

DISCOVERING

GALATIANS

EPHESIANS

PHILIPPIANS

COLOSSIANS

& PHILEMON

BIBLE STUDY AND QUIZZING FOR YOUTH

By Gene Sanford

DISCOVERING

Galatians, Ephesians,
Philippians, Colossians,
& Philemon



Discovering Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon

Bible Study for Youth and a Leader's Guide
By Gene Sanford

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USER'S GUIDE

**Discovering Galatians, Ephesians, Philip-
pians, Colossians, and Philemon** is best used
in a “Discovery Group” setting. A Discovery
Group is a group of youth committed to grow-
ing in God’s Word, meeting regularly for a set
period of time to study and share. The use of
Discovery Groups is described in more detail in
the next section of this guide. It also serves as a
great group study workbook for youth involved
in Bible quizzing.

Here are some guidelines to help facilitate your
use of *Discovering Galatians, Ephesians, Philip-
pians, Colossians, and Philemon*:

- This study is divided into 13 Study sessions,
and then the Bible quizzing. Each Group
Study lesson is written to take approximately
45-60 minutes. This Bible study is meant to
be only a part of a total session that includes
you and your youth sharing insights from
your personal study plus events and activities
of the week and ending with prayer. A meet-
ing of an hour to an hour and a half will pro-
vide adequate time for these components.
- Each Group Study session covers a specific
section of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians,
Colossians, and Philemon and also identifies
a key verse for you and your participants to
memorize.
- This leader’s guide gives you a complete ses-
sion plan for the entire Bible study portion of

your weekly meeting. Each session contains
the following elements designed to assist you
in your preparation and presentation.

TEACHING AIMS and **PERSPECTIVE**—these will
help you gain an understanding of the “main
points” of the lesson.

BIBLE BACKGROUND—this extensive section
will provide you with additional information
that will broaden your understanding of the
passage being discussed.

- The actual group study time is designed to
take place through the structure of the ses-
sion activities. After you’ve prepared yourself
through studying the Purpose, Perspective,
and BIBLE BACKGROUND, read through
the session activities to develop an under-
standing of what to expect from the coming
group study time. Make sure you understand
exactly what is intended to happen through
each activity; remember, also, that these ac-
tivities are here to assist you. Feel free to ad-
just them as necessary to fit your group envi-
ronment, resources, and/or time frame.
- Regarding the group activities, you will find
specific instructions that actually say, “Say,
...” or are printed in bold italics. This does
not mean that you must quote this informa-
tion word for word to your students. We’ve
included this material only as a guide for you
regarding what we recommend to be com-

municated to your group.

- Each session provides you with four activities; each one intended to bring your students into an encounter with the Scripture through a certain perspective. These activities are: Engage the Word, Explore the Word, and Live the Word. The session activities are intended to give you strong teaching options without neglecting your own creativity. Adapt and tailor the sessions to meet the individual needs and personalities of your group.

- Occasionally, you will find sections entitled “Terms/People to Know.” These brief sections will give word definitions, explanations about terms or people, etc. that will help your class members better understand the passage being studied.

- Students are encouraged to keep personal notebooks as they read and study during the next several weeks. During the group sessions, they will often be asked to reflect in writing. Encouraging each youth to have a “notebook-type” journal will keep you from having to provide blank notepaper each time.

The first place to start on your journey through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon is with the Word itself. Read through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon entirely before you begin your Bible studies. Then look through this leader’s guide and acquaint yourself with the contents.

GUIDE

TO DISCOVERY GROUPS

An effective small-group Bible study ministry for youth in the local church begins with Discovery Groups. Discovery Groups are important in: communicating acceptance, teaching by example, building personal relationships, modeling discipleship in a real-life setting.

There are many ways to start a Discovery Group in your church. The best way is to invite all of your youth to be involved. Use posters and promotional announcements beginning three or four weeks in advance to spread the word about the group. Personally contact those persons whom you feel would especially benefit from the study. Also, make personal contact with those whom you think will be involved in quizzing in the coming year, encouraging them to be involved in the group.

There are at least two ways to form a Discovery Group. One is to hand-pick those already strongly committed to becoming all God wants them to be. These hand-picked, highly motivated youth will usually respond more eagerly to discipling than others would. This approach to discipling is called for when a major purpose of the discipling is training for leadership, as in Jesus' training of the Twelve.

At the same time, every Christian needs to be discipled. Every Christian needs to belong to a warm, accepting fellowship that calls out the best in him. In the loving fellowship, the half-hearted disciple can begin to catch a vision of his

potential; he can taste the excitement of growth.

In many churches, all the youth will fit into a single small group. If you need more than one group, provide different groups for those with different levels of commitment. You may want to hand-pick a group for in-depth discipling, then provide other groups for those not yet ready for the intense commitment expected of the first group. Rather than dividing the youth arbitrarily, you may want to set specific conditions for membership in the more in-depth group. These conditions might include disciplines of attendance, spiritual journaling, Bible study, accountability, and so on.

Any Discovery Group member must have some level of commitment. An obvious minimum commitment is to attend the group regularly. To build mutual trust in the group, members have to get to know each other. If one group member drops in only occasionally, he will be a relative stranger to the rest of the group, at least at the level of sharing expected in the Discovery Group. The presence of a relative stranger will immediately reduce the trust level in the group, limiting the openness of sharing. Of course, some absences are inevitable. The needed commitment here is for each group member to make group attendance a very high priority so that attendance is regular. A discussion of the priority of group attendance can be helpful in the early weeks of the group.

What's the best time for a Discovery Group? Again, it depends upon your goals and the personality of your group.

