.
- 

## B. JESUS' RELATIONSHIP TO HIS COMMUNITY

### Ministering to Needs

**Goal 2.** Indicate Jesus' involvement in His community as an adult.

Jesus' ministry began when He was about 30 years old. During His three years of ministry, He was constantly involved with other people in His community. Jesus had closest fellowship with the 12 disciples and spent much time training them. The disciples and Jesus lived in very close communion during the three years of His ministry, and they shared a common purse or expense fund (John 12:6). They experienced true community living.

Jesus also had other followers who were in communion with Him. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were His close friends. On one occasion Jesus sent out about 70 men into the towns to prepare people for His visit (Luke 10:1–12). Mentioned in the Scriptures are many others who loved Him and had community with Him.

Jesus began His public ministry in His home province, Galilee. He ministered to the needs of people. The blind, lame, deaf, demon possessed, and those with other sicknesses were completely cured. Matthew writes of Jesus, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36).

Many times Jesus told lepers who were healed to go and show themselves to the priests and offer the proper sacrifices according to the Law. He affirmed, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matthew 5:17).

Jesus associated with people in all levels of society. He attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee along with His mother and disciples. There He showed interest in the problems of others and performed a miracle to help them (John 2:1–11). Matthew 9:9–11 records that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. At other times He sat with the Pharisees (Luke 7:36; 11:37). The Gospel of John tells us about a Samaritan woman with whom Jesus talked (John 4:1–30).

Jesus himself expressed His ministry with these words from the book of Isaiah. (See Isaiah 61:1–2.)

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. (Luke 4:18–19)

On two occasions Jesus fed the multitudes. (See Matthew 14 and 15.) He was concerned with the earthly condition of humanity. In Matthew 25:31–40, Jesus talked about the final judgment. He said that as often as you have helped the poor and visited the sick and imprisoned, you did it for Him. If you have failed to do these, you have failed to minister unto Him.

Thus, Jesus came to fulfill the Law. He came to bring a new day to His people, and to all people who would follow Him. His purpose was not to enforce a list of laws, but to write the Spirit of the Law on the hearts and minds of people. His death and resurrection completed this. Has Jesus' ministry affected your life? Are you in fellowship with Him? Ask Him to take your life into His control. He will help you to minister in your community just as He did in His.

### ***Application***

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- 5** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.
- a)** Jesus ministered only in His hometown of Nazareth.
  - b)** Jesus ministered to people from all levels of society.
  - c)** Jesus observed the laws of His community.
  - d)** Jesus did not get involved with ungodly people.
  - e)** When we help those in need, it is the same as doing it for Christ.
- 6** Name three ways in which Jesus showed the spirit of community.

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### **Submitting to Authority**

Although Jesus was the Son of God, He accepted the authority or rule of those in power in His community. For example, we read in Matthew 17:24–27 that He submitted to payment of the temple tax. Not wanting to offend the people, Jesus told Peter to go fishing and he would find enough money in the mouth of a fish to pay the tax.

On another occasion, Jesus did not accept a custom that was contrary to the will of God. Money changers were doing business in the temple court known as the Court of the Gentiles

(Matthew 21:12). This was the only place a seeking Gentile could worship God. How could people pray when the buyers and sellers were making noise? Also, the money changers were taking advantage of the poor by charging too much interest to change foreign money for money used in the temple. They were also keeping sincere seekers from finding God. They had violated Isaiah 56:7: “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” In this instance Jesus was more concerned that His Father’s will be accomplished. He acted against human customs because He was obeying the highest authority.

Jesus is the perfect example of one who showed the spirit of community. Yet He did not allow people’s customs to overrule God’s will.

### ***Application***

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- 7** Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.
  - a)** Jesus did not feel obliged to pay the temple tax, but He did so because He did not want to offend people.
  - b)** Jesus ate with the tax collectors because He loved them and wanted to forgive their sin.
  - c)** Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple because they were not paying taxes.
  - d)** Jesus did not usually obey authorities in His community because He was the Son of God.
- 8** Give one instance when Jesus submitted to those in authority.

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## **C. THE INFLUENCE OF JESUS**

**Goal 3.** Discuss Jesus’ influence on the world.

True Christianity brings freedom. Jesus taught, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John

8:31–32). Later, He said, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). Christianity frees people from superstitions and bondage to sin. It puts within them the desire and ability to live above sin.

The ministry of Jesus still has an influence on our world. Jesus raised women to new heights of respect. He highly honored His mother. Even on the Cross, He was concerned about Mary’s welfare and left her in the care of John. (See John 19:26–27.)

Luke 7:36–39 tells of a woman who anointed the feet of Jesus. He did not turn her away even though she had been sinful. Instead, Jesus forgave her sin and changed her life. He honored her for her ministry to Him. Another time, in Samaria, He ministered to a woman who was an outcast, and her life was changed. Today, in many places where the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, women are given great love, respect, and honor.

The life and ministry of Jesus has greatly influenced the whole world. Think of the way the western world measures time. Years are numbered in B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (after Christ).

God started the seven-day week. In His creation of the world, He rested on the seventh day and commanded that it be kept holy and used as a day of rest. The day of rest changed after Jesus came. He arose from the dead on the first day of the week. Now many people in the world accept Sunday as their day of rest and worship.

Many of the highest standards of living in the world are enjoyed where the gospel can be preached freely. Our modern system of law has its roots in the Scriptures. The desire that moves many people to work hard is based on biblical teaching.

One of the most important concerns of Bible believing Christians has been to teach people to read so that they could read the Bible for themselves. Christian missionaries have put many languages into writing for the first time. Missionaries in

many countries of the world have started schools, so that boys and girls could learn to read. These schools have blessed many communities throughout the world.

The influence of Christianity has been great upon modern people and their world. Religion enslaves people; true Christianity frees them. When Christ died, His teaching did not stop. You are an extension of His ministry—you represent Christ to the world. When you show true Christian community, the world is better. In the next lesson we will discuss some ways you can extend Christ’s ministry in your community.

**Application**

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**9** Name two ways the world would be different if Jesus had not come.

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**10** List two influences of Christianity on women.

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**11** State one way in which Christianity has changed you as an individual.

