

Toward A Good Beginning

By

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A Ten Week Study for New Converts, and

New and Current Church Members,

In Need of Fulfilling I Peter 3:18.

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Course Objective:

To learn the books of the Bible, learn how to memorize scripture, and become grounded in the basic doctrines of the faith, for the purpose of establishing a life style of faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Introduction:

It is reprehensible to bring an infant into the world, and then not care for it. Even the animal kingdom has that knowledge within, as the creation of God. Yet, in many of our churches, we place tremendous emphasis on soul winning, and rejoice and shout when souls are saved. They are introduced to the church and the congregation files by, in dutiful order, to offer them the "right-hand of fellowship" into the church family.

Then what? Generally, they are thrown into a "Day-care" kind of environment, where it is "root little pig, or die." Is not mother's personal care much better than a hireling's group care, for the newborn infant? But where is the personal care for the new convert? Who will assume personal responsibility for "rearing" that new born child of God through the formative years of spiritual growth?

The best care for the new convert is for a spiritually mature saint to take personal responsibility for nurturing such in the maturing process. Such personal involvement is an individual choice, and so few have the time, or, are willing to invest the time, as their respective case may be. There is, however, another supplementary alternative. That is, a special class geared totally to the new convert, and to others yet lacking in spiritual growth. That is the purpose of this present endeavor. This class is not sufficient in itself. Nothing can surpass the value of one-on-one nourishment from the sincere and principled soul of a spiritually mature saint, to ready the student for a normal diet of Sunday school class and preaching services. But, in lieu of the personal method, or, preferably, supplementary to it, this class is designed to provide for the spiritually immature, "Toward A Good Beginning."

The Study:

Week One —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17

- I. I WANT TO KNOW FOR SURE I HAVE BEEN SAVED (II Peter 1:10). Let us consider five witnesses to our salvation—
 - A. Faith (I John 5:13).
 1. Faith is defined best in Hebrews 11:6. Faith responds to God, fully expecting Him to do what He promised.

2. Faith is beautifully illustrated in Matthew 14:28-30. Peter attempted to walk on the water, only after Christ commanded him to do so.
 3. Faith, then, is "acting without any other resource than the Word of God." Our text verse, above, speaks to those who "Believe." ("Believe" is the verb form of the noun, "faith.") In summary: God said He would save us, if we would believe Him (Romans 4:3, 11).
 4. If you are trusting in Him, then God has obligated Himself to save you! (Romans 10:9).
- B. Love (I John 3:14). John does not say, here, that we are saved because we love the brethren, but, that "...We know..." that we are saved. That we now love the people we once despised, or at least shunned; that we now love the things (i.e. church, preaching, etc.) that we once loathed, or at least shied from; that we now love God!!—against Whom we previously rebelled. What could bring such a change, other than God's salvation?
- C. Obedience (I John 2:3).
1. Again, as above, John does not say we are saved because we obey, but that we "know" we are saved, through our obedience.
 2. One just converted, however, will not necessarily be obeying the Lord totally. This is a learned trait, as we learn from God's Word more of Him and His will for you. However, the key is: That now one desires to know, and to do, His will!
- D. Separation (I John 2:15).
1. The old sin nature is naturally attracted to this world. Satan uses the five body gates, to tempt us to succumb to worldly allurements. When one is converted, this attraction does not suddenly end.
 2. However, the believer also has a new nature, attracted to God, and His world. Thus, a war begins in us.
 3. The above text refers to the fact that the new nature does not love this world. The old one continues to.
 4. As we mature in Christ, we become less comfortable in the world; more at home with God.
- E. Chastisement (Hebrews 12:6-15).
1. A child of God can commit any sin that is found among the unsaved! The sin nature continues within, and if yielded to, it can lead to any ungodly act.
 2. The difference is, a child of God will not continue in that sin. There will be Holy Spirit conviction, and deep misery in the soul. This will lead to repentance and confession (I John 1:9). If one is continually sinning, without repentance, and gets by without experiencing chastening, that is evidence of a false profession—such an one is not truly born again. Hence, the inability to sin and get by with it is good evidence that one is truly saved.

Week Two —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth
I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1

II. I WANT TO KNOW HOW I MAY COMMUNICATE WITH GOD
(Matthew 5:2; 6:9)

A. God Speaks to Us Through His Word (Matthew 5:2).

God's Word is:

1. Inspired (II Timothy 3:16)
2. Of Dual Authorship (II Peter 1:21)
3. Perfect (Psalm 119:89)
4. Preserved (Matthew 24:34, 35)
5. Valuable (Psalm One)

B. We Commune with God in Prayer (Matthew 6:9).

Prayer is:

1. Only for a Believer (I Timothy 2:5, 8)
2. Not a Ritual (Matthew 6:5-7)
3. Principled (Matthew 6:8-13; I John 5:13-15)
4. Powerful (Jeremiah 33:3)

Week Three —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth
I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job
Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:1, I John 1:9