How long should we continue the Discovery Group? As long as the youth involved can stay committed. There have been groups who continued year round. Once they finished the 13-week study, they worked chapter-by-chapter on other Bible books or started on a new workbook. It is generally best to run the group for 13 weeks. After the study has finished, there may be other youth who want to be a part of the Discovery Group who did not sign up before. If so, arrange for a leader for them. Some of the youth in the original group may want to continue, while others focus more on other activities. If you cannot continue to serve as leader, be sure another adult leader is there to carry on.

How do I facilitate the Discovery Group Bible study? To facilitate means to "make easy." A small-group facilitator, then, is a person who makes it easy for the group to relate. He or she

keeps the group moving, nudges it back on track when it starts to stray, encourages participation. The leader's role is to help group members discover for themselves what the scripture means, how they can apply it to their lives, and then encourage them to follow through with obedience. The group leader's role is not to be a resident authority who tells group members what the scripture means and how they are to apply it to their lives. He must resist the temptation to lecture.

The Discovery Group leader is not authoritarian but an authority. This authority, though, is a spiritual authority, flowing out of an authentic life. Youth follow this leader, not because they are forced to, but because of the kind of person the leader is.

This book has been created with the prayer that the Word of God will find a place in the heart and mind of you and your students so that you will all be equipped to be effective disciples of Jesus Christ in the midst of the contemporary pagan culture you face each day.

1 NO OTHER GOSPEL

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Galatians 1:1–2:21

KEY VERSE: “So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified” (Galatians 2:16b).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand that the events of Paul’s life qualified him to be the “Apostle to the Gentiles.”
2. Value the stand Paul took on behalf of Gentile believers.
3. Give thanks that the gospel is provided freely to all who believe.

PERSPECTIVE

Many youths read the pages of Scripture completely out of context, with no understanding of their historical, theological, or literary background. They approach a book such as Galatians as if it were written yesterday, in 20th century, where they live. Consequently, they are unaware of the impact that the great controversies, such as the issue of grace and law, have had on their spiritual heritage. Most youths are totally ignorant that if it were not for the incredibly courageous and Spirit-led stand that Paul

took on behalf of the Gentiles, most of us would probably be followers of some religion other than Christianity. Without an understanding of this historical/theological context, the rest of Galatians (indeed most of Paul’s writings) will be meaningless to them. This lesson seeks to give them an appreciation of their spiritual heritage.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Although one walks on dangerous ground when he or she begins ranking the books of the Bible in order of importance, it cannot be denied that the Book of Galatians has had a profound impact upon Christianity. R. A. Cole has declared that “Galatians is spiritual dynamite, and it is therefore almost impossible to handle it without explosions.” Indeed the book has had an explosive effect throughout the history of the Church. Tenney has written that “Christianity might have been just one more Jewish sect, and the thought of the Western world might have been entirely pagan had Galatians never been written.” It was primarily because of his study of this book that Martin Luther set in motion the events that led to the Protestant Reformation. It was a sermon on Galatians that brought peace to the heart of John Wesley.

The reason that Galatians is such a powerful book is that it is perhaps Paul’s strongest statement on the issue of grace vs. law. Although he addresses this primary theological principle in

all of his writings, the apostle seems to be most passionate about it in this letter. This book is also much more than any theological paper. It is a letter, a letter from a frustrated church founder to a district in trouble and, indeed, to the Church at large. It is a tool—or perhaps better, a weapon—with which the apostle fought a heresy which could have virtually choked the life out of the Christian Church before it even had a chance to live.

The Book of Galatians is addressed to “the churches in Galatia” (v. 2). Galatia was a territory in Asia Minor (now Turkey) which Paul visited on his first missionary journey, described in Acts 13--14. While there, he gained converts and established churches in the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

The first two chapters of Galatians form the letter’s introduction. For someone who is not familiar with Galatians (like most of your students), these chapters will seem strange, as if Paul starts in the middle of something. Indeed, he does. The Galatians, however, had no trouble understanding these chapters, because they themselves were in the middle of the same thing—a fierce battle over apostolic authority and the place of Gentiles in the Church.

One of the issues with which Paul struggled throughout his ministry was that of authority. The original 11 apostles were recognized without question as the leaders of the Early Church, with Peter, especially, assuming the role of primary leader. Acts 1:12-26 records that the Church elected a 12th apostle, Matthias, but we read nothing else about him in the pages of the New Testament.

When Paul came on the scene, it was clear that he was going to play a major role in the establishment of the Church, but he was not an apostle, at least not like the others. He had not

walked with the Savior. He had not heard the Savior’s sermons nor been privy to His private instruction. He had not been present at Jesus’ arrest, crucifixion, or resurrection.

But, in a life-changing moment on the road to Damascus, Paul encountered the living Christ. And that event, for Paul, amounted to a calling to apostleship. Frequently in his writings, Paul reminds his readers that it was God, not other men, who called him.

However, since Paul was something of a radical (as are most visionaries and pioneers), he had a lot of enemies. Some were pagans, some were Jews, and some were Christians. Those who were Christians exploited doubt about Paul’s apostleship in their battles with him.

Apparently this was going on in Galatia. A good portion of these first two chapters is designed to establish Paul’s apostolic right to speak authoritatively. His apostolic authority was important so that his message would be received as authentic.

Establishing himself as an apostle is only the groundwork for Paul’s main argument in Galatians. Those who were demeaning Paul’s authority were doing so to further a campaign which almost cost the Church its life. These people were “Judaizers,” Christians who insisted that Gentile converts to Christianity become Jews by being circumcised and continuing to obey the Jewish law. This in effect made Christianity a sect or branch of Judaism.