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## Check Your Answers

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- 6** He shared money with the disciples; He ate with sinners; He healed the sick; He fed the multitudes; He attended happy occasions such as weddings.
- 1 b)** presented to God just like the other Jewish children.
- 7** Statements **a)** and **b)** are true.
- 2 a)** it was the custom to attend the feast there.
- 8** When He paid the temple tax
- 3 a)** well accepted by His community.
- 9** Your answer. Any of the many ways mentioned in this lesson, and other ways as well. Can you see how your own world would be different if He had not come?
- 4 b)** obeyed those who were over Him.
- 10** Possible answers: Women are given greater love, honor, and respect where the gospel is preached. They are set free from sin and superstition. They may have greater opportunities for education.
- 5** Statements **b)**, **c)**, and **e)** are true.
- 11** Your answer

# LESSON 7 Shining in Your Community

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In the Panama Canal Museum is an old signal light. It was made in France in the 1800s and taken to Panama when the French were trying to build an overland canal. They were unable to continue the construction of the canal because of sickness and lack of money. However, the old light stayed on. It served for many years as a signal for ships at sea.

Inside the light is a place for a small kerosene lamp. Surrounding the lamp are rows of cut glass in long narrow strips which serve as reflectors. There are perhaps 800 reflectors around the lamp. They have no light in themselves, but they reflect and send out the light of the lamp. And so, the tiny light from the kerosene lamp is multiplied many hundreds of times to make a brilliant, shining light. For many years, ships and boats were guided to shore by this faraway light.

In the same way, we reflect the light of Jesus Christ to the world. The Bible compares a Christian to both light and salt. In this lesson you will see how you can be light and salt to your community. Having your mind influenced by Christ will help you to reflect His love to the world.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. A Light to Your Community
- B. Salt in Your Community
- C. A Renewed Mind

## ***The Goals***

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1. Describe ways a Christian can reflect the light of Jesus.
2. State how a Christian can be like salt in his or her community.
3. Identify attitudes of a renewed mind.

### **A. A LIGHT TO YOUR COMMUNITY**

**Goal 1.** Describe ways a Christian can reflect the light of Jesus.

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” (John 9:5). He also said, “You are the light of the world . . . let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:14, 16). We have no light in ourselves, but we reflect the light of Jesus, much as the reflectors in the old signal light in Panama reflected light from the lamp.

One of the purposes of light is to shine so that people can move about safely. The psalmist writes, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105). People may not read God’s Word, but they observe our lives. As we study the Word and walk in its light, others will be better able to see the right path. We will be serving as reflectors of Christ’s light and helping others find the way to Christ.

Another purpose of light is to warn of danger. Lighthouses are built to warn ships of rocks beneath the water, or of rocky coasts. Christians serve as lights to warn of the dangers of sin. Not only does God’s Word help us to avoid sin, but also it is

reflected from our lives to warn others. Often it is necessary for us to give a warning against sin.

Light also makes it possible for people to see things as they really are. Hebrews 4:12–13 says,

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

When our hearts are open to the Word, it causes us to see ourselves as God sees us. In turn, when people who are not Christians look at our lives, it should cause them to recognize their sin and their need for the transforming power of Jesus. Paul writes that believers should live as “blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe” (Philippians 2:15–16).

## ***Application***

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**1** Name three purposes of light given in this lesson.

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.....

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**2** Apply each of these purposes to our responsibility as Christians.

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.....



## **B. SALT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

**Goal 2.** State how a Christian can be like salt in his or her community.

Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men” (Matthew 5:13). One function or purpose of salt is to purify. When salt is used to purify, it destroys those things that do not belong.

Purity is a virtue or quality that Christians are to show to their community. To be pure is to live holy. By being pure ourselves, we can influence our community towards purity. While the spirit of the world is to diminish honesty and moral goodness, the Christian is commissioned by God to uphold standards of purity in speech, behavior, and thought. Sin is like an infection, and we are to act as healing agents to destroy it and keep it from spreading. When we speak out against sin, we serve as salt in our community.

Salt is also used to preserve. For example, we use it to preserve fish and meat. I was born on the island of Newfoundland, where a common meal is a “salt meat dinner.” This name is used because salt was used to preserve the beef. Newfoundland is also a great fishing country. I remember visiting the fishermen’s docks where they have tons of fish packed in salt. After much time the salt preserves the fish, which is later packed to be sold.

In both of these cases, the salt preserves the meat so it can be eaten later. The meat keeps its natural qualities; it does not lose its flavor. Similarly, the Christian is to be the salt of the earth—a preserving agent in the world. Christians must influence others positively.

The most common quality of salt is its ability to flavor. It has flavor in itself, but salt’s best use is to bring out the flavor of food. Christianity is to life what salt is to food. It flavors life.

Take Christianity and its influence out of life and you have a very dull life with no meaning or purpose.

We Christians should be pure ourselves and influence others to be pure. We should do all in our power to preserve that which is right and good. Our own lives should show others that Christianity gives purpose to life. Then we are serving as salt, as Jesus said we would.

### Application

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**3** Fill in the blanks.

**a)** In a sinful world, the Christian must be .....

**b)** A pure Christian is like .....  
because he or she helps to purify the community.

**4** Name three functions of salt.

.....  
.....  
.....

**5** Apply each of these functions to our responsibility as Christians.

.....  
.....  
.....



## C. A RENEWED MIND

**Goal 3.** Identify attitudes of a renewed mind.

We have just learned that we have no light of our own—we simply reflect Christ’s light. Neither do we have power to preserve, purify, or flavor our world. The power comes from God, who gives us wisdom to use His power for the good of others.

It is the same with your mind. You cannot really understand how it works—only God can understand it. Therefore, the more your mind or thoughts are yielded to God, the more He can influence your mind. Romans 12:2 says, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

A transformation or complete change takes place in us when we find the Lord. Everything takes on new life. We see things differently; we think differently; and our mind is renewed. God is now in control of our thoughts and ideas. We need to get into the habit of allowing God to influence us through our minds. Allow God to impress your mind with His thoughts. As you pray, you will become sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. He will give you wisdom in your relationships with others. As you follow His leading, your mind will be transformed and renewed, and you will be salt and light to your community.