III. I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GOD (Genesis 1:1)

A. God is Holy (I Peter 1:15, 16 w/ Leviticus 11:44)

B. God is Spirit (John 4:24)

C. God is Love (I John 4:8)

D. God is Merciful (Psalm 136)

E. God is Just (Deuteronomy 32:4)

F. God is Eternal (Psalm 93:2)

G. God is Omnipotent (Psalm 97:9; 139:19, 20)

H. God is Omniscient (Psalm 139:1-6)

I. God is Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12)

J. God is Good (Psalm 145:8, 9)

K. God is the Creator of All Things (Genesis 1:1)

L. God is God Alone (Isaiah 44:6, 7; I John 5:10)

M. God Exists a Trinity (Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 48:16; I Thessalonians
5:23; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 5:7; Revelation 12, 13)

Week Four—

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth
I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job
Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah
Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23

IV. I Want to Know More About The Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:9).

Christ:

A. Is Deity (Colossians 1:16; John 1:1-5)

B. Is Eternal (John 1:1, 2)

C. Is Human (Philippians 2:5-8)

D. Is Perfect (I Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15)

E. Is Alive.

He--

1. Was Born of a Virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)

2. Died on the Cross (I Peter 2:24; I Corinthians 15:1-4)

3. Rose from the Grave Bodily (Acts 2:30-32)

4. Is Now Seated at the Right Hand of the Father (Acts 2:33-36;
Romans 8:34)

F. Is Lord (Philippians 2:10, 11)

Week Five —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I
& II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job
Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah
Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:1, I John 1:9, Romans 3:23,
Romans 6:23

V. I Want to Know More About the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

He:

A. Is Deity (Acts 5:3, 4)

B. Ministers to the World (John 16:8)

C. Ministers to the Believer. He:

1. Baptizes (I Corinthians 12:13)

2. Indwells (I John 14:17)

3. Seals (Ephesians 1:14)

4. Is the Earnest of our Inheritance (Ephesians 1:15)

5. Fills (Ephesians 5:18)

D. Bestows the Spiritual Gifts:

1. Gifts to the Believer
(Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12)
2. Gifted Men to the Church (Ephesians 4:11, 12)

Week Six —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23;
Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8

VI. I Want to Know How Sin Affects My Life (Hebrews 12:1)

A. What Sin Is (5:17a). Three Windows into the nature of Sin:

1. Falling Short of What is Right (Romans 3:23)
2. Doing What One Knows is Wrong
(I John 3:4; Romans 4:15)
3. Lawlessness (I John 3:4)

B. What Sin Does.

1. Separates the Sinner from God (Isaiah 59:1, 2).
2. Breaks the Fellowship of the Believer (I John 3:1-7).
 - a. His Prayer Life (Psalm 66:18)
 - b. His Service (Isaiah 52:11)
 - c. His Joy (Psalm 51:12)

C. How Sin is Remedied:

1. For the Unsaved, through salvation (Acts 10:43)
2. For the Saved, through confession (I John 1:9)

Week Seven —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

New Testament:

Matthew Mark Luke John Acts

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23;
Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9

VII. I Want to Know About the Church (Matthew 16:18)

- A. Began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:3,4 w/ I Corinthians 12:13)
- B. Is Universal in its Essence (Ephesians 3)
- C. Is Local in its Effectiveness (Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1)
- D. Is Eternal in its Essence (Ephesians 3:21)
- E. Is Temporal in its Early Existence (Titus 2:13)
- F. Is Commissioned to Witness to the World
(Matthew 28:19, 20)
- G. Is Essential in the Life of the Believer (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- H. Is Ruled by Her Head (Colossians 1:18)
- I. Is Guided by Her Ordained Leaders (Titus 1:5)
- J. Is Anticipating the Coming of Her Lord
(I Thessalonians 4:13-17)
Additional Considerations:
- K. The Origin of the Church (Acts 2:3, 4)
 - 1. There was no Church in the Old Testament
(Note: This Includes the lifetime of Christ, up to Calvary, as that is also the Old Testament Era).
 - 2. The Church was:
 - a. Not "Started"
 - b. Not "Born," but:
 - c. Created (I Corinthians 12:13). (Note: Typology of Adam & Eve)
- L. The Nature of the Church: The Unseen Body.
 - 1. Spiritual, as the Body of Christ (Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 15:45). The Church is not a building, but people.
 - 2. God's Present Program (I Corinthians 10:32; Book of Acts).
 - 3. The Essence of the Glory of Christ throughout Eternity (Ephesians 2:7).
- M. The Practical Outworking of the Church (Acts 13:1, 2; 14:23, 27) The Local Manifestation:
 - 1. Membership of Born Again, Baptized Believers (Philippians 1:1a)
 - 2. Meets Regularly in a Specific Location
(Philippians 1:1b)
 - 3. Has Two Officers: Pastor and Deacons
(Philippians 1:1c)
 - 4. Has a Commission Directly from Her Head
(Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)
 - 5. Observes Two Ordinances:
 - a. Baptism (Acts 10:48)
 - b. The Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:23-26)
- N. The Glorious Consummation of the Church (Titus 2:13)

Week Eight —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:
Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

New Testament:

Matthew Mark Luke John Acts Romans I & II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I & II Thessalonians I & II Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews James I & II Peter I, II, III John Jude Revelation

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9; Romans 10:10; Romans 10:13; John 5:24.