Paul’s argument throughout his ministry was that while Christianity had its roots in Judaism, God’s plan was for the gospel to be taken to the world. Paul saw circumcision and obedience to the Law as unnecessary burdens placed on the shoulders of new Christians (Acts 15:10). He fought for the right of Gentiles to become

Christians without first becoming Jews. Acts 15 and Galatians 2 recount some of this battle.

While a simple understanding of the issue of grace vs. law is necessary for this lesson, the theological aspects of that discussion will be reserved for the next lesson. The purpose of this lesson is to create a historical context and help your students understand that the Book of Galatians is relevant to them not just because they are Christians, but because they are Gentile Christians.

ENGAGE THE WORD

I'm A Gentile, You're A Gentile!

In order to make the message of Galatians relevant and personal to your youth, they must understand the historical context of the Gentile/Judaizers conflict. And in order to make that context relevant and personal to your students, they must first get a clear understanding that they are Gentiles.

Ask your students to answer the following questions on piece of paper or on a copy of the handout. Probably, all of your students will score 20. But that's a pretty low score. Ask them whether their low scores indicate that they aren't religious, that they don't believe the Bible, or that they don't respect God's laws. You can "play" with them for a little while, until they make it clear that they don't obey these laws because they aren't Jewish. (You might also point out that even modern Jews themselves don't obey many of these laws literally.)

To make the point clearer, ask them to complete section 2, which concerns national heritage. Many of them will want to check more than one nationality. That's fine. Many of them will consider themselves of some national origin not listed. That's fine. Some students might even

point out that one can be Jewish and one of the other nationalities as well, since Judaism transcends national borders. That is true, but does not spoil the point being illustrated.

Then ask your students to complete section 3, which concerns religion. Your students will probably all check "Christian."

At this time introduce to them the word "Gentile." Explain that the word applies to anyone who is not of Jewish race or religion. Explain that everyone in the classroom, regardless of their ethnic heritage, is a Gentile. (Again, we are assuming that they are all Gentiles. If you have students of Jewish heritage, make the proper adjustments.)

1. As you are well aware, the first two-thirds of your Bible is called the Old Testament. In the Old Testament are many laws, some of which I will read. Raise your hand as to whether you and your family follow these laws "always," "sometimes," or "never."

Always/Sometimes/Never

_____ You shall not murder (Exodus 20:13).

_____ You shall not eat pork (ham, bacon, and sausage) (Leviticus 11:7).

_____ Rebellious children shall be stoned to death (Deuteronomy 21:21).

_____ You shall not steal (Exodus 20:15).

_____ You shall not eat lobster (Leviticus 11:10).

_____ You shall sew tassels on the four corners of your undershirt (Deuteronomy 22:12).

Give yourself 10 points for every “Always” answer, 5 points for “Sometimes” answer, and 0 points for every “Never” answer.

85—100 Big Time Religious

70—84 Sort of Religious

55—69 Slightly Religious

0—54 Not Religious At All

2. What is your race/nationality/ethnic origin?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> French |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek | <input type="checkbox"/> American
Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slavic | <input type="checkbox"/> Latin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nordic | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Conclude this portion of the lesson by pointing out that when the New Testament refers to Gentiles, many times we forget that it is referring to us. This is especially important as we begin our study of the Book of Galatians.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Book of Galatians! Big deal, you’re probably saying. “Isn’t it one of those mi-

nor books that does not mean much? After all, it’s only six chapters long! How important can it be?”

Well, let’s look at what some authors and Biblical scholars have said about this “minor” book:

- “Galatians is a dangerous book” (Warren Wiersbe).
- “The Epistle to the Galatians is spiritual dynamite, and it is therefore almost impossible to handle it without explosions” (R. A. Cole).
- “Christianity might have been just one more Jewish sect, and the thought of the Western world might have been entirely pagan had Galatians never been written” (Merrill C. Tenney).
- “Galatians declares with sparkling clarity the central message of grace in the New Testament” (Donald Bastian).

“Hmmm . . . must be something to this little book!” You’re right! This is one of the most important books in the New Testament, because in this book Paul makes some of his strongest statements about grace, freedom from law, and Christian liberty. Indeed, Galatians has been called the “Magna Carta of spiritual liberty” and the “Christian Declaration of Independence.” It was primarily his study in this book that fueled Martin Luther to begin the process that led to the Reformation and the Protestant movement.

The old saying, “Good things come in small packages,” is really true for this book. It’s powerful, but it’s short. So short, in fact, that you can read it all in about half an hour. A challenging way to really dig into this book is to read it completely through frequently--at least once a week, maybe even every day--while you’re studying it. “Boring?” Well, maybe the first time or two, but then it really begins to get into your mind, and

each reading becomes like a search for hidden treasure. You'll be amazed at what pops out at you each time you read through these six chapters.

As you read, you might want to make the following marks in the margin of your Bible:

- Put a “?” by any section you don't understand.
- Put a “!” by any section that encourages or inspires you.
- Put a “*” by any section that gives you new insight.
- Then, when you come to these sections later in this study, you can give them closer attention.

2. No Gospel at all (1:1-10)

In Acts 13 and 14, we read of Paul's first missionary journey through Asia Minor, where he preached the gospel and established new churches. Much of this trip was spent in a territory known as Galatia. In Acts 13:13–14:23 we read how Paul established churches in the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. At the end of his missionary tour, Paul revisited each of these baby churches, “strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith.” Then he “appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord” (Acts 14:22–23).

Now, however, something had gone wrong. He had instructed the new Christians in Galatia to remain true to the faith, but now the apostle is “astonished” that they are already “deserting” his message and “turning to a different gospel” (Gal. 1:6).