In 1 Corinthians 2:16, the apostle Paul says, “We have the mind of Christ.” He also says in Philippians 2:5, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” Then he goes on to tell about the attitude Christ had. Read Philippians 2:5–11, then study the chart below until you understand the attitudes of Christ and God’s response to those attitudes.

| <b>ACTION OF JESUS</b>                  | <b>HIS STATE OF MIND</b> | <b>GOD’S RESPONSE</b>                                     |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| He gave up all He had (v. 7).           | Submissive               | God raised Him to the highest place (v. 9).               |
| He took the nature of a servant (v. 7). | Humble                   | God gave Him the name greater than any other name (v. 9). |
| He walked the path of obedience (v. 8). | Obedient                 | God gave Him a place of honor (vv. 10–11).                |

Do you have the kind of mind Christ had? Are you submissive, humble, and obedient? Ask the Lord to help you have a renewed mind—the mind of Christ. Having His mind will help you relate His love and concern to your community.

**Application**

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**6** Write an example of how you can be

**a)** submissive.

.....

**b)** humble.

.....

**c)** obedient.

.....

**7** How does a renewed mind make us more effective?

.....

.....





## Check Your Answers

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- 5** A Christian should be a healing agent to those around him or her. He or she should preserve that which is right, and should show how Christ gives meaning to life.
- 1** To help us see our path; to warn of danger; to help us see things as they really are
- 6** Your answer. Were you able to think of examples for all three?
- 2** We reflect Christ's light to help others find the way to Him, to warn them of the dangers of sin, and to help them see sin as it really is.
- 3** a) pure  
b) salt
- 7** When my mind is renewed, I have the attitudes of Christ, and I can influence others to follow Him.
- 4** To purify, preserve, and flavor

# 8 Belonging in the Church Community

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Chee Kim was an orphan. Although he was only six years old, he lived in the streets of Hong Kong. He did not belong to anyone.

One day a kind man met Chee Kim and took him to a home where many other boys and girls lived. Here he was given good care, and he was taught about Jesus. Soon Chee learned to read and to write his own name.

After a few months Chee Kim was taken to the home of a lovely Chinese family. He was adopted and treated like a true son. He now was very happy because he belonged to a family.

One of our basic needs is to belong. Belonging to a family gives a sense of comfort and security. When you became a Christian, you became a part of God's family. In this lesson you will study what it means to belong to the family of God—the community of believers who make up His Church.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. Worshipping Together
- B. Fellowship
- C. Ministering Together

## ***The Goals***

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1. Identify the values of worshipping with other believers.
2. Describe results of the combined ministry of believers in the church.
3. State the results of joining with others in ministry.

## **A. WORSHIPPING TOGETHER**

**Goal 1.** Identify the values of worshipping with other believers.

In an earlier lesson we said that the church is not a building—it is a body of believers united to do the work of the Lord. When we become Christians we become part of the body of Christ. We are part of His worldwide church. This body of people unites together to do the work of the Lord and to worship Him. They form church groups in their community. In the book of Acts we read about the early church, and about how the Christians went from one community to another, helping to form new church groups. These early believers had a great desire to worship their Lord together.

Worshipping God means giving your devotion to Him. You give Him honor and praise. You adore Him more than any other. God made people so that they like to be with other people. It is natural for believers to want to join together in worship. We give and receive encouragement when we worship together.

There are many ways to express worship to God. In the Psalms we are instructed to worship Him in different ways—by clapping our hands, by singing unto Him, by praising Him with

our voices, by praying, by using musical instruments, and in other ways. When we join with other believers in worshipping in these ways, we find it easier to express our love and adoration to God. Worshipping with other believers gives us greater strength to serve God.

Another way to express worship to God is through service to others. True worship, an expression of love and adoration to God, naturally results in expressing love and kindness to other people. This is expressed in Jesus' words in Matthew 25:3, which we have seen in another lesson. When we serve others, we are doing it as unto the Lord.

## ***Application***

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**1** Circle the letter in front of the statements that describe values of worship with other believers.

- a)** We receive strength.
- b)** We become more concerned about ourselves.
- c)** We give and receive encouragement.
- d)** Through service to others, we honor God.
- e)** We find it easier to express our worship.
- f)** We find it harder to think about God.

**2** Make a list of some ways to worship God.

.....  
 .....



## **B. FELLOWSHIP**

**Goal 2.** Describe results of the combined ministry of believers in the church.

In our first lesson we saw that one of the meanings of community is “fellowship.” The highest form of fellowship can be found among Christians. The local church is a good place to find fellowship with other believers. Young people enjoy being with each other and sharing in times of recreation and

work. Adults, too, need to get to know one another and share in activities together.

Through fellowship activities in the church, the whole community can be reached. Special activities for the children can be a means of bringing in other children. Getting together for a picnic, or to work on a project together, or just for a time of talking and sharing are all ways of getting to know people better. And as we get to know each other, we are better able to minister to one another when there is a need.

In the Gospels are many accounts of Jesus eating with people. He used these informal times of fellowship to share deep truths about the kingdom of God or to minister to individual needs. We all need times to relax, to enjoy one another, and to get better acquainted. Often, community members not part of the local church are brought into fellowship with the Lord and the church in this way. Sharing, caring, and loving are shown to be community actions.

### ***Application***

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**3** Christians can fellowship best with

- a)** people they work with.
- b)** their neighbors.
- c)** other believers in the church.

**4** A major benefit of fellowship is that we

- a)** learn how to study together.
- b)** get to know others better.
- c)** forget our own problems.

**5** Describe some ways to fellowship with other believers.

.....

.....



## C. MINISTERING TOGETHER

**Goal 3.** State the results of joining with others in ministry.

One of the greatest advantages of regular church attendance is the privilege of studying with other Christians. In most churches Sunday school classes or Bible training sessions are held. Regular study of the Bible gives a person a good background and understanding of the Word. Pastors prepare sermons to help us grow and become mature. As we are ministered to in these ways, we are able to minister to others.

Chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Titus have a lot to say about Christian conduct and responsibility. In these verses the apostle Paul speaks of the things that agree with sound doctrine or teaching. Helping widows, instructing youth, and teaching workers to be submissive are all mentioned here. All of these things are part of the ministry of a church.

People joined together can do things they could never do alone. When my wife was a small girl living on a farm in Canada, the farmers would help each other harvest the crops because they had no machines to do this work. People would leave their own work to help another farmer pick his corn or harvest his wheat. As everyone worked together, all of the crops were harvested. They could not have done the work alone.

The same principle works in the church. For example, the Bible needed to be translated into the language of the people of Burma. The project was too large for one person or even for one church. So a large number of people from many churches put their money together and paid to have the Bible translated.

