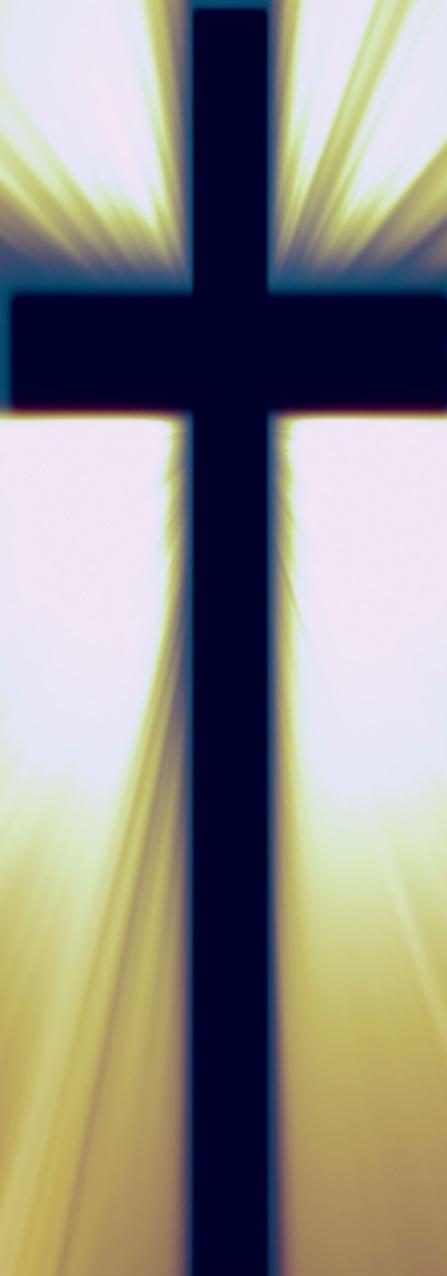


CROSS BIBLE STUDY



Meeting Jesus in Your Daily Bible Reading

Jim Millard

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In honor of Bob Schultz and Jack Loy. *“I met Bob and Jack when I was 15 years old at a Bible study at Jack’s house. Jack was our Young Life leader and had a huge impact on my life and on the lives of countless numbers of young people over his lifetime. Bob discipled me over a period of about 3 years when I was in high school. We met together each week one on one. He taught me how to spend time with God in his word, how to pray, how to share the gospel, the importance of obedience and the other foundational building blocks of walking with God that are portrayed in the Wheel illustration. Both Bob and Jack taught me through their life examples and by their words. Jack and Bob put the vision into my heart of first being a disciple of Jesus and then to make disciples who make disciples of Jesus. I am deeply indebted to these men of God. Many of the things in this book I learned from them.”*

Jim Millard

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The discipleship Wheel illustration originated with The Navigators.

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Welcome to Cross Bible Study!

Cross Bible Study is a simple approach to help you encounter Christ personally through your daily time in the Word. This approach emphasizes meditating on passages in the Bible, hearing Jesus speak through those passages and obeying Jesus.

Another primary goal of Cross Bible Study is to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus. Daily time in God's Word is a major factor in your spiritual growth. In order to grow as Jesus' disciple you need to learn to feed continually on the Word of God.

We believe that Jesus speaks to us personally through the Bible. However, the goal is not just to get a nice devotional feeling or to gain intellectual knowledge during our daily time in the Word. The goal is to spend time with Jesus, to encounter Him through the Scriptures, and to obey Him.

Disciples grow by hearing and obeying Jesus. Our understanding of spiritual things and growth as His disciples increases dramatically as we obey Him in our daily lives. Cross Bible Study will help you focus on hearing Jesus speak through the Bible and on obeying Him in real life situations. Disciples grow rapidly when they love Jesus and radically obey Him.

This workbook includes three main sections: *Cross Bible Study*, *The Wheel: Living as Disciples of Jesus*, and *45 Cross Bible Studies*.

Cross Bible Study

This first section introduces Cross Bible Study and explains four steps or phases of the daily quiet time. The four steps are 1. Read in the Presence of Jesus, 2. Meditate with Jesus, 3. Listen to Jesus, 4. Obey Jesus. These are not intended to be rigid or mechanical, but describe the spiritual dynamics of our daily time with God. However, all four steps are essential to our time in God's Word. This study will help you understand and experience each of these steps.

After this explanation of Cross Bible Study five examples are given from various passages in the Bible. These examples are taken directly from Jim's quiet time notebook. These five examples will help you see how to meditate, how to listen to Jesus and how to obey Jesus. They include examples from both Old and New Testaments. After reading the explanation of Cross Bible Study along with the five examples you will be ready to do Cross Bible Studies on your own.

The Wheel: Living as Disciples of Jesus

In the second section, we share a well-known illustration called *The Wheel*. The Wheel illustration represents the life of disciples of Jesus. It makes clear the most fundamental and foundational areas of discipleship. Through the Wheel illustration disciples will know where they need to grow. They will also begin to grasp that Christ must be the center of our lives and of everything we do. The 45 Cross Bible studies in the final section focus on the fundamental areas of discipleship portrayed in The Wheel.

On the pages following the Wheel Illustration there are 24 memory verses listed, two for each area of discipleship. We suggest that you memorize these together with a discipleship partner and review them each week when you meet. Memorizing these verses and discussing the Cross Bible Studies you do each week will lay a solid foundation in the lives of growing disciples.

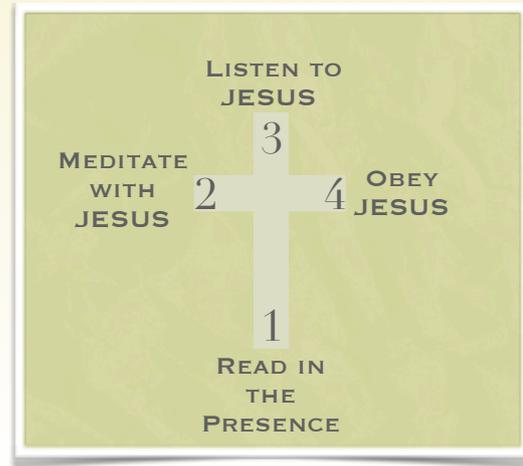
45 Cross Bible Studies

The third section contains forty-five Cross Bible Studies on the various parts of The Wheel. As mentioned above, these focus on foundational areas of growth as disciples of Jesus. There are ten Cross Bible Studies on the topic of *Christ the Center*. Everything depends on living in love relationship with Him. There are three Cross Bible Studies on each of the basic areas of discipleship like the Word, obedience, faith, etc. There are also five Cross Bible Studies on the subject of prayer.

Each Cross Bible Study is designed to help you grow in your love relationship with Jesus. May God bless you richly as you walk with Him, hear His voice and obey Him!