Paul is upset--to put it mildly. And he lets his readers know right up front, at the top of the

letter, that this is something that must be dealt with.

If you have never read Galatians before, the first 10 verses are like the introduction to a mystery story--we know that “something is amiss” but we don't know what yet.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In verse 1, Paul seems to be working hard to establish himself as an apostle, a legitimate authority figure. Compare this verse with verse 10. Do you get the feeling that something strange may have been happening in Galatia? What do you think it was?

2. If you haven't done so already, read quickly through Acts 13:13--14:23, noting especially 13:38-39. How would you summarize the message Paul preached in Galatia during his missionary tour there?

3. Read Galatians 1:7 carefully. This is a major clue. What seems to have been going on?

3. Paul's Spiritual Autobiography, Part I (1:11-24)

Wow! That last section was something of a mystery, wasn't it? But now, just when we're really anxious to find out what is going on in Galatia to make Paul so upset, he seems to take a strange detour. Suddenly, in the next several verses, Paul is telling us his life story!

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Compare verses 13-24 with Acts 9. Acts 9 has been labeled by one author as “Changing the Leopard’s Spots.” Why is that an appropriate title?

2. Read verses 1 and 10 once again and put them together with verses 11-12. If you read “between the lines” of these verses, you may begin to figure out why Paul launches suddenly into this autobiographical section. Paul is evidently trying to prove something about himself. What do you think Paul is trying to prove?

3. Paul seems to be bragging in verse 24. Do you think he is, or is there something else he is trying to do?

4. Paul’s Spiritual Autobiography, Part II (2:1-10)

In these verses Paul continues summarizing the story we have read in the Book of Acts. Now he is talking about the Jerusalem Council described in Acts 15. In that council, the Jerusalem leaders faced probably the biggest question in the first century of the Church: Do Gentiles (non-Jews) have to become Jews before they can become Christians? The Church was divided over this question. The “catchword” for the controversy was “circumcision,” a medical term for a simple surgical procedure performed on infant males. Because this procedure was originally commanded by God to separate the Hebrews from their pagan neighbors, it became the

symbol of being a Jew. But the argument wasn’t just over this minor surgery. The surgery merely represented the entire Hebrew religious culture—all the laws, rituals, feast days, sacrifices, and other elements of the Jewish faith.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Read Acts 15:1-35 and summarize what happened at the Jerusalem Council.

2. Compare Acts 15:1 with Galatians 1:7-8 and 2:4. The people that Paul is talking about have been frequently called “Judaizers.” What seems to be their primary goal?

3. Remembering that most of us are “Gentiles” (if we aren’t members of the Jewish race), what do you think is important about the conclusion of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)?

5. Paul’s Spiritual Autobiography, Part II (2:11-21)

In this section, Paul describes an incident not recorded in the Book of Acts. This incident apparently occurred some time after the Jerusalem Council described in Acts 15. At that Council, as we have discovered, the leadership of the Church decided that a Gentile (non-Jewish) believer did not have to be circumcised to be a Christian. (Remember that “circumcision” not only referred to a minor surgical procedure, but

also symbolized the entire Jewish legal code.)

After agreeing to that decision, Peter must have been influenced by the Judaizers (v. 12), because he began to instruct Gentile believers to be circumcised. At a face-to-face meeting in Antioch, Paul accused Peter of being hypocritical.

Have someone read these verses out loud to the class and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In verses 15, 16, and 21, Paul strongly states what the essence of the gospel is to him. Restate these verses in your own words.

2. If these verses capture the gospel for Paul, what do you suppose is the “different gospel” to which Paul refers in 1:6-9?

3. These first two chapters are really just the introduction of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Given what you have studied so far, what do you guess will be the theme of the rest of the letter?

LIVE THE WORD

Justified by Faith

Begin bringing this lesson to a close by asking one of your students to read aloud today’s Key Verse (Gal 2:16b).

Encourage your students to think about how their individual lives have been affected by Paul’s determination to share the gospel message with Gentiles, reminding them once again that they most likely fall into this category. Help direct their thinking toward what it truly means to each of them to understand the difference between being justified “by the law” and being justified “through faith.”

Close with a prayer thanking God for His open invitation to each of us to enter into a relationship with Him. Pray that God will continue to bless your group of students as this study group continues over the coming weeks.

2 SONS OF GOD

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Galatians 3:1–4:31

KEY VERSE: “Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law” (Galatians 3:25).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Realize that faith, not deeds, is the prerequisite for God’s gracious gift of salvation.
2. Be thankful for God’s gift.
3. Place their reliance for salvation in grace alone.

PERSPECTIVE

Today’s Christians certainly do not struggle with the issue that was upsetting the Galatians—whether to become Jews as well as Christians. We do not labor under bondage to Old Testament laws and rituals. But we do fight a battle with our own legalistic yokes. Many youths, especially those who have grown up in the church, continue to look to deeds and actions to earn favor with God. They have difficulty understanding and accepting the concept of grace. This lesson helps them explore the nature of their dependence on deeds and learn to trust God’s grace.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

After the introductory remarks in the first two chapters of Galatians, Paul now moves into the heart of the letter, the doctrinal section. And he moves with speed and passion: “You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?” (3:1).

In the previous chapters, we have been given a brief historical overview of the “Gentile problem” that the first century Church faced. Through the Spirit-blessed work of Paul and his colleagues, the Church was being flooded with converts to Christianity from pagan religions. When we remember that the Church was born in (or out of) Judaism and that all of its early leaders were Jewish by race and by religious tradition, it is a bit easier for us to understand why this Gentile influx was a problem. Some among the leadership were convinced that these new believers must become Jews at the same time they become Christians, adhering to such Old Testament laws as circumcision, eating restrictions, and holy days.