As you become mature in the Lord, you have a greater desire to minister to others. Your world gets bigger, and you become sensitive to the needs of others.

When some people hear of others going hungry it does not bother them. They just think people should work harder so they will have money to buy food. But when Christians hear of people suffering from lack of food, they ought to empathize and help. Jesus said, “From everyone who has been given

much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked” (Luke 12:48). In other words, if God has given you many things, you will be held responsible for how you use these gifts and how you respond to the needs of others.

When you hear of people on the other side of the world suffering from lack of food, or from a terrible storm or earthquake, does it trouble you? A sign of your maturity is how these things affect you. Ask yourself these questions: Do I really care about my neighbor? Is it really important to me if thousands of people die in some faraway place? Am I really concerned about being involved in a worldwide ministry? Am I helping in my church to minister to those in need?

## ***Application***

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- 6** God expects us to give to others
- a)** everything that we have.
  - b)** according to the measure that we have received from Him.
  - c)** only when we want to do so.
- 7** Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.
- a)** One of the true marks of Christians is that they have concern for others.
  - b)** As you become mature in the Lord, you become more sensitive to the needs of others.
  - c)** When Christians hear of suffering and destruction, they feel pain for the people involved.
  - d)** Much more is required of people who have received little.
  - e)** When God has given you many things, it does not necessarily mean that more will be required of you.
  - f)** People working together can accomplish much more than individuals working alone.

**8** Examine yourself by answering the following questions.

|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|
| <b>a)</b> Are you a member of a local church?  | .....      | .....     |
| <b>b)</b> Are you faithful in attendance?  | .....      | .....     |
| <b>c)</b> Do you enjoy fellowship with other Christians?                                   | .....      | .....     |
| <b>d)</b> Do you support the church with your money or in other ways?                      | .....      | .....     |
| <b>e)</b> Does your church have activities to minister to the community?                   | .....      | .....     |
| <b>f)</b> Do you need to do more to be involved in any of these activities in your church? | .....      | .....     |





## Check Your Answers

---

- 4 b)** get to know others better.
- 1** Statements **a)**, **c)**, **d)**, and **e)** are true.
- 5** Your answer. Some answers are: Eating together, talking or sharing together, working on a project together, sharing in recreation.
- 2** Your list might include these: singing, praising with our voices, using musical instruments, clapping our hands, praying, or serving others.
- 6 b)** according to the measure that we have received from Him.
- 7** Statements **a)**, **b)**, **c)**, and **f)** are true.
- 3 c)** other believers in the church.
- 8** Your answer. If you answered *no* to some of these questions, think of ways you can improve your relationship to God through your local church.

# LESSON 9 Contributing to Your Community

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In most continents and almost every country the Red Cross Association is at work, serving humanity. They help people in times of disaster, such as famine, or heavy storms, or earthquakes. The Red Cross is supported by contributions, or gifts. People give money, supplies, and blood so the Red Cross will be ready to help when trouble comes. People contribute not because they will get something in return, but because they desire to help others in emergency and trouble.

It is the same with our contributions to our community. We do not help because we will receive some great gift in return. Rather, we contribute our time, money, and talents to community needs because it is right and good to do so. In this lesson we will see how we can prepare ourselves to serve our community better.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. Preparing to Serve
- B. Becoming Involved
- C. Contributing Skills

## ***The Goals***

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1. Identify ways to prepare yourself for a Christian witness in your community.
2. Indicate ways to influence your community for God.
3. Show how your skills can be used to help your community.

### **A. PREPARING TO SERVE**

**Goal 1.** Identify ways to prepare yourself for a Christian witness in your community.

Before we can serve someone, we must be prepared for the service we are giving. The greatest service Christians can give to their communities is to win souls. Here are three ways to prepare yourself to be a witness in your community:

1. *Have personal assurance of salvation.* How can you be sure of your salvation? By having a secure relationship with the Lord. You can do this by praying and studying the Word of God. When you know the author of a book you have a greater desire to read the book. As you get to know God better, you will have a greater desire to read His Word—the Bible.

Allow your trust in God to be based on what the Bible says, and not on how you feel. If you feel that you have failed, cheer up. God loves you! Accept His love and place your faith in His Word rather than in your feelings. If for some reason you have begun to doubt your relationship with Him, remember the verses in Ephesians 2:4–5:

Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even

when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

None of us can earn God’s love; therefore, we must accept His free gift and live in a way that shows God we are thankful. Paul asks,

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?  
 Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or  
 famine or nakedness or danger or sword?  
 ...No, in all these things we are more than  
 conquerors through him who loved us.  
 (Romans 8:35, 37)

When we accept Christ as our Savior, we can have complete security in our salvation because of His mercy, and not because of our feelings.

2. *Know how to lead someone to God.* Have you ever had someone say to you, “Follow me; I know the way,” and then you ended up lost? That is not a pleasant feeling. We like to follow people who really do know the way.

If we want to lead other people to God, we must know the way. Many verses in the Bible help us to lead someone to Christ. In the following chart are a few verses that you may memorize to get you started:

| <b>Verse</b> | <b>Message</b>                               |
|--------------|--|
| Romans 3:23  | All people have sinned and need a Savior.    |
| Romans 6:23  | People deserve death, but God offers life.   |
| John 3:16    | God has provided a sacrifice for our sins.   |
| 1 John 1:9   | If we confess our sins, God will forgive us. |
| 1 John 5:13  | We can know we have eternal life.            |

If you would like to use these verses to show someone how to find Christ, memorize the verses. Put the page number of the first verse inside the cover of your Bible. Then at the bottom of the page where the first verse is found, put the page number of the next verse. Do this until you have listed all five

of the verses. Then you will have a simple but effective way to use your Bible to lead someone to Christ. You are prepared to serve. As you find other verses that will help you to witness, mark them in the same way.

3. *Depend on the Holy Spirit.* No matter how well you know the Bible, you must still depend on the Holy Spirit to help you. He will give you guidance and will bring the right words to your mind as you witness.

The Holy Spirit draws people to God and makes them sorry for their sin. He knows the condition of each person's heart. As you pray for His direction, He will help you to serve your community through your personal witness.

### ***Application***

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**1** Without looking back, list the three ways you can prepare to serve your community as a soul winner.

- a) .....
- b) .....
- c) .....