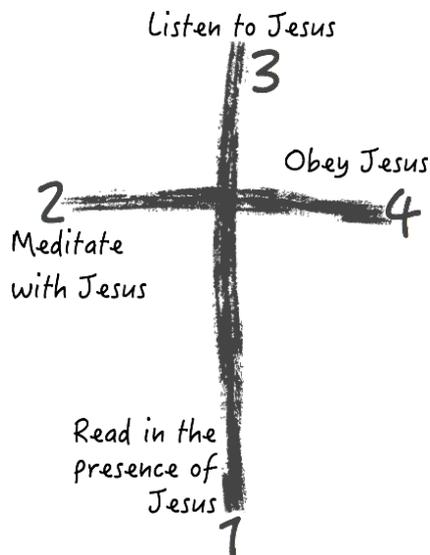
CROSS BIBLE STUDY

Meeting Jesus in Your Daily Bible Reading



Cross Bible Study

God is pursuing an intimate relationship with you. Your time reading the Bible each day is a central part of that relationship. Jesus continually invites you to, *Come to me*, and this invitation is extended to you every time you read the Bible. You can personally encounter Christ daily through His Word.



It is very important to spend time in God's Word each day. One reason many people struggle with reading the Bible is that they do not have a plan. Some read for a few minutes every day, but usually end up reading the same familiar passages over and over. They never go very deep in God's Word.

One of the most practical things a spiritual mother or father can do is to help newborn believers learn to feed themselves through daily time with Jesus in the Word. Establishing a daily quiet time is a basic building block for spiritual growth. The best way to do this is to study the same passages each day and then, share with one another about your time in the Word when you meet together each week.

Many books and devotional studies have been developed to help people do daily devotions. Although they are helpful, some systems substitute devotional books for the Word of God itself. In order to grow you need to learn to feed on the Bible itself, not on what

someone else has written about the Bible. Cross Bible Study is a simple method to help you to grow deeper in your love relationship with God by encountering Christ in the Scriptures every day.

It is also important to grasp the spiritual dynamics of the daily time in God's Word. The quiet time should not be thought of simply as an obligation or an intellectual exercise. The purpose of reading the Bible is not just to acquire more information and learn biblical principles. The purpose is to personally encounter God, to hear Him speak through the Scriptures and to experience transformation through Christ as you apply His Word in your daily life.

The symbol of the cross illustrates what can and should happen when you read the Bible. The diagram illustrates four key phases or aspects of your time in the Word of God: Read in the Presence of Jesus, Meditate with Jesus, Listen to Jesus, and Obey Jesus. This illustration makes clear key aspects of what should happen during your time with God in His Word.

1. Read in the Presence of Jesus

When you open the Bible each day you are opening the door into the presence of God. When you read the Bible, you are coming to a Person.

Reading in the presence of Jesus means to consciously acknowledge and honor Him. It is through Jesus' blood that you can enter freely into the presence of the living God. *"For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit"* (Ephesians 2:18). You can come to God with confidence because of Jesus. He made relationship with God possible through the cross.



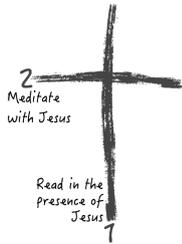
You can come to Jesus with confidence, faith and expectation. Ask Him to meet you and to speak to you through His Word. Jesus can open your mind so that

you can truly understand the Bible. He did this for the disciples after the resurrection: *“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures”* (Luke 24:45). Apart from the work of His Spirit we cannot really understand the things of God, but He has given us His Spirit so that we can understand (1 Corinthians 2:12,14).

Prayer: *“Jesus, I come to You today by the grace of your cross. Open my heart and mind to understand Your Word and to know You better. Speak to me today through Your Word.”*

2. Meditate with Jesus

Many people make the mistake of going directly from reading a passage of the Bible (Step 1) to application (Step 4). However, before going to personal application you must first understand what the passage really means. It is essential to read the entire passage and grasp the meaning in context. This enables you to correctly interpret what the Bible is saying.



It is important to read the entire chapter and ask, *“What did the author intend to say to the people he wrote to through this passage?”* While there are some difficult passages that scholars disagree about, most of the Bible is simple and straightforward. The average person CAN understand the Bible if he or she takes the time to study and diligently seeks God’s wisdom. Take time to *meditate* in order to grasp the meaning of passages in the Bible.

Meditation means to think deeply about something in order to understand the meaning. Meditation is like the process of digesting food. Just as cows chew the grass they eat again and again in order to digest it fully, you can digest the Word of God by thinking about it many times throughout the day. You meditate by bringing it into your mind and chewing on it again and again. As you bring the Word of God into your mind and reflect on its message, you come to understand the meaning of the passage in a deeper way.

To meditate on a passage ask relevant questions. There are general questions that can be asked about any passage such as: *What is the main point? What commands, principles or promises are given in these verses? What does this passage teach about God? What does this passage teach about people?*

Almost every passage points to Christ in some way. As you read the Bible a great question to ask is, *What do these verses say about Jesus? How does this passage relate to Christ?*

The Bible has something to say about almost every life-situation imaginable. It talks about friendship, marriage, family, money, work, children, heaven, hell and every important area of life. However, the **overarching focus of the Bible is on Jesus himself**. Christ is the center

of the Bible, and He should be central as we meditate on His Word.

As you meditate on a passage, ask Jesus to help you understand it. Talk with Jesus as you are thinking about the verses you are studying. He will help you to understand!

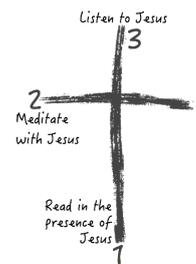
After the resurrection, Jesus explained various passages of the Bible to His disciples. In Luke 24:27 it says, *“Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself”*. (Also see John 5:46 and Luke 24:44). In the same way Jesus will help you to understand as you meditate on the Scriptures with Him.

For Step 2, as you Meditate with Jesus, write down your insights, observations, and thoughts about the verses you are focusing on. *What is the main point? What is the meaning of the passage?* Write simple notes that are helpful to you.

Prayer: *“Jesus, show me what this chapter really means and how You are revealed in it. Guide my thinking and show me the right questions to ask. Reveal Yourself to me through these verses.”*

3. Listen to Jesus

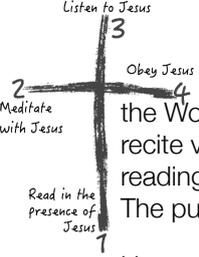
Many Bible study methods teach the following steps: A-Observation, B-Interpretation, C-Application. It is important to correctly interpret the Bible and to emphasize obedience. However, even if you correctly interpret a passage, you can miss the real purpose of the Bible by trying to apply its principles to your life in your own strength. If you proceed from interpretation straight to application you can end up with mere moralism.



Moralism means to try to do good things in your own strength. It is an attempt to understand and apply the principles in the Bible by yourself. But Christ is the only one who can live out what is written in Bible. The purpose of the Bible is not simply to teach us how to live, but to lead us to Jesus Himself.

Jesus made this clear to the Pharisees who were Bible scholars, but who had missed the whole point. Jesus said to them, ***“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life”*** (John 5:39-40). Jesus wants us to come to Him through the Scriptures in order to receive His life.