Other leaders, however, especially Paul, already recognized that Christianity was going to be a religion dependent upon but entirely separate from Judaism. They saw Old Testament legalism as a yoke of bondage to these new converts (Acts 15:10).

Paul, the great theologian of Christianity, also recognized that the new covenant was one

of grace, not merit. The old covenant, while having a foundation of grace, had long since become a “point-keeping” system. Under the old covenant, favor with God was earned by keeping rules. Paul recognized that the basis of the new covenant was faith in God’s unmerited favor.

This gospel of faith, grace, and free salvation was the gospel Paul had preached to the churches in Galatia on his first missionary journey. It was under that preaching that the Galatians had believed and had become Christians.

But now, as Paul has stated in the first chapter, “people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ” (1:7). These “people” were the Judaizers, persuading the Galatians to submit to circumcision and obey the other ritual laws of the Old Testament.

In chapters 3 and 4, Paul uses six types of argument to prove to his readers that the way of grace is superior to the way of law.

1. The Experience Argument (3:1-5). Paul reminds the Galatians of their experience of salvation when they were first converted under his ministry: “Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?” (v. 2).
2. The Scriptural Argument (3:6-14). Paul next appeals to Old Testament scripture. Abraham, who was made righteous in God’s sight before the Law was given to Moses, was obviously justified by faith.
3. The Logical Argument (3:15-25). The next argument is a typical rabbinical argument, difficult for us to follow. Its key is verse 17, which proves that the way of grace is superior to the way of the Law because it is older. But to ward

off those who might accuse Paul of doing away with the Law altogether, he shows that the Law did have a place historically in the plan of salvation. It served as a “schoolmaster” (v. 24, KJV) or “guardian” (JB) until the people were mature enough to understand grace.

4. The Family Argument (3:26--4:7). In these verses Paul shows that those who believe in Christ are, through faith, children of God and heirs of the kingdom.

5. The Personal Argument (4:8-20). Here Paul reveals his great concern for the Galatians. In very moving and personal terms, the apostle pleads with the Galatians to remain true to the gospel he taught them.

6. The Allegorical Argument (4:21-31). Paul uses the Old Testament story of Hagar and Sarah to allegorize the conflict between law and grace. The Law is like Ishmael, son of the slave woman, Hagar; grace is like Israel, son of the free woman, Sarah.

For us today, the legalistic codes of the Old Testament are not the problem. We are not tempted to begin obeying the dietary instructions or celebrating the ritual feasts of Leviticus. We, however, have created our own legalistic structures, to which our youths are heirs. Reliance on those structures for salvation is as deadly and burdensome as reliance on the Old Testament Law. In this lesson, we will explore some of that legalism. It may perhaps be a challenge for some of us to separate compliance with the accepted standards of a particular group or culture from reliance upon those standards for salvation. Trust the Holy Spirit for guidance through this lesson.

ENGAGE THE WORD

Saved!

This activity is designed to help your youths begin thinking about the things on which they depend to earn their salvation. Explain that they begin with 100 points and lose points each time one of the statements applies to them.

- Subtract 90 points if you've murdered anyone.
- Subtract 75 points if you've robbed a bank.
- Subtract 50 points if you've beaten up an old lady.
- Subtract 40 points if you've been drunk in the last year.
- Subtract 30 points if you've smoked a cigarette in the last year.
- Subtract 20 points for each time you've lied to your parents in the last month.
- Subtract 15 points for each time you've missed church or Sunday School in the last month.
- Subtract 5 points for each time you've forgotten to have your devotions in the last month.
- Subtract 3 points for each time you've lost your temper in the last month.
- Subtract 1 point for each time you've had a bad attitude in the last month.

After your students have finished the list, explain to them that the grading scale is this:

100 points = salvation

0-99 points = no salvation

Obviously, no one in your group will be saved! But that's the point. As Paul says, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law" (Galatians 3:10). In other words, if we are depending upon a legalistic structure for our salvation, we have to obey all the laws. If we disobey any of them, we're doomed.

If you prefer an active exercise, ask all of your students to stand. Then change the statements to read like this: "Sit down if you've murdered anyone. Sit down if you've robbed a bank," and so on. On the last six statements, just leave out "each time" so that your statement is, "Sit down if you've forgotten to do your devotions this month," and so on. By the last statement, you should have no one left standing. You might have fun by saying something like, All right, all of you still on your feet get to go to heaven. The rest of you, better luck next life!

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. You Foolish Galatians! (3:1-14)

Obviously, Paul is really upset. Somebody has been “bewitching” the Galatians! Somebody has been telling them that in order to gain favor with God they have to keep the Old Testament law. Paul, in some of his most passionate writing, has to persuade them that salvation has nothing to do with good deeds. We don’t earn salvation; it is a gift from God.

He uses his first two arguments in this passage. In verses 1-5, he uses an experience argument. In verses 6-14, he uses a scriptural argument.

Have the class read through these 14 verses and then answer these questions:

1. If you could sum up Paul’s attitude in one word, what would it be?
2. In this passage, Paul is contrasting two things. What are they?
3. In verses 1-5, Paul reminds them of their personal experience of salvation. What is his point?
4. In verses 6-14, Paul quotes from six Old Testament passages. Read Genesis 15:6; 12:3; Deuteronomy 27:26; Habakkuk 2:4; Leviticus 18:5; and Deuteronomy 21:23. Now identify these scriptural quotations in Galatians 3:6-14.