**2** Write in the correct word(s) to complete each statement below.

- a) I will have greater desire to read the book if I personally know the .....
- b) My relationship to God does not depend on how I .....
- c) It is by God's grace that I have been .....
- d) To properly lead someone to a personal experience of salvation, I must know .....
- e) I will receive help in leading others to God from the .....



## **B. BECOMING INVOLVED**

**Goal 2.** Indicate ways to influence your community for God.

Christians can serve and influence their communities in many ways. We should be better citizens, neighbors, and friends because we are Christians. Our community should be better because we are there. If we hope to influence our community for God, we must take part in community activities. But we must decide which activities are good, and which ones would harm our Christian testimony. How do we decide?

First of all, when you need to decide whether to become involved in an activity, ask yourself: “Is it against basic Christian teaching according to the Bible?” If the answer is no, then ask yourself this question: “Can I be a witness for God, enjoy the activity, and come away unharmed?” If the answer is yes and if you have prayerfully considered it, then go.

If you do go and find that the activity does not meet the standards given above, then leave, and thank the Lord for teaching you a lesson. The Holy Spirit will give you wisdom in making decisions such as this one.

Christians can involve themselves in their communities and let their lights shine in many ways. For example, they can be good citizens by notifying the police if they see a crime being committed. They can help provide wholesome activities for the youth and/or elderly of the community.

Christian parents and other Christians can take an interest in the local schools and help teachers and leaders in whatever ways possible. You might even be able to help get Christian teachers for your school. Show an interest in getting better school buildings, books, and libraries if they are needed.

Another good way to influence your community is to become friends with community leaders such as police officers, teachers, doctors, and those who operate businesses. Look for opportunities to witness to them about what Christ has done in your life. Try to get acquainted with your mayor and

representatives in your local government. Remember, they need the Lord, too.

It would be impossible to list all the ways we can serve our community. When we are given opportunity to vote for leaders or laws that encourage righteous living, it is our Christian responsibility to do so. If the community is trying to raise funds for a worthy project such as a hospital or an orphanage, Christians should help with these projects.

In all our relationships, it is important that we be examples of Christianity. This is especially true in our business dealings. The Bible tells us that we should “set an example for the believers in speech in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

### ***Application***

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- 3** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements.
- a)** Christians can attend any kind of activity as long as they testify about Christ there.
  - b)** If Christians attend a function and find that it is not according to Bible teaching about what Christians should do, they should leave.
  - c)** It is possible to attend any function as long as you do not let people there know you are a Christian.
  - d)** Being a Christian should make you a better citizen, neighbor, and friend.

- 4** Circle the letter in front of good examples of Christian community spirit.
- a)** John has decided not to vote because he does not care who is chosen to lead the community.
  - b)** James has offered to organize youth activities at the school after the soccer games.
  - c)** Ruth goes to the hospital twice a week to help sick people by reading to them, writing letters for them, or visiting with them.
  - d)** Mary will not attend school activities because she is not as well educated as the teachers.
  - e)** Robert saw a young man rob a storekeeper, but he did not report it because he did not want to get involved.
  - f)** Philip makes it a point to smile and greet people on the street, such as the postman, the policeman, or the neighbors.
- 5** Try to become friends with at least two leaders in your community this month. Write here the names of those you will try to get to know.

.....  
 .....



## **C. CONTRIBUTING SKILLS**

**Goal 3.** Show how your skills can be used to help your community.

John Brown is a Christian who gave his life to Christ many years ago. Everyone in his community respects him as a good worker and an honorable man. Mr. Brown is also known in his community as a good builder. When the mayor asked for volunteer help to build a recreation area downtown, Mr. Brown offered to direct the new building project.



Notice the important aspects of this story:

1. John Brown is an excellent builder with a good reputation.
2. He has offered his skill to help in a community project that will provide enjoyment for many people.

These two things are of interest to the community. Many people probably do not know that Mr. Brown is also a Christian. However, everyone involved in the project will come to know that he is a Christian as they work with him. He loves God, and Christian principles will shine out of his life.

Perhaps you have skills that your community needs. Can you offer your services as a contribution to everyone? If you can, you will be a blessing to others, and you will have an opportunity to give your Christian testimony by using your skill to help others. The community needs many skills. Farming, building, nursing, caring for small children, and helping to clean or beautify your community are only a few ways to be involved. What is your special ability? Have you offered it to God and your community?

### ***Application***

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**6** Discuss two ways your skills can be used as a witness to your community.

.....  
.....

**7** Think of some ways you have been involved in your community by using your skills? List them in your notebook.

**8** Name one way that you will become more involved in your community.

.....



## **Check Your Answers**

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**5** Your answer

- 1 a)** Have personal assurance of salvation
- b)** Know how to lead someone to God
- c)** Depend on the Holy Spirit

**6** Your answer. As you contribute your skills, people will see your Christian witness and you will be able to lead them to Christ. You will bless your community by your attitude and involvement.

- 2 a)** author.
- b)** feel.
- c)** saved.
- d)** God's Word.
- e)** Holy Spirit.

**7** Your answer. Can you see ways that you could do more?

**3** Statements **b)** and **d)** are true.

**8** Your answer. God will bless you as you give freely to others what He has given to you.

**4 b), c)** and **f)** are good examples of Christian community spirit.



# 10 Continuing in Community

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During World War I, a professor in a European university was teaching his students when an order came to dismiss classes because of the war. The students were not able to meet again as a class for a number of years. When at last the school reopened, the professor began his first teaching session with the words: “As I was saying . . .”

He just continued where he had left off before the classes were stopped. This attitude of continuation shows certain determination. We need to have similar determination to keep an ongoing relationship with our community.

In this lesson you will study ways in which you can continue to practice the principles taught in this course. The most important way is to depend on the Holy Spirit.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. Be Yourself
- B. Make Your Witness Personal
- C. Depend on the Holy Spirit

## ***The Goals***

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1. Explain the importance of having a personal and reliable Christian witness.
2. Give examples of ways to show a positive personal witness.
3. State reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

### **A. BE YOURSELF**

**Goal 1.** Explain the importance of having a personal and reliable Christian witness.

A young woman was going to a foreign country to work for the Lord as a missionary. On a radio program she was asked, “What are you going to do over there?” Her reply was, “I’m just going to be what I say I am.”

Are you what you say you are? You are really best at being yourself. The best way to influence your community toward God is to give a true image all the time. If what you are is not something you can be happy with, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a new image. Be a person of worth and value, one that people can rely on at all times. Ask God to make you what you ought to be, and what He wants you to be.