This became clear to me one evening when a good friend named Ron came to our home for dinner. After eating together, according to our custom, we read the Bible and my children recited Bible verses. Ron must have sensed something lacking. He shared about coming to Jesus through the Bible from John 5:39-40. He encouraged us to personally come to Jesus through



the Word and not to just mechanically read the Bible or recite verses. We had gone through the exercise of reading the Bible, but had missed the main purpose. The purpose is to come to Jesus and to listen to Him.

How can you come to Jesus and receive life through your daily Bible reading? First, you must have a conscious focus on Christ Himself. Your goal is to meet Jesus in His Word. If you seek Jesus you will encounter Him. If you wait on Him He will reveal Himself to you.

After you have read the passage and have meditated on it, **Listen to Jesus!** Close your eyes and wait on the Lord. Don't struggle or strive. Just listen. Usually the Spirit has already begun speaking to your heart while you were reading and meditating. As soon as you sense you understand what He is saying, write it down.

Prayer: *"Jesus, speak to me through your Word. I wait expectantly for You. Make Your words clear to my mind and heart."*

4. Obey Jesus

Application is very important. James 1:22 says, *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."* Jesus taught clearly in John 14:21 that if you love Him you will obey His commands:

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love

him and show myself to him."

If you really love Jesus, you will obey Him. When you love Jesus you can do what the Bible says through His power and life within you.

God's desire is that Christ live His life in you by faith (Galatians 2:20). Jesus said, *"Apart from me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5). He wants you to depend on Him and to receive His life. You are changed by Christ living in you.

You can obey Jesus in the power of Jesus. Trust Him to empower you to obey His commands. Through the written Word of God you can experience the Living Word of God (Jesus) dwelling in you.

As you proceed with this step, it is important to be specific and concrete so that you can assess whether or not you have obeyed Jesus. For example, if you sense Jesus is speaking to you about forgiveness, you should write down specifically who you will forgive and how you will express your forgiveness. Step 4 is most effective when you share with others what you wrote and how you obeyed Jesus.

I write, OBEY JESUS: in my notebook and write down specifically how I will obey Jesus. Also I often write a prayer expressing my response to the Lord from the passage I read.

Guidelines and Suggestions

1. Do Cross Bible Studies together.

Cross Bible Study is a tool to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus through your personal daily devotions. However, we strongly encourage you to learn to do these Cross Bible Studies with someone else in the beginning. Soon you will be able to do Cross Bible Studies on your own. Then you can share from your own daily time in the Word when you meet others. It is possible to do this in a small group. However, it is more effective to do Cross Bible Studies in a group of 2 or 3 people who are growing together as disciples.

Sharing the Word with others will help you to grow as a disciple of Christ. Share with your discipleship partner and with others in your faith family how the Lord is speaking to you through His Word and how He is working in your life.

Begin by doing simple passages together. Matthew 11:28-30, Luke 10:38-42, John 12:1-8 are examples of easy passages to start with.

After you both are confident to study passages by yourselves, then do Cross Bible Studies during the week and share with each other when you meet together. Share your insights and what you learned from each passage when you answered the questions in Step 2. Share what you sensed Jesus said to you personally (Step 3). Finally, share how you obeyed Jesus (Step 4).

2. Do Cross Bible Studies according to the needs of the participants.

You can begin with the first lesson and work through the entire book. However, it is best to focus on the needs and interests of the people in your group. For example, if one person needs to learn about forgiveness, then focus on that. If he or she needs to learn the importance of walking by faith, then do the Cross Bible Studies on faith.

After you have learned to do Cross Bible Study, we recommend that you make a plan with your discipleship partner to read 2-3 chapters a day and also to do a Cross Bible Study on 5-15 verses from one of the chapters you read that day. After you complete the 45 Cross Bible Studies in this book you should be able to do Cross Bible Studies on almost any passage in the Bible.

3. Make Disciples!

It is our hope that you use these Cross Bible Studies to make disciples of Jesus. Once you learn to do Cross Bible Study, it will be easy to share it with others. If you do each of the 45 studies in this workbook with someone else, it will help lay an initial foundation in the core areas of discipleship in your lives.

May God lead you and bless you richly through His Word!

Encountering Christ through the Bible

When I explained the cross illustration to a good friend, he thought for a while and asked, *"How can you 'come to Jesus' through a story like Daniel and the Lion's den?"* I do not mean to imply that we should twist passages and interpret them to refer to Jesus if they really do not. However, I do think that we can (and should) look to Jesus and encounter Him even through stories like Daniel and the Lion's den.

I read the story of Daniel again after my friend asked this question. I observed that Daniel's strength came from his relationship with God. He was willing to obey God and risk being thrown into the lion's den because he trusted God. When I read this passage I sensed Jesus saying to me, *"I am the living God. My kingdom will never be destroyed. Trust and obey me and I will take care of you."* This is what I mean by coming to Jesus through the Word.

Cross Bible Study: Five Examples

On the following five pages are examples from my own quiet time of how to study a passage using the Cross Bible Study method. There are examples from both Old and New Testaments. Read each passage and then look at the notes I have written, taking notice of the four steps we have discussed. These unedited examples are from my own daily time with God in His Word. I hope these samples will help you to understand how to encounter Jesus every day in His Word!

Example 1: Matthew 14:22-33



Date: _____

Step 1: Read in the Presence of Jesus

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ²⁸"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Step 2: Meditate with Jesus

Meditation Questions: Why did Peter have faith to walk on water?

Why did he doubt?

Why did Jesus scold Peter so strongly?

What distracts you from focusing on Jesus?

Peter was the only one who had faith to step out of the boat and walk on the water. I think his faith was inspired when he heard Jesus speak. However, Peter was distracted by the wind and the storm. Fear took over he lost his faith. Jesus scolded Peter strongly saying, "You of little faith. Why did you doubt?"

Jesus expected Peter to focus on Him and to believe Him. There are many things that distract me from Jesus and that inhibit my faith: busyness, problems, people, self, etc.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

"Don't let anything - (storms, problems, people) - distract you from Me. There will always be wind and storms in your life. Focus on Me and believe Me. I expect you to look to Me and to believe Me. Don't let anything distract you. Keep your eyes on Me and believe Me! Don't doubt Me. Always walk in a spirit of faith."

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Focus on Jesus and do not let anything distract you from Him! Believe Jesus in every situation. Consciously believe Jesus for the coming seminar in Ishinomaki, for the meetings in Thailand and in Los Angeles, and for your equipping and discipling ministry in Japan.

Prayer: "Jesus, I often get distracted from you. I want to walk with strong faith in you every day. Teach me to walk on water. Teach me how to believe in you and not be distracted by things around me. I believe you for the things I wrote above."

Example 2: Matthew 18:1-6



Date: _____

Step 1: Read in the Presence of Jesus

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

²He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵"And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. ⁶But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Step 2: Meditate with Jesus

Meditation Questions: What does it mean to become, "like little children?"