VIII. I Want to Know About the Return of Christ (Acts 1:10,11)

A. The Rapture of the Church.

1. What it is:
(I Corinthians 15:51; I Thessalonians 4:13-17)
2. Whom it Concerns:
(I Thessalonians 4:16b, "...In Christ")
3. When it will Occur:
(I John 3:2, "...When He shall appear..."
Greek: "Whenever He might appear")
4. What is its Importance (I John 3:3)
 - a. Keep one Pure (I John 3:3)
 - b. Bring one Comfort (I Thessalonians 4:18)
 - c. Deliver from Wrath (I Thessalonians 5:9)
 - d. Reward for Service (I Corinthians 3:11 -15)

B. The Return of Christ (Acts 1:11) (Note: The Return of Christ is a totally separate event from the Rapture.)

1. Prophesied in the Old Testament (Jude 14; Deuteronomy 30:3)
2. Necessitated by Christ's Rejection at His First Coming (Matthew 16:21-27)
3. Will Be Literal and Personal
(Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11-16)
4. Will Institute the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:6)

Week Nine —

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Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

New Testament:

Matthew Mark Luke John Acts Romans I & II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I & II Thessalonians I & II Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews James I & II Peter I, II, III John Jude Revelation

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9; Romans 10:10; Romans 10:13; John 5:24.

- IX. I Want to Know How to Win Others to Christ
- A. God Chose to Send Us Forth to Witness to Others
(Acts 1:8; 4:33; 5:32; 17:16).
(Note: God could have chosen many other methods, but He chose to use the Church—people!)
 - B. God Gave us a Specific Task (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - C. God Gave us a Clear Message (I Corinthians 15:1-4)
 - D. God Gave us a Singular Method (Mark 16:15) E. God Gave us the Needed Power (Matthew 28:18; Acts 1:8; 4:31).
We Must:
 - 1. Learn the Word (Psalm 119:9-11; Acts 4:31 b; 17:11)
 - 2. Develop a Consistent Prayer Life (Acts 4:24; II Thessalonians 3:1)
 - 3. Walk in the Fullness of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
 - 4. Be Prepared to Witness to Anyone, Anywhere
(I Corinthians 10:33; I Peter 3:15; Proverbs 11:30)
 - E. God will Reward Faithful Witnesses (Daniel 12:3; I Thessalonians 2:19)

Week Ten —

Let's Learn the Books of the Bible:

Old Testament:

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I & II Samuel I & II Kings I & II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

New Testament:

Matthew Mark Luke John Acts Romans I & II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I & II Thessalonians I & II Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews James I & II Peter I, II, III John Jude Revelation

Let's Memorize Some Verses in the Bible:

II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1; I John 1:9; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9; Romans 10:10; Romans 10:13; John 5:24.

- X. I Want to Know How to Have a Good Home Life.
- A. The Home was Instituted by God
(Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6). It is one man, for one woman, for life.
 - B. The Home is a Picture of Christ and the Church
(Ephesians 5:23).
 - C. The Home is Structured by Bible Principles
(Ephesians 5:21-33; Romans 7:1-3; I Corinthians 7):
 - 1. The Husband is:
 - a. The Head (Ephesians 5:23)
 - b. To Love his Wife (Ephesians 5:25)
 - c. To Honor his Wife (I Peter 3:7)
 - 2. The Wife is to Submit:
 - a. To a Saved Husband (Ephesians 5:22)
 - b. To an Unsaved Husband (I Peter 3:1-6)
(Note Principle in Acts 4:18-24)

3. Children are to:
 - a. Obey Parents in Childhood (Ephesians 6:1)
 - b. Honor Parents in Adulthood (Ephesians 6:2)

D. The Home will be Strong through:

1. Application of Bible Principles
(I Corinthians 10:6, 11)
2. Time of Devotions (I Peter 3:7)
3. Faithfulness to Church (Hebrews 10:25)

Conclusion:

The above is only very basic foundational information for getting started right in your new life, as a Christian. Please read it over again, taking time to 13 meditate on each point. Search a Bible concordance, or a good chain reference Bible, like the Scofield Reference Bible, for supplementary scriptures that will expand your understanding.

Please be quick to call upon your Pastor, or Sunday School Teacher, to help you in difficult areas which you have not been able to resolve. God bless you as you seek to develop a strong walk with the Lord Jesus.

I The author has not printed out any scripture texts, as a part of our spiritual growth involves personally using our Bible. The reader is encouraged to look up, read, meditate on, and memorize many of the scriptures cited. Only the King James Bible should be used.

II See this Author's more detailed study on the Church. The reader is encouraged to visit the author's web site, www.exhortationplace.com, and make use of the study outlines, and Bible studies thereon, to advance his or her spiritual growth. They are all free, unless otherwise noted