Do people see you one day as a cheerful, happy person, and the next day as an unpleasant, moody person? Do you have a steady, reliable witness every day, regardless of the unpleasant things that may happen from day to day?

People who keep the right attitude all the time give the best witness. The Holy Spirit is the greatest agent for changing one’s

character. If your nature is not cheerful, ask God to change it. Then begin to act as you know God wants you to.

My friend, John, was a grouchy, complaining person. Even though he was a Christian, he made excuses for his attitude, and said he could not help being the way he was. When he eventually realized that God could help him to be a different person, he practiced being pleasant, kind, and considerate until it became natural.

Your life must give others a true picture of what a Christian should be. If people are not sure that you are living a Christian life, you will not be an effective witness for Christ. Make your call clear—then others will follow you.

### ***Application***

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**1** How can people change their personalities if they do not like the way they are?

.....  
 .....

**2** Why is it important to develop the right image in order to represent Christ to your community?

.....  
 .....

**3** The best witness is given by Christians who

- a)** study the best ways to talk to people.
- b)** carry their Bibles everywhere they go.
- c)** keep the right attitude at all times.



## B. MAKE YOUR WITNESS PERSONAL

**Goal 2.** Give examples of ways to show a positive personal witness.

When I was 17 years old, I graduated from secondary school and took a job with a large company in my hometown. The first morning, as I left for work, my mother called me aside and said, “Remember, son, any old dead fish can go with the tide. It takes a live one to swim against it.”

I have never forgotten my mother’s words. Ever since that time, I have tried to make sure that I was not just drifting with the tide. It is not always easy to be different from the crowd. Sometimes in our work or other activities we may be the only Christian in the group. If we want to have a personal witness, we must be willing to stand for our Christian principles even when it would be easier to go along with the group.

In 1 Peter 3:15 we are advised to “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” Our hope is in Jesus Christ, who died and rose again that we might have eternal life. We must maintain a good personal testimony at all times if we want to help others find Christ.

Do you realize that God knows you better than you know yourself? Consider this verse of Scripture:

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:13)

God wants us to show the world what He is like. Make your witness for Christ a personal thing. Let people see the results of God’s grace in your life. God has made His Holy Spirit available to help us do this.

If you are to reach your community for God, you will have to be transparent—open before people. They must see what you really are. The apostle Paul said, “Follow my example, as

I follow the example of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). Can you say the same thing to those in your community?

## Application

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- 4** Which of these are TRUE examples of a positive personal witness?
- a)** Doing something you know is not right because a friend asked you to, and you do not want to offend him.
  - b)** Saying no when saying yes would harm your Christian testimony.
  - c)** Showing you are upset when your plans do not work out the way you want them to.
  - d)** Doing more than your share of work in a project.
  - e)** Being friendly and kind even when you do not feel like it.
- 5** Which of these attitudes represents the most personal concern for those who do not know Christ?
- a)** I will do my best to witness for the Lord, but I cannot help it if people do not show an interest in following Christ.
  - b)** My whole life should be a testimony to those who do not know Christ, so that I will not cause them to turn against Him.



## C. DEPEND ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Goal 3.** State reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

### The Revealer

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His disciples, “It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you” (John 16:7). *Counselor* is one name given in the Bible for the Holy Spirit.

When we understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we can trust Him more. For example, if you put two people who speak different languages in the same room, they will have a



hard time communicating with each other. But if their language is the same, they will be more able to get to know one another. Talking together will help them understand each other.

Understanding brings confidence. It is the same with the Holy Spirit. As you understand Him and His ministry, you will learn to trust Him. One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to reveal or show Christ to us. When Christ is made known to us, we realize our need of Him. John writes,

When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. (John 15:26)

Another purpose of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin and draw people to God. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would speak about repentance and would “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8).

Joe Smith had never known of God. One day he heard the story of Jesus and His love for men and women. A week went by, and Joe could not get this story out of his mind. Why? The Holy Spirit had revealed Jesus to Joe and had caused him to be sorry for his sin. Joe felt that he had to do something. It was not long until he gave his heart to the Lord and became a Christian.

The Holy Spirit has a ministry of calling people to Jesus. Are you not glad He brought conviction to your heart and revealed Jesus to you? And as we witness to others, we can depend upon the Holy Spirit to do His work in their hearts also.

## ***Application***

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- 6** Repentance is the act of
  - a)** getting to know someone.
  - b)** feeling sorry for sin and confessing it to God.
  - c)** being drawn to God by the Holy Spirit.

**7** When we learn to trust the Holy Spirit we can

- a)** depend on Him.
- b)** leave the work of soul winning to Him.
- c)** live without sin.

**8** Write three reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

- a)** .....
- b)** .....
- c)** .....



## Our Teacher and Reminder

Read the words of Jesus recorded in John 14:26:

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

In this verse two more ministries of the Holy Spirit are mentioned. Firstly, the Holy Spirit will teach us what the Word of God means and how to apply it to our lives. The Holy Spirit is wise, and He can give us wisdom, too.

Tom Green was not an educated man, but he was teachable. After the day’s work was done, Tom would read and study his Bible. He learned many things from the Bible. Tom and Betty Green had two sons. The instructions in the Bible helped them raise these sons so that they, too, loved God and wanted to obey Him. Both of their sons are now married and have children of their own. They are raising their children in the same way. Because Tom and Betty Green studied God’s Word and allowed the Holy Spirit to teach them, their family was blessed.

The Bible shows many ways that the Holy Spirit will teach us. Find the verses listed below in your Bible and write them down so that you will remember them.

1. Ephesians 1:17—He gives us wisdom and reveals God to us.
2. Ephesians 6:18—He teaches us to pray as He leads.
3. First Corinthians 2:10–12—He teaches us truths about God and His purposes.
4. Galatians 5:16, 22–23, 25—He directs our lives and produces in us love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

Secondly, according to John 14:26, the Holy Spirit will also help us remember the things Jesus said. As we study the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will bring the Word to our minds when we need it. We cannot remember all of the things we read in the Bible. However, when we need to remember, the Holy Spirit brings to our minds those teachings that will help us at that particular time.

Have you ever talked to someone about the Lord, and it seemed you had all the right answers? Or the Holy Spirit brought to your mind exactly the right Scripture verse to fit the occasion? It is very rewarding to feel God’s help in such times. Without the Holy Spirit’s help, many times we would feel lost as we tried to witness to someone.