Why is the person who humbles himself or herself like a little child the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?

What is the opposite of being like little children?

Being like a child is an essential key to experiencing the Kingdom of God. Children are simple, trusting, teachable and dependent. I need to throw away my pride and walk with Jesus simply -- as a child. My relationship with Jesus depends on being childlike! Further, the way I treat children is the way I am treating Jesus, so I should receive children like I would receive Jesus.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

"My ways and my values are different than yours. Walk before me in complete sincerity, faith and trust. Do you trust me as your father? Sometimes you think complicated things instead of trusting me. Be a child before me always."

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Choose to humble yourself and throw away human pride, especially pride in the things adults value: recognition, position, exaltation, etc. Walk in simple faith in Jesus daily. Enjoy life as a child of your Father. Reject "adult thoughts" that move you away from trusting your Father. Depend on the Father for all things throughout the day.

Prayer: "Jesus, I want to trust You like a child. Help me to throw away pride (especially in thinking I understand) and come to You in simple faith. Help me to love children like You love them."

Example 3: 2 Corinthians 3:12-18



Date: _____

Step 1: Read in the Presence of Jesus

¹²Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. ¹³We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. ¹⁴But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.

¹⁶But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Step 2: Meditate with Jesus

Meditation Questions: What is the cause of the veil that dulls people's minds and covers their hearts?

What is the key to removing the veil?

How can we experience the glorious freedom of the Spirit?

What is the key to transformation?

The veil seems to symbolize hardness of heart and the inability to understand the things of God. The veil is taken away by turning to the Lord and contrasted to living in the Spirit. I think the veil represents legalism and religion - our attempts to understand God and to be righteous in our own strength without believing Him from the heart. It says in verse 14 that only in Christ is the veil taken away. Also in verse 16 it says, "Whenever anyone turns to the Lord the veil is taken away." "Turning to the Lord" may refer to salvation, but I think it includes the continual action of turning to the Lord. Verses 17-18 refer to present ongoing action (reflecting the Lord's glory and being transformed into His likeness). Therefore it seems logical that "turning to the Lord" can be an ongoing, continual process.

The key to removing the veil from our hearts and minds is to turn to the Lord, to believe Him and to focus on Him. Then we can gaze into the face of Jesus and reflect His glory. This is the key to transformation.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

"Continually turn to Me and gaze into my face. Acknowledge and honor My presence at all times. Seek and respond to the work of My Spirit. Look continually into My face and allow My Spirit to transform you and fill you with My life."

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Practice, "turning to Jesus." Keep turning your focus back to Jesus. When you realize you are focused on things in this world, TURN to Jesus. Turn your heart, mind and attention to Jesus. Look into His face. Let his life and presence be your main focus. Turn to Jesus in your home, in conversations with people, when discussing issues or matters of business and when you are watching TV.

Prayer: "Jesus, I want to turn to You, gaze into Your face and reflect Your glory. Lead me into the freedom and glorious ministry of Your Spirit. Transform me into Your likeness."

Example 4: Genesis 9:1-22



Date: _____

Step 1: Read in the Presence of Jesus

¹Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. ²The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. ³Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

⁴“But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. ⁵And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. ⁶“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. ⁷As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it.”

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: ⁹“I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you ¹⁰and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹²And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: ¹³I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. ¹⁶Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.” ¹⁷So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

¹⁸The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the earth. ²⁰Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard.

²¹When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. ²²Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. ²³But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness.

Step 2: Meditate with Jesus

Meditation Question: Why did Noah and his son Ham fail after God established a covenant with them?

I observed from Genesis 9 that even though God established a covenant with Noah and his family after the flood, they still sinned. The chapter seems to emphasize this by describing the covenant that God made with Noah followed by the account of Noah's drunkenness and Ham's sin.

Jesus has established a better covenant with me based on the cross. Nevertheless, I still have a sin-nature and still sin in spite of the fact that I am a Christian and a missionary. I still must let Jesus transform me by his life; otherwise, sin will rule me.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

“You must continually recognize your need for Me. Do not let self-righteousness creep into your heart. You will sin just like Noah if you stray from dependence on Me. Rely on Me, not on your knowledge, experience or strength.”

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Continually admit your need for Jesus in all situations. Take steps of humility in areas you think you are strong so that you will truly rely on Jesus. (Find ways to humble yourself in the meetings next week so that you will rely on Jesus instead of on your knowledge and experience.)

Prayer: “Jesus, I confess that pride easily enters my heart and that often I rely on my own knowledge and understanding. I thank You for the covenant of grace You made with us through the cross. You have set us free from sin and judgment. I confess that I will fail without You.”



Example 5: Proverbs 26:1-12

Date: _____

Step 1: Read in the Presence of Jesus

- ¹Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, honor is not fitting for a fool.
- ²Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest.
- ³A whip for the horse, a halter for the donkey, and a rod for the backs of fools!
- ⁴Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself.
- ⁵Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.
- ⁶Like cutting off one's feet or drinking violence is the sending of a message by the hand of a fool.
- ⁷Like a lame man's legs that hang limp is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
- ⁸Like tying a stone in a sling is the giving of honor to a fool.
- ⁹Like a thornbush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
- ¹⁰Like an archer who wounds at random is he who hires a fool or any passer-by.
- ¹¹As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.
- ¹²Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Step 2: Meditate with Jesus

Meditation Question: Why is being wise in your own eyes so much worse than being a fool who is described in verses 1-11?

Proverbs 26:1-11 describes the folly of fools. Each verse discusses the stupidity of the fool. Then verse 12 states that there is more hope for even a fool than for a man who is wise in his own eyes.

Fools are silly, but people who are proud are stupid. There is not much hope for a fool, but less for people who are wise in their own eyes. Pride blinds us to the wisdom God is trying to give to us.

The way you see yourself is very important. It is easy to be wise in your own eyes. I need to see myself in relation to Christ.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

"Don't be a fool by being wise in your own eyes. Embrace my humility. I am your wisdom, not information. Pride will destroy you. Humble yourself before Me and before others."

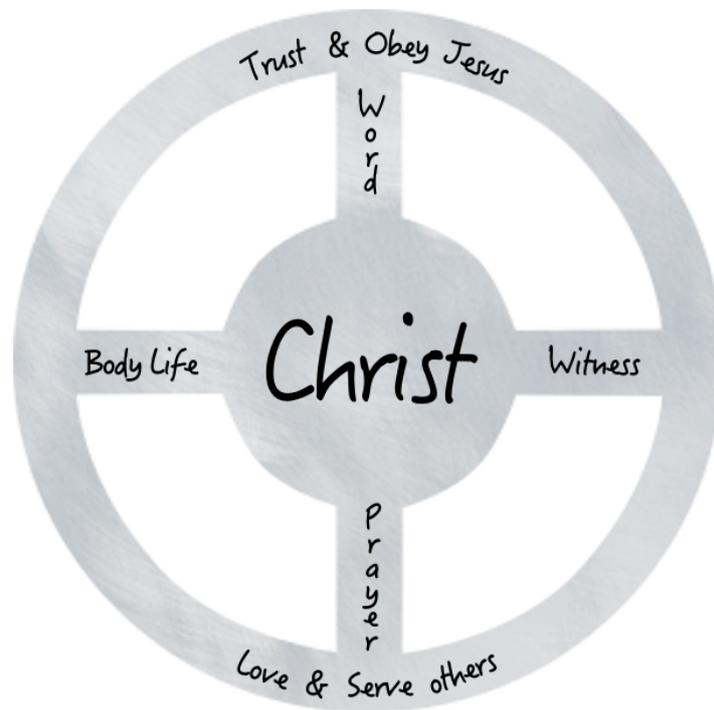
Step 4- Obey Jesus

Confess your sin immediately when you know that you are being wise in your own eyes. Find ways to humble yourself so that you do not become wise in your own eyes. Follow Jesus who was most humble.