2. Standing on the Promise (3:15–4:7)

In 3:15-25, Paul uses a logical argument to show the superiority of faith and grace over the Law. This gets pretty complicated, so spend a little time on it. In 3:26-4:7 Paul uses a family argument.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In verses 15-18, Paul notes that the way of grace is older than the way of law. The key to this argument is verse 17. Can you put this verse into your own words?
 2. Just in case someone might get the idea that Paul thinks the law is worthless, he continues by explaining its purpose in history. Verse 24 is the key to this argument. Its meaning is somewhat hidden in the NIV. The phrase translated there as “the law was put in charge” is translated in other versions like this:
 - “the law was our schoolmaster” (KJV)
 - “the Jewish laws were our teacher and guide” (TLB)
 - “the Law was like a strict tutor” (Phillips)
 - “the Law was to be our guardian” (JB)
- With these various versions helping you understand this verse, what do you think was Paul’s point?
3. How does someone become a son of God (v. 26)?

4. Compare 4:1-3 with 3:23-24.

3. The Apostle Pleads (4:8–20)

Now Paul moves to the most intimate of his arguments, a personal argument. Here we see the real heart of the apostle. He is on his knees, pleading with the Galatians to give up their foolishness.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What one word would you use to describe Paul's attitude in these verses?

2. What does Paul mean by “weak and miserable principles” (v. 9)?

3. In verse 17, Paul refers to “those people.” Who is he talking about?

4. Hagar and Sarah (4:21–31)

Now Paul concludes this section with an allegorical argument. He uses an incident out of the Old Testament as an allegory (a symbolical story) to finish this theological discussion. Read this passage and then answer these questions:

1. Read Genesis 16:1-16 and 21:1-21. Summarize these Old Testament passages.

2. In Paul's argument, what do these two Old Testament women and their sons represent?

3. In chapters 3 and 4, Paul has used six arguments to contrast salvation by grace through faith with salvation by obeying the law. Has he convinced you? Do you think he convinced the Galatians?

After your youths have responded to this question, you will probably need to spend a few moments supplementing their understanding with material from the Bible Background above. Make sure that they first understand the conflict between Paul and the Judaizers over Gentiles keeping the Law. Then help them to understand the difference between salvation by merit (works, keeping the Law, obeying the rules) and salvation by grace (a free gift, regardless of merit, activated by faith). Finally, explain to them that the law/grace conflict still exists. It is no longer about circumcision and the Old Testament rituals, but it concerns any legalistic structure, any set of rules, or any kind of “point-keeping” system that we may be relying on to earn God's favor.

LIVE THE WORD

Nothing You Can Do

Ask your students to be quiet for a moment, perhaps closing their eyes so they can concentrate on what you are about to say. Then read to them the following poem:

“There is nothing you can do—

no deed of devotion, no heroic

act, no kindness, no sacrifice, nothing—

that will make God love you one single, tiny bit more than He loves you right at this moment.

There is also nothing you can do—

no heinous crime, no act of violence, no improper attitude, no impure thought, nothing—

that will make God love you one single, tiny bit less than He loves you right at this moment.”

Allow a few moments of silence for the meaning of the poem to sink in. The only requirement that God has for you to be declared righteous, holy, and pure in His sight is that you believe and accept His gracious gift of salvation.

Ask your students this question: What things—deeds, actions, attitudes, rules—have you been depending on to earn God’s acceptance? Do not ask them to respond aloud. They should either write their response privately, or just keep their thoughts silently to themselves. Encourage them to take this question seriously. Is there anything they are doing just to earn God’s acceptance?

Finally, ask them this question: Can you trust Him right now to accept, love, and save you without any of those things? If you feel that the timing is right, you might wish to have an evangelistic conclusion to your lesson, explaining the way of salvation to your class and giving them an opportunity to respond. You might consider asking your pastor to join you for this lesson so that he can guide these last few moments.

However you proceed, conclude the lesson with a prayer of thanksgiving for God’s free and gracious gift.

3 LIVE BY THE SPIRIT

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Galatians 5:1–6:18

KEY VERSES: “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand that good deeds that follow and are in response to salvation are indications of spiritual growth.
2. Desire to express their gratitude and commitment to God through exhibiting the law of love and the fruit of the Spirit.
3. Begin using the law of love and the fruit of the Spirit as spiritual measuring sticks.

PERSPECTIVE

OK, fine! Paul has made his point. Now we have removed all the rules, laws, and legalistic structures from our lives. Now what? Are we to live without any kind of guidance? Is it everyone for himself or herself?

Youths need to understand that salvation by grace and not by merit does not do away with standards of conduct nor discount the benefit of good deeds. This lesson will help them to search for the balance between legalism and lawlessness and to find the proper place for good deeds in their lives.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

As Paul moves into chapter 4, one gets the impression that he knows he has won his argument. His confidence is probably not so much in his power of persuasion but in the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the Galatians’ receptivity to truth.

Chapters 5 and 6 have the tone of “Now, since we are agreed on this doctrinal matter, let’s see how it works out in real life.”

In 5:1-15 Paul is encouraging the Galatians to celebrate their freedom in Christ and to be on their guard against any further encroachment. He also sums up the Old Testament Law in one commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (5:14; compare with Matthew 22:35-40).

In these verses Paul also introduces an idea which he will expand upon in 5:16--6:10. This idea may be best explained by the old illustration that truth is the narrow path between two ditches. The ditch on one side, legalism and salvation-by-works, is what the first four chapters of the letter have dealt with. But there is a ditch on the other side, too—the ditch of antinomianism, or lawlessness. Just because the Law cannot save, that doesn’t make it worthless. Just because we cannot earn salvation through good deeds, that does not mean we should not value such deeds. Just because God justifies us freely through grace and through no merit of our

own, that does not mean that we should have no merit.