Sometimes when we are tempted to do wrong, the Holy Spirit shows us how to obey God. He reminds us to keep a good attitude in our relationships with other people as we seek to maintain the spirit of community.

### ***Application***

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**9** Why do you need to rely on the Holy Spirit to be your teacher and reminder?

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.....

**10** Look over this lesson, and write in your notebook all the ways the Holy Spirit helps us. Review your list and underline all the ways that He has personally helped you.

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## Check Your Answers

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- 6 b)** feeling sorry for sin and confessing it to God.
- 1** They can ask the Holy Spirit to change them, and then they can practice being the kind of person they want to be.
- 7 a)** depend on Him.
- 2** Because people will not want to follow your example and accept Christ if they do not like what they see in you.
- 8** Any of these: The Holy Spirit came to draw us near to God; to convict of sin; to reveal Jesus; to tell us about God's judgment; to help us witness to others.
- 3 c)** keep the right attitude at all times.
- 9** Your answer. We need His help in witnessing, in our ministry to our community, and in making the right decisions so that our lives will glorify God.
- 4** Statements **b)**, **d)**, and **e)** are true.
- 10** Your answer
- 5 b)** My whole life should be a testimony.

You have come to the end of this study. I hope you have received much help for your Christian walk through these lessons. You have begun a new understanding of the ministry of Christians in their communities. You can only put all of these teachings into practice as you allow the Holy Spirit to help you. Only by the Holy Spirit's power can we do the things we should do. Trust Him, and He will help you apply these teachings in your life and ministry to others. Be encouraged by the following Scriptures:

Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it. (2 Timothy 3:14)

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. (1 John 2:24)

Now you are ready to fill out the last half of your student report for Lessons 6–10. Review these lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. When you send your answer sheets to your instructor, ask him or her about another course of study. May the Lord bless you as you continue to practice the spirit of community.

**CL6360    The Christian in His Community****UNIT ONE ANSWER SHEET**

Please fill in the blanks below:

Name .....

Student Number .....  
(Leave blank if you don't know your number.)

Mailing Address .....

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Country .....

**Directions**

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the Unit Evaluation answer sheet for that unit. Read each question carefully. There is one best answer for each question. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen. *Be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question you are answering.*

**Example**

- 1** To be born again means to
- a)** be young in age.
  - b)** accept Jesus as Savior.
  - c)** start a new year.

The correct answer is **b) accept Jesus as Savior**, so you would blacken space **(B)** like this:

1. (A)  (B) (C) (D)

*Turn page over when you are ready to begin.*

**UNIT ONE ANSWER SHEET**

Carefully blacken the correct space for each numbered item.

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>11</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>2</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>12</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>3</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>13</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>4</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>14</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>5</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>15</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>6</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>16</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>7</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>17</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>8</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>18</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>9</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>19</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>10</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) | <b>20</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |

This is the end of the requirements for Unit One. For grading, return your Unit One Answer Sheet to your instructor or office in your area. Continue your study in Unit Two.

*For GU Office Use  
Only*

Date .....

Score .....



## UNIT ONE EVALUATION

- 1** The key concept behind Christian community is
  - a)** partnership.
  - b)** master-servant relationship.
  - c)** detailed roles.
  
- 2** Which of the following shows a spirit of community?
  - a)** The Good Samaritan
  - b)** The rich man in Luke 16
  - c)** A farmer with a tractor
  
- 3** The perfect community between Adam, Eve, and God was destroyed when
  - a)** Adam and Eve named the animals.
  - b)** Adam and Eve left the garden.
  - c)** Adam and Eve did not obey God.
  
- 4** The best definition for the word church as discussed in this course is a
  - a)** body of all believers in Jesus Christ.
  - b)** building where Christians meet.
  - c)** group of believers meeting in one place.
  
- 5** In the area of witnessing, our “Jerusalem” is
  - a)** the country in which we live.
  - b)** the community where we work and live.
  - c)** our surrounding countries.
  
- 6** Praying for revival in our country is a means of ministering to
  - a)** “Jerusalem.”
  - b)** “Samaria.”
  - c)** “Judea.”
  
- 7** When God called Jonah to minister to Nineveh, it was like going to
  - a)** Judea.
  - b)** Samaria.
  - c)** the ends of the earth.

**8** Ministering to people in distant lands would be fulfilling God's call to go to

- a)** Samaria.
- b)** Judea.
- c)** the ends of the earth.

**9** The Sadducees' attempt to test Jesus exposed their lack of

- a)** knowledge of the Scriptures.
- b)** insight into human affairs.
- c)** empathy for people's problems.

**10** An important way to grow in community is to

- a)** think about all our responsibilities.
- b)** think about God and His ways.
- c)** demonstrate our own strength.

**11** A person's relationship with Christ will not fall apart when trouble comes if he or she is

- a)** doing the things he or she likes to do.
- b)** living in obedience to Christ.
- c)** doing what is expected of him or her.

**12** Our spiritual growth requires that we worship

- a)** together with others.
- b)** when we are happy.
- c)** on special occasions.

**13** A principle of spiritual growth is separation from the world, which means

- a)** having no associations with unbelievers.
- b)** living outside of densely populated areas.
- c)** forming no close partnerships with unbelievers.

**14** When we are tolerant, we will

- a)** do as we please, regardless of how others feel.
- b)** respect the convictions of others.
- c)** take the convictions of everyone else as our own.

**15** To be protected from our spiritual enemy, we must

- a)** stand in our own strength.
- b)** give money to the church.
- c)** wear God's armor.

**16** A biblical approach to community traditions is to

- a)** celebrate them in a way pleasing to God.
- b)** refuse to participate in them altogether.
- c)** compromise our beliefs for the sake of standing.

**17** In a society where a holiday is provided to worship the dead, the Christian should

- a)** join in with the activities.
- b)** use the day as an opportunity to witness.
- c)** observe but not take part.

**18** The man who built his house on a rock is like a person who

- a)** does not want to obey God.
- b)** chooses a weak foundation.
- c)** obeys the teachings of Christ.

**19** An adaptable person is one who will

- a)** insist on doing things his or her own way.
- b)** allow sinful traditions to remain in his or her life.
- c)** fit into the plans of others to meet a common goal.