Prayer: "Jesus, I confess that I often think I am wise, but You are my wisdom. Deliver me from pride and arrogance. Be my wisdom today."

The Wheel: Living as Disciples of Jesus

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5



The Wheel is an illustration that represents the life of disciples of Jesus. **The center of the Christian life is Christ Himself.** We are saved by Christ and we live through Him. Just as the hub of a wheel must be in the center in order for the wheel to roll smoothly, so Christ must be the center of our lives at all times. Most problems we face as believers are caused by taking our focus off of Christ.

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* Everything in the Christian life depends on Him! **IF CHRIST IS NOT THE CENTER OF YOUR LIFE THEN NOTHING WILL GO RIGHT!** We cannot live the Christian life in our own strength. We must learn what it means for Christ to live in us by faith as Paul described in Galatians 2:20: *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

There are **four spokes** in the diagram above. The vertical spokes represent *our relationship with God*. The **Word of God** is our spiritual food. We need food in order to be nourished and to grow. Listening to God speak through His Word daily is an essential part of having an intimate relationship with Him. The Bible says in Matthew 4:4, *"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."* Living in the Word of God is a core element following Jesus.

Prayer is also a vital part of our relationship with God. Prayer is like breathing. We inhale (listen to God) and exhale (talk to God). It is a constant activity, just like breathing. We can have continuous communication with Him. Jesus taught us to ask, seek and knock aggressively in prayer knowing that our Father in heaven gives good gifts to His children:

⁷Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! Matthew 7:1-11

The horizontal spokes represent *our relationship with others*. If we live in love relationship with God, it will change the way we relate to people. We have a unique relationship with other believers because of our relationship with Christ. Jesus said, *"Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them"* (Matthew 18:20). We have a spiritual fellowship because the same Holy Spirit indwells us all. We are all members of the Body of Christ. Disciples grow and are built up by living in the Body of Christ. This is called **Body Life**.

Body Life can be compared to physical rest. We must rest in order to be refreshed and renewed each day. In the same way, disciples are built up and renewed through Body Life. Romans 12:4-5 describes our relationship in the

body: *“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”*

The other horizontal spoke is labeled **Witness**, which refers to sharing the gospel with others. Evangelism can be likened to physical exercise. The physical body needs rest, but it also needs exercise. Without exercise, our bodies will not be strong and healthy.

Spiritually it is the same. We need to be built up and grow in Christ, but also need to exercise. We need to share the gospel with others. Sharing the gospel is a sign that we have a healthy and vital relationship with Christ. Jesus said in Matthew 4:19, *“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”* If we are following Jesus, He will use us to win others to Himself.

The tire is the part of the wheel that actually touches the road. The tire represents **trusting and obeying** Jesus in our daily lives. Without faith and obedience the wheel does not move. Faith and obedience work together. Obeying Christ is an expression of genuine faith. As Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us, *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

Loving and serving others is also a part of the tire in the Wheel Illustration above. The most central and basic command of Jesus is to love others. Jesus said in John 15:12, *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”* Jesus also said in John 13:35, *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* Loving one another the way Jesus loved us is the sign that we are truly His disciples.

Jesus was a servant. He humbled Himself and washed His disciples feet. This is how He expressed His love for His disciples. And this is how we are to show love to one another. We express love practically by serving others and meeting their needs. You cannot grow as a disciple of Jesus without serving others. Jesus emphasized this in Mark 10:45: *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

There are two foundational building blocks not listed in the Wheel Illustration. The first is **forgiveness**. Love and forgiveness are the heart of God and the heart of the gospel. We must continually forgive and love others. Ephesians 4:32 is a powerful verse about forgiveness: *“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

A second, and crucial, building block (not listed in the Wheel) concerns **money**. Jesus said, *“You cannot serve both God and money.”* Jesus said it simply and made it very clear. We cannot be disciples of Jesus if we serve money! If Jesus is not the Lord of our finances, then He really is not the Lord of our lives. Learning to trust and obey Jesus with our money, time, and possessions is essential to discipleship.

Use the Wheel Illustration to MAKE DISCIPLES!

The Wheel Illustration is intended to help people grow as disciples and to make disciples. Jesus commanded us to **make disciples**. The Great Commission is given in Matthew 28:18-20:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The Cross Bible Studies on the following pages focus on the various parts of the Wheel. Doing these Cross Bible Studies together with your discipleship partner will help both of you grow strong as disciples of Jesus.

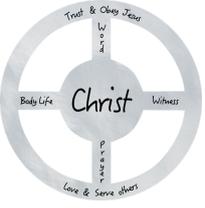
If you are helping someone else to grow as a disciple, first do some Cross Bible Studies together until the other person has confidence to do it by himself or by herself. Then do two or three Cross Bible Studies each week and share your insights and experiences when you meet together weekly.

In addition, I also recommend that you choose passages together and read 2-3 chapters each day. It is good to read larger passages (2-3 chapters a day) and also focus on smaller sections of 5-15 verses using the Cross Bible Study method. Finally, memorize the verses about each part of the Wheel (on the following pages) with your discipleship partner.

Almost every part of the Wheel can be found in John 15:1-17. Read this passage and find verses for each part of the Wheel. For example, John 15:4-5 are powerful verses about Christ being the center of our lives:

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

May God bless you richly as you grow in Christ and make disciples who are able to make disciples of Jesus!



The Wheel Memory Verses

1. Wheel	John 15:4-5	Matthew 28:18-20
2. Christ the Center	Matthew 6:33	Galatians 2:20
3. Faith	Proverbs 3:5-6	Hebrews 11:6
4. Obedience	John 14:21	James 1:22
5. Word	Joshua 1:8	Matthew 4:4
6. Prayer	Matthew 7:7-8	Philippians 4:6-7
7. Body Life	Matthew 18:20	Romans 12:4-5
8. Witness	Matthew 4:19	Romans 1:16
9. Love	John 15:12	John 13:34-35
10. Forgiveness	Ephesians 4:32	Matthew 7:1-2
11. Serve Others	Mark 10:45	2 Corinthians 4:5
12. Money	2 Corinthians 9:6-7	Luke 6:38

1. The Wheel

John 15:4-5

4Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19**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, **20**and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

2. Christ the Center

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

3. Faith

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; **6**in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

4. Obedience

John 14:21

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

5. Word

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Matthew 4:4

'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

6. Prayer

Matthew 7:7-8

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

7. Body Life

Matthew 18:20

"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Romans 12:4-5

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

8. Witness

Matthew 4:19

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

9. Love

John 15:12

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

John 13:34-35

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

10. Forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Matthew 7:1-2

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ²For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

11. Serve Others

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

2 Corinthians 4:5

For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

12. Money

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Luke 6:38

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

45 Cross Bible Studies

The following pages include 45 Cross Bible Studies on the various parts of the Wheel, which are all foundational for growth as disciples of Christ.