Good deeds do not earn salvation. They have no merit to salvation. However, the change that occurs in our lives when we receive the gracious gift of salvation should result in good deeds. Said another way, the natural response to salvation should be a changed life, a life that reflects the commandments of God.

Perhaps an illustration will help here. If a man loves his wife, he will be faithful to her, not because marital fidelity is the rule, but because his love causes him to want to be faithful. He doesn't earn his wife's love by being faithful, but his fidelity is a response to her love.

In 5:16-26, Paul gives perhaps the best explanation of this concept. One who lives by the Spirit will naturally exhibit the "fruit of the Spirit" (vv. 22-23). The "acts of the sinful nature" (vv. 19-21) will have no part in the believer's life because they are "contrary to the Spirit" (v. 17). If you are following Paul carefully and fully understand what he is saying, you might summarize by saying that when a person is being led by the Spirit, one can do whatever he or she wants to do. (Because, one will want to do only the things that the Spirit leads him or her to do.)

Although there is not enough space here for a full examination of the separate elements in the two lists in 5:19-23, it would be wise to spend a few minutes in a Bible dictionary or commentary studying these lists before class.

ENGAGE THE WORD

King Nomos of Kosmos

Find someone in your church—even one of your youths—who knows how to tell a good

fairy tale. Ask that person to be prepared to tell the story printed here. It's a silly story, so your story teller should have fun with it.

Once upon a time, in a land called Kosmos, a very strict and harsh man, King Nomos, ruled. He had laws for everything. Laws about how to eat breakfast, laws about how to shave, laws about how to drive a car, laws about how to talk on the telephone, laws about how to earn money, laws about how to spend money, laws about how to treat animals, laws about how to treat animal-like little brothers, laws about how to trim toenails, laws about . . . well, you get the picture.

Each year, the citizens of Kosmos became more and more frustrated with King Nomos and his laws. Living in Kosmos was like being in jail! There was no freedom, no creativity, no breathing room!

One day the citizens decided they'd had enough. They elected a leader named Antinomos who threw King Nomos in prison and abolished all the laws in the land. The people rejoiced! The people celebrated! And, the people soon found themselves in absolute chaos!

Without the laws of King Nomos, the people drove their cars in whatever manner they chose. Men and women quit their jobs and began stealing from each other. Children treated their pets (and their little brothers) with cruelty. And no one was trimming his or her toenails right!

Then one day a very wise man named Sophos came to Kosmos. When he saw the chaos and discovered what had caused it, he called all the people together.

"You, my friends, are like a man leading a donkey along a narrow path between two deep

ditches. If his donkey falls in the ditch on the left, the man will pull the animal out and walk as far from the left as possible. However, if he walks too far from the left ditch, the donkey will fall in the ditch on the right. He must find the way between the ditches.”

When they heard Sophos, the people of Kosmos realized the error of their ways. They threw Antinomios in prison with King Nomos and then began the process of deciding which rules were reasonable and necessary.

Finally peace and tranquility reigned in Kosmos.

After the story, ask your youths the following questions, but don't expect good answers at this point. Don't reward those who give "correct" answers and don't challenge those who give "incorrect" answers.

So far in Galatians, Paul has argued against the Law. Do you think he means that laws should be thrown out and Christians should act however they feel like acting? How can we avoid chaos without being legalistic?

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Called to be Free (5:1-15)

If living under the "yoke" of the Law is being in prison, as Paul has said (3:23), then living under grace is being free. In this section Paul says to the Galatians, "Celebrate your freedom!"

Read these verses and then answer the following questions:

1. In verses 2 and 3 Paul is not saying that anyone who has had the minor surgery of circumcision is under the burden of the law. (Circumcision

is a common procedure in many parts of the world for health and cultural reasons.) Remember that the act of circumcision held a symbolic meaning for the Jews. What is Paul really saying in these verses?

2. What is the point Paul is trying to make in verses 7-12?

3. Someone once said that truth is like walking a narrow path between two ditches. If laboring under a legalistic system and trying to earn salvation is one ditch, what is the other one? (See v. 13).

4. Read verses 6b and 14. What is one law that Paul thinks a Christian should obey?

2. The Fruit of the Spirit (5:16-26)

This section is one of the best known in all of Paul's writings. It serves as a balancing pole for the tight-rope walker who is trying to avoid the ditch of legalism on one side and the ditch of antinomianism on the other. (Antinomianism is a big word that means living without rules altogether.)

After reading these verses, answer these questions:

1. What is the "antidote" for living under the law (v. 18)?

2. You might find it instructive to read verses 19-21 out of several versions. Look up any of the words you don't understand. After all that Paul has said about avoiding a legalistic structure, doesn't he just turn around and spout off another list of rules here? Read verses 16-17 again. How does this list differ from a legalistic list of "no-nos"?

3. If you haven't already, memorize verses 22-23a. Use them as a daily checklist—not for "keeping score" of your spirituality or racking up "goodie points" so God will love you, but as a measuring stick for your spiritual growth

3. To Have And To Hold (7:1–6)

Paul has finished saying what he needed to say in this letter. He's made his arguments, convinced his readers, and wrapped up his doctrinal thesis. Now he is listing a few "don't forget" items--almost like a "P.S." or an extra mini-sermon thrown in at no extra charge.

Read through these verses and then answer these questions:

1. If someone really wants a law to live by, Paul gives us two. The first he has discussed in 5:6b and 5:14. The second law is here, in verse 2. What is it?

2. Put verses 3-5 into your own words.

3. In verses 7-10 we have the "law of sowing and reaping." This is one of the "natural" laws of the universe. Like the law of gravity, we don't have to worry about obeying it. It works with or without our cooperation. Summarize this law in one sentence.