**20** Which is an example of building a bridge between people?

- a)** Gossiping about others
- b)** Inviting someone into your home
- c)** Refusing an invitation to someone's home



**CL6360    The Christian in His Community****UNIT TWO ANSWER SHEET**

Please fill in the blanks below:

Name .....

Student Number .....  
(Leave blank if you don't know your number.)

Mailing Address .....

.....

.....

Country .....

**Directions**

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the Unit Evaluation answer sheet for that unit. Read each question carefully. There is one best answer for each question. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen. *Be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question you are answering.*

**Example**

- 1** To be born again means to
- a)** be young in age.
  - b)** accept Jesus as Savior.
  - c)** start a new year.

The correct answer is **b) accept Jesus as Savior**, so you would blacken space **(B)** like this:

1. (A)  (B) (C) (D)

*Turn page over when you are ready to begin.*

**UNIT TWO ANSWER SHEET**

Carefully blacken the correct space for each numbered item.

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>11</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>2</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>12</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
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| <b>9</b> (A) (B) (C) (D)  | <b>19</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| <b>10</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) | <b>20</b> (A) (B) (C) (D) |

This is the end of the requirements for Unit Two. For grading, return your Unit Two Answer Sheet to your instructor or office in your area.

*For GU Office Use  
Only*

**Date** .....

**Score** .....

## UNIT TWO EVALUATION

- 1** When Jesus was a child, He was
  - a)** despised by His community.
  - b)** well liked in His community.
  - c)** seldom involved with His community.
  
- 2** When Jesus was 12 years old, He
  - a)** began His public ministry.
  - b)** performed His first miracle.
  - c)** showed great interest in spiritual matters.
  
- 3** Which of the following is true of Jesus?
  - a)** He avoided contacts with wicked people.
  - b)** He showed concern for everyone.
  - c)** His concern was only for the poor.
  
- 4** As a result of Jesus' life on earth,
  - a)** many people now accept Sunday as a day of rest and worship.
  - b)** it is no longer necessary to set aside a day of worship.
  - c)** the church building is Jesus' kingdom on earth.
  
- 5** As Christians reflect the light of Jesus, they
  - a)** show others the path to Jesus.
  - b)** condemn others for their sins.
  - c)** are honored as special people.
  
- 6** Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." As Christians we should
  - a)** reflect Christ's light.
  - b)** not be a part of the community.
  - c)** try to keep our light hidden.
  
- 7** When Christians are salt in the community, they are like
  - a)** irritants that expose sin.
  - b)** healing agents that destroy sin.
  - c)** judges who issue punishment.

**8** Christians are like salt because they

- a)** help to preserve righteousness.
- b)** are free from sin.
- c)** dress in white.

**9** We can have a renewed mind when we

- a)** accept Christ and let Him control our thoughts.
- b)** conform to the standards of those around us.
- c)** let random thoughts fill our mind.

**10** The value of worshipping God with other believers is the

- a)** standing that it gives us.
- b)** opportunity for using our talents.
- c)** strength to serve God that it provides.

**11** Belonging in the church community is nurtured by

- a)** having fellowship together.
- b)** keeping out of each other's way.
- c)** listening to sermons in church.

**12** Which is a purpose for the existence of the church?

- a)** To build beautiful buildings
- b)** To have a place to show off our musical ability
- c)** To preach the gospel

**13** We have learned that our salvation comes through

- a)** our service to God.
- b)** the good things we do for others.
- c)** the grace of God.

**14** The Holy Spirit is given to teach us how

- a)** to show that we have Bible knowledge.
- b)** to understand Bible truth.
- c)** our traditions were formed.

**15** We should not be involved in a community activity if

- a)** sinners are present.
- b)** it would hurt our Christian testimony.
- c)** it is an athletic event.



**16** Our witness in our community will have greater impact as we

- a)** offer criticism or advice about city affairs.
- b)** contribute our skills for the benefit of others.
- c)** remove ourselves from non-spiritual activities.

**17** The best way to represent Christ in our community is to

- a)** be something that we are not.
- b)** recite verses from the Bible.
- c)** keep the right attitude all the time.

**18** To maintain a positive personal witness, we must

- a)** do nothing to cause someone to reject Christ.
- b)** know all the right answers.
- c)** compromise in order not to offend someone.

**19** Believers in a community can only accomplish God's purposes as they

- a)** obey the teaching and direction of the Holy Spirit.
- b)** refuse to submit to those in authority.
- c)** become involved in civil government.

**20** Relying on the Holy Spirit to be our teacher

- a)** is necessary when we are tired.
- b)** is not advisable as it shows we are not disciplined.
- c)** increases our wisdom.

*Please return your Unit Two Answer Sheet to your instructor. Now that you have completed your study of this course, ask your instructor to recommend another course of study.*



## FINAL WORDS

Dear Student,

We hope this study has made you think about your relationship with God. After studying the lessons and answering all the questions, have you wondered, “Am I really a Christian? Do I know God? Is He real in my life?” We want to give you the opportunity now to have a relationship with God.

We have all done wrong things. We have hurt ourselves and others. The Bible calls that sin and we are all guilty: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Our sin keeps us from knowing God as a loving Father. But God loves us in spite of our sin. He loves us so much He sent His Son to die for us. “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). When He died, Jesus took the punishment we deserved for our sins.

Do you want to make sure Jesus is your Savior? It is really so simple:

- Admit that you are a needy sinner separated from God, and ask Him to forgive you.
- Believe in Jesus with all your heart, and let Him know you accept Him as your Savior.

You can talk to God in your own words by saying a prayer like this:

*Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. Please forgive me. I believe You are the eternal Son of God. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. Come into my life. Make yourself real in my life. Be Lord of my life today. Thank You for saving me.*

If you prayed this prayer and meant it with all your heart, your sins are forgiven and you have eternal life. Jesus is Lord of your life. The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Welcome to the family of God. We want to rejoice with you, so please write and tell us what God has done in your life. Blessings to you!

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Name .....

**Do you have a friend who needs to know more about Jesus?**

Send us your friend's name and address for answers to the great questions of life.

Name .....

Address .....

.....



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ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY BY SHARING  
GOOD NEWS?

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Community entails people caring for one another. This course emphasizes Christian attitudes and actions in building, sharing, and understanding within many spheres of community. The definitions, guidelines, and examples will encourage you to be used of God where you live.

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*The Christian In His Community* is Course 6 in Unit 3.



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