These Cross Bible Studies follow the four steps designed to help you focus on Jesus and to encounter Him through the Scriptures:

- Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus.
- Step 2- Meditate with Jesus
- Step 3- Listen to Jesus.
- Step 4- Obey Jesus

At the risk of being redundant, we would **like to emphasize the importance of doing these Cross Bible Studies together with others.** There are several ways to do this. Cross Bible Studies especially work well in the following relationships:

- One-to-one discipleship
- Husband and wife
- Family
- Cell group or house church

If you do these 45 Cross Bible Studies together you will grow as disciples of Jesus and will be able to make disciples by studying these passages with others.

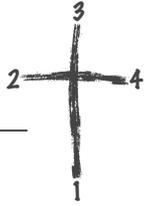
After learning the Cross Bible Study method, you can use it to study other passages in the Bible on your own. Simply get a notebook for your daily quiet time and follow the cross pattern you have learned from this study. Use one page for each day to record your notes and insights. Begin by writing the passage you are studying and the date in the upper left part of your page. Then draw a cross on the upper right section of your page (as seen in the examples).

In the following Cross Bible Studies meditation questions are given for each passage. After completing these foundational Cross Bible Studies you will be able to develop your own meditation questions for passages you study.

We recommend that you read 2-3 chapters from the Word every day, but then focus on 5-15 verses for your Cross Bible Study. After reading larger portions of Scripture, you can focus on a shorter passage that you are drawn to. Follow the cross pattern for the verses you select. Complete each step on your page for that day followed by your notes, comments, principles and insights. For Step 3 we highly recommend that you use "quotation marks" to record what you sense Jesus is saying to you personally through the passage. You will grow strong as a disciple of Jesus as you hear and obey Him daily through the Word.

May God bless you richly as you encounter Christ in the Scriptures!

The Wheel: Matthew 28:18-20



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. How should understanding this influence our thinking about making disciples?
2. Jesus commanded us to MAKE DISCIPLES of all nations. Was this command given only to the 12 disciples or to us as well? What does it mean to make disciples? What is the difference between making a convert and making a disciple?
3. How can we teach people to OBEY everything Jesus commanded?
4. Jesus promised to be with us as we make disciples. What is our part in disciple making? What is His part?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

The Wheel: John 15:1-8



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

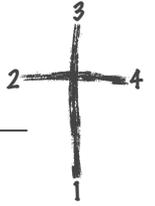
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What is the key to bearing fruit?
2. What does it mean to *abide* in Jesus?
3. How are we like branches?
4. What does this passage teach about prayer?
5. What do these verses teach about discipleship?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

The Wheel: John 15:9-17



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command.

¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

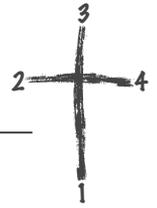
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How can you remain in Jesus’ love?
2. According to verses 9-11, how can you have true joy?
3. What is Jesus’ main command? When can you obey this command?
4. How will you practically love people the way Jesus loved us?
5. What does it mean to be Jesus’ friend?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Matthew 11:28-30



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

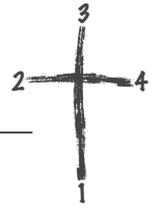
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How will you respond to Jesus' invitation to *Come to me*?
2. What promises does Jesus give in these verses?
3. What does it mean to take Jesus' yoke?
4. What do these verses say about human beings? What do they teach about Jesus? What do they teach about living in relationship with Jesus?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Matthew 22:34-40



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

³⁴Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:

³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What does it mean to love God with all of your heart? How can you love God with your intellect, feelings, and will?

2. Who is your neighbor? What does it mean practically to love your neighbor as yourself?

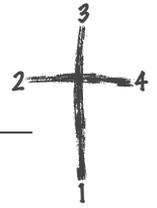
3. What does it mean that all of the Law and Prophets depend on these two commands?

4. Are these two commands life priorities for you? How are you obeying these two commands?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Philippians 3:1-11



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ²Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. ³For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

⁷But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

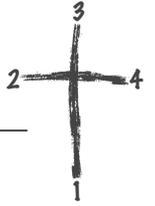
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did Paul depend on and boast about before meeting Christ? If you had to boast about yourself what would you say?
2. What did Paul consider to be valuable (profit) and not valuable (loss)?
3. How did Paul's way of thinking and values change after meeting Christ?
4. What was Paul's greatest passion and goal? What is yours?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Ephesians 6:10-18



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What kind of battle are we engaged in? Who are we fighting against? Why do we need armor?

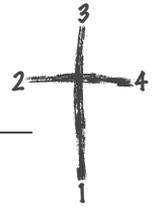
2. List the pieces of armor mentioned in these verses. What does each piece represent spiritually?

3. How does putting on each piece of armor make us strong in the Lord?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Matthew 4:1-11



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

⁴Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

⁷Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

⁹“All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” ¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’ ”

¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

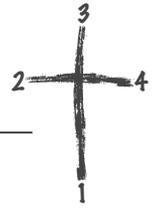
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How did Satan tempt Jesus? In each of the three temptations, what was Satan appealing to?
2. Jesus answered each temptation by quoting the Scriptures. How did His answers point out Satan’s lie each time?
3. Why do you think Satan said to Jesus two times, “If you are the Son of God?”
4. Why do you think Jesus was able to overcome these temptations?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Matthew 16:24-26



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. ²⁶What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done."

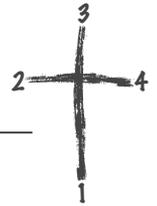
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What does Jesus require for anyone to be His disciple? What does it mean to *deny yourself, take up your cross and to follow Jesus*?
2. What does it mean to *save your life*? Explain the paradox that Jesus stated here: "*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will find it.*"
3. What does Jesus mean when he asks, "*What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*"
4. Do you really believe that Jesus will return to this earth in glory with his angels and reward you according to what you have done? How will this affect the way you live?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: 1 Corinthians 9:24-25



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How much time, energy, sacrifice and commitment do athletes put into winning a prize in the world of sports?

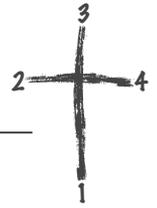
2. What does it mean, *“They do it to get a crown that will not last?”* If you became a world famous athlete or won a gold medal at the Olympics, how long would that “crown” last?

3. Paul said that we are living, *“to get a crown that will last forever.”* What sort of crown are you living for?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Christ the Center: Romans 12:1-2



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹Therefore, 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. ²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did Paul refer to when he said, *In view of God's mercy*? How has God poured out His mercy on us (as Paul explained in Romans chapters 1-11)?

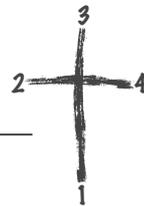
2. What is a *living sacrifice*? Why do you think that true worship requires offering ourselves completely to God?

3. What does it mean to be *conformed to this world*? Can we be transformed by God without offering our lives fully to Him? Why or why not?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Faith: Joshua 1:1-9



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ²"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west. ⁵No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

⁶"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. ⁷Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why does this passage emphasize being strong and courageous so much?

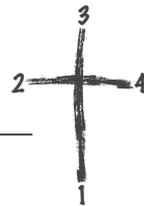
2. How can we be strong and courageous?

3. What promises are given in this passage? List all of them.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Faith: Matthew 14:22-32



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

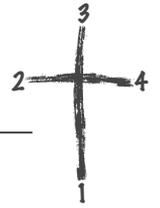
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How would you have felt if you were in the boat with the disciples in the storm? How would you have felt if you thought you saw a ghost coming to you on the water?
2. What do you think inspired Peter to have the faith to leave the security of the boat and to walk on the water to Jesus?
3. Why did Peter doubt and lose his faith?
4. Jesus expected Peter to have faith and scolded him for doubting. Do you think Jesus expects you to have faith in every situation? Give some examples of situations in which He expects you to have faith.
5. How is the Christian life like walking on water?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Obedience: Matthew 7:24-27



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²⁴“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did the wise man and foolish man have in common? How were they different?

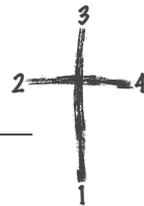
2. How can you build a solid foundation for your life and family?

3. What do you need to do to build your life on the ROCK?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Obedience: John 14:15-26



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁵"If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

²²Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. ²⁵All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But 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.

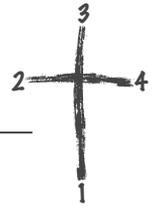
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What proves that you really love Jesus?
2. What promises did Jesus give in these verses to those who love Jesus and obey His commands?
3. If God loves us even when we do not obey His commands, what did Jesus mean when He said in verse 21 that when a person loves Him and obey His commands that, "*he will be loved by the Father and I will love him?*"
4. How will we experience the Holy Spirit when we love Jesus and obey His commands?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Obedience: Matthew 25:14-30



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁴Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. ¹⁷So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' ²¹His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²²The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'²³His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²⁴Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'²⁶His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

²⁸Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. ²⁹For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ³⁰And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

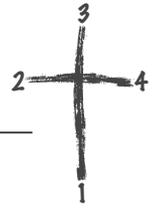
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did each servant do with the money (talents) given to him?
2. Why did the master reward the servant who had been entrusted with 5 talents? Why did he reward the servant who had been given two talents? How were each of them rewarded?
3. How did the man entrusted with one talent try to justify not using what he had been given? How did the master react to this? How was this man punished?
4. Do you believe God will judge all people (including you) the same way he dealt with the three men in this story? How will this affect the way you live?
5. What has God entrusted to you? How are you using it for His Kingdom?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Word: Luke 8:4-15



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

⁴While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.” When he said this, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

⁹His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ““though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.”

¹¹“This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.

¹³Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What does the seed represent in this parable? What does the soil represent?

2. What are the four kinds of soil and what do they symbolize?

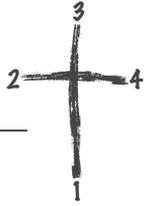
3. Why does the condition of our heart become like each of these four soils?

4. What kind of soil are you? Why?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Word: Psalm 1:1-6



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

²But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

³He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

⁴Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What does it mean to not walk in the counsel of the wicked? What does it mean to not stand in the way of sinners? What does it mean to not sit in the seat of mockers?

2. What it means to *delight* in the law of the LORD? How can a person actually meditate on God's Word day and night?

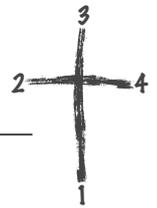
3. Describe the blessings of a person who delights in God's Word and meditates on it day and night.

4. What will happen to wicked people?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Prayer: Matthew 6:5-15



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

⁵“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹“This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did you learn about prayer from verses 5-8?

2. There are seven important parts to the Lord's Prayer. It is important to pray concerning each of these themes daily. Summarize in your own words the focus of each of these seven themes.

Part 1- Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Part 2- Your kingdom come.

Part 3- Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Part 4- Give us this day our daily bread.

Part 5- Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

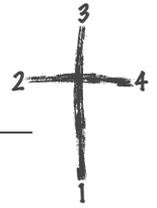
Part 6- Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Part 7- Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever.

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Prayer: Luke 18:9-14



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

⁹To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

¹⁴“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why did the Pharisee think that he was not sinful? What was he really saying when he prayed? What was his attitude?

2. What was the attitude of the tax collector before God?

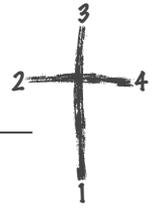
3. How did God see the tax collector? Why was he justified before God?

4. In verse 14 Jesus said, “*For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*” How will you humble yourself like the tax collector daily so that God will exalt you?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Prayer: Ephesians 1:15-23



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

¹⁸I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did Paul pray for in this prayer? List the main things he prayed for.

2. Why is it important to pray that God will give revelation to people?

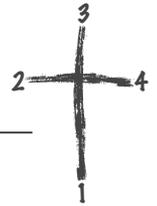
3. Why is it important for disciples to know the power of Christ living in them? Describe how great the power is that is in us.

4. What do these verses teach about Jesus?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Body Life: 1 Corinthians 12:12- 27



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹²The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

¹⁴Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²²On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. ²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Summarize the main points of this passage in one or two sentences.

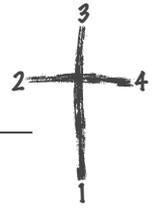
2. Why is it important to recognize that you are a member of the body? Why is it important to recognize that other people are members of the body?

3. Why do you need other members of the body? Why do they need you?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Body Life: Ephesians 4:11-16



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹¹It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What is the job of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers according to verse 12?

2. Who is supposed to do the ministry (verse 12)? What is the result of this ministry (verse 13)?

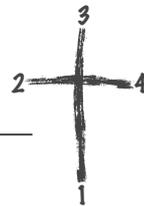
3. How will we grow to maturity?

4. What will maturity look like when we reach the fullness of Christ?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Witness: Luke 15:1-32



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. ²But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

⁸“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

¹¹Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ ²⁰So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²²“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

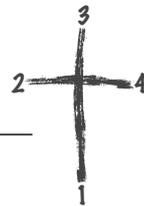
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. From this passage what did you learn about the heart of the Father towards sinful lost people?
2. How is the Father’s compassion for lost people seen in the story of the lost sheep, in the story of lost coin and in the story of the lost son?
3. Why was the older brother angry? Why couldn’t he rejoice that his brother had come back home? How are we like the older brother sometimes?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Witness: John 4:1-42



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, ²although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. ⁴Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." ¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" ¹³Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." ¹⁶He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." ¹⁷"I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

²⁵The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." ²⁶Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

²⁷Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" ²⁸Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" ³⁰They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." ³³Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" ³⁴"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. ³⁸I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

³⁹Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹And because of his words many more became believers. ⁴²They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

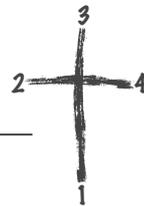
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What did you learn about sharing the gospel from the way Jesus talked with this woman?
2. How was Jesus Spirit-led in this conversation? What persuaded this woman that Jesus was the Messiah?
3. What did Jesus teach about the harvest? How does that apply to us?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Witness: Luke 19:1-10



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ²A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamorefig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. ⁷All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a ‘sinner.’”

⁸But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

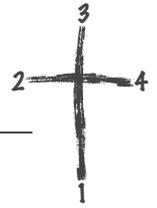
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How do you think Zacchaeus felt when Jesus saw him and told him that He wanted to go to his house?
2. Why was Jesus willing to go to the house of a ‘sinner,’ even though people criticized him for it?
3. Zacchaeus showed his repentance by giving half his money to the poor and by promising to pay back people he had cheated four times the amount! Have you ever done anything like this? Explain your answer.
4. What does this story teach about salvation? What does it teach about Jesus?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Love: John 13:34-35



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

³⁴“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

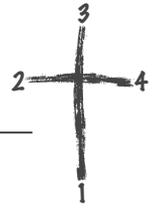
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why do you think Jesus said this was a *new commandment*?
2. How did Jesus express his love for His disciples in John 13?
3. How did Jesus love you?
4. Do people in the world know that you are Jesus' disciples by the way you love one another? Explain your answer?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Love: 1 Corinthians 13



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹²Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

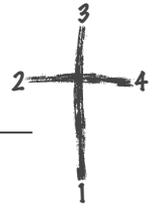
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. How empty and vain are we if we do not truly love others? Why do you think love is required to make any of the actions listed in these verses meaningful?
2. List the actions of love in verses 4-7. List the *attitudes* of love in verses 4-7. How does this description of love differ from the way the word love is often used?
3. Loving others is a sign of maturity. If you do not love others, you are still a child. By this definition, are you still a child or are you an adult?
4. Love never ends and is even greater than faith and hope. How will understanding this change your life?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Love: 1 John 3:14-18



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

¹⁶This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Even if you do not hate someone, if you are indifferent towards him or her, what does it say about you?

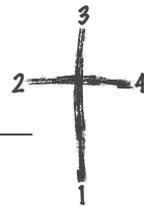
2. How can we lay down our lives for our brothers as Jesus laid down his life for us?

3. What does it mean to love others practically? What needs do your brothers or sisters have that you can meet?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Forgiveness: Ephesians 4:25-32



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²⁵Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶“In your anger do not sin” : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹Do 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. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What do these verses teach about how we should speak?

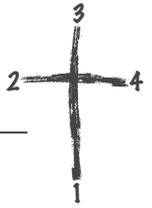
2. What do you think grieves the Holy Spirit?

3. Do you have anger and bitterness in your life? If so, why? Who do you need to forgive and love?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Forgiveness: Matthew 18:21-35



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" ²²Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

²³"Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. ²⁶"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. ²⁹"His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' ³⁰"But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. ³²"Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

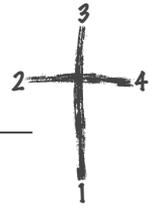
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. If a person commits the same offense against you many, many times why is it hard to continue to forgive them?
2. Ten thousand talents was more money than whole countries had at the time. How would you compare this huge amount of money to the price Jesus paid for your sins to be forgiven?
3. How do we sometimes act like the man who was forgiven ten thousand talents, but would not forgive his fellow servant a small amount? Why is God angry with us when we do not forgive others?
4. What does it mean to forgive your brother or sister from the heart?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Serve Others: John 13:1-17



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

²The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. If you had been one of the disciples, how would you have felt as Jesus washed your feet?

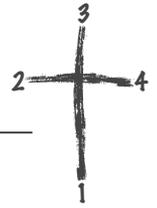
2. How have your "feet" gotten dirty in the world? How can others wash your "feet" and deal with those areas of your life?

3. What does Jesus' command to wash one another's feet really mean?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Serve Others: Mark 10:35-45



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

³⁵Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." ³⁶"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. ³⁷They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." ³⁸"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" ³⁹"We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

⁴¹When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴²Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

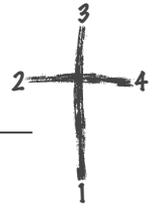
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What is the attitude and mentality of leaders in the world? How are followers of Jesus to be different?
2. Jesus said that whoever wants to be great must become the servant of all. What does this mean for us in practical terms?
3. How did Jesus serve others?
4. How will you serve others like Jesus?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Serve Others: Philippians 2:1-11



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why does it say that we should seek to live in love and unity? What does it mean to think of others as better than yourself?

2. Describe Jesus' attitude and actions as described in verses 5-8.

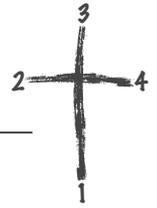
3. What does it mean to have the same mind as Jesus?

4. How did God exalt Jesus (versus 9-11)? What does this teach us about God?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Money/Giving: Matthew 6:19-24



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why did Jesus say that we should store up treasures in heaven and not on earth?

2. How can we lay up treasures in heaven?

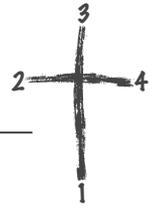
3. Where is your treasure?

4. How can you make God your only master rather than serving money?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Money/Giving: Matthew 6:25-34



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

²⁵“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

²⁸“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

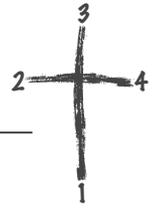
Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. Why are we not to worry about what to eat, what to drink or what to wear?
2. What good does worrying do?
3. What do these verses teach about how to stop worrying?
4. Why must we trust our Father to meet our needs in order to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness?
5. Do you really believe that if you seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness that all these things will be given to you as well? How will this affect the way you live?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

Money/Giving: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11



Date: _____

Step 1- Read in the presence of Jesus

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Step 2- Meditate with Jesus

1. What does it mean to *sow generously*? What does it mean to *reap generously*?

2. How does God meet our needs? Why does He meet our needs? How comprehensive is God's provision for us?

3. What will be the result of our generous giving according to verses 10-11?

4. How would you describe your attitude in giving? Do you believe that if you sow generously that you will reap generously? Why or why not?

Step 3- Listen to Jesus

Step 4- Obey Jesus

“The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”

John 6:63b

Then Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

Luke 24:45