4. Following the custom of the day (and also because he probably had poor eyesight), Paul dictated all his letters to a scribe. In verses 11-18, he apparently takes the pen into his own hand to finish the letter with personal remarks. What sense do you get of the apostle's attitude as he concludes this letter?

LIVE THE WORD

"Law of Love"

This exercise discusses briefly the "Law of Love" as the guiding principle of the fruit of the Spirit and of the Spirit-led life. It, too, becomes a goal or a measuring stick to evaluate our spiritual growth.

The fact that "love" is the first fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 is no accident. Love is not simply just one of the nine fruits. Really, the other eight fruits are actually expressions of love.

Although Paul has little use for the Old Testament, he does instruct the Galatians to obey the "Law of Love":

- The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love (Galatians 5:6b).

- Serve one another in love. The entire law is summed-up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:13b-14).

As with the other eight fruits of the Spirit, love does not earn us God’s favor. Rather it is the result of God’s work in us.

Have your students list under each fruit one or two ways they can actively live out the “Law of Love” in their everyday lives.

Exercise spiritual sensitivity in deciding how to close this lesson. Invite them to ask God to show them what “fruits of the Spirit” need to be demonstrated more effectively in their lives. Let them know that God’s grace is sufficient—it is enough—and that He wants to help each person to bear the fruit of the Spirit. You may need to give students the opportunity to receive the free gift of God’s grace. You may need to discuss the work and activity of the Holy Spirit with your students who are already Christians. You may need to just be quiet and let the Holy Spirit do His work.

4 MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 1:1–2:22

KEY VERSE: “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved” (Ephesians 2:4-5).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Identify what God has done for them in Christ.
2. Value God’s work in their lives.
3. Thank and praise God for His work in Christ.

PERSPECTIVE

J. B. Phillips once wrote a book titled *Your God Is Too Small*, in which he explores the false concepts of God under which many people labor. Several of these false concepts include the idea that God is somehow against us and that He has to be talked into loving us, accepting us, redeeming us. Unfortunately, many youths have just such a concept of God. This lesson will help them realize that God’s activity in history--and even before--has been on our behalf. His goal in creation was to share with us the riches of His grace..

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Although Galatians and Ephesians came from the pen of the same apostle, they are two very different letters.

Galatians was written “in the heat of battle,” as Paul was fighting for the spiritual lives of his loved ones in Galatia. It is passionate, specific, and immediate.

Ephesians, however, was written years later, during Paul’s imprisonment in Rome (see Acts 28:16). Although addressed to the church at Ephesus, it was probably intended to be circulated around all the churches in Asia Minor (now Turkey). Because Paul is addressing no specific problem, it is more general and philosophical in nature than Galatians. But what it may lack in immediacy, it makes up for in richness.

The primary focus of this book is Christological, that is, a focus on the life and work of Christ. If you glance through its pages, you will see that the name of Christ is mentioned frequently. Probably because of the time Paul had for reflection and prayer while he was imprisoned, the book contains much wonderful devotional material. It is filled with praise and worship.

After the traditional greetings (vv. 1-2), Paul begins the book with a hymn of praise. Verses 3-14 actually comprise one sentence in the orig-

inal language. In it Paul speaks of God the Father (vv. 3-6), God the Son (vv. 7-12), and God the Holy Spirit (vv. 13-14). In a sense, Paul is listing the “job descriptions” of each member of the Trinity:

The Father has chosen us to be holy, pre-planned for us to be adopted as sons, and given us grace freely through Jesus Christ.

The Christ has redeemed us through His blood, forgiven our sins, and revealed to us the mystery of His will.

The Holy Spirit serves as the seal of our redemption, and the deposit or guarantee of our eternal inheritance.

The important thing to note here is that the initiative is all God’s. Out of His spiritual riches, He chose to share with us. Far too many of us labor under the false idea that we have to persuade God to forgive us. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Paul makes clear here. Our redemption was planned even before our birth, and all of God’s actions in history have been toward us and our redemption.

Paul follows this hymn of praise with a prayer for the believers. His prayerful wish is that those saints would be given the Spirit of wisdom in order to know God better. In the middle of this prayer, somewhere around verse 19 or 20, Paul forgets that he is praying and begins to preach about the authority and power of Christ.

The next section, 2:1-10, contrasts spiritual death with spiritual life. In 2:1-3, Paul describes the condition of spiritual death. This passage closely parallels the discussion of the sinful nature in Galatians 5. A dark picture is painted of the persons who are “by nature objects of wrath.”

Verse 4 begins with “But” --and an important

“but” it is. “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions” (vv. 4-5). Notice again that the activity is God’s, not ours. Redemption begins with God’s desire to redeem us.

In verses 5b and 8-10 we find repeated the theme we studied in Galatians, that we are saved by grace, not by works. Notice again the correct chronological placement of “good works.” Prior to salvation, they are meaningless. They in no way earn our redemption. But once we are saved, we are “created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (v. 10). The good works follow and are in response to God’s work in us.

The final section, 2:11-22, again reminds us of one of the themes we studied in Galatians, Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles. But rather than the passion and even perhaps anger that Paul exhibited in Galatians, here we find reflection and peace. The difference, of course, is that Paul wrote Galatians in the heat of battle, facing the real danger that the Church might refuse to accept Gentiles as believers. By the time he wrote Ephesians, however, the battle was over, and the Gentiles had been accepted as full citizens of the Kingdom. In this writing, the apostle gives total credit for that victory to Christ: “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” (v. 14).

ENGAGE THE WORD

On the Spot

This activity is a light-hearted look at a serious subject: the misconceptions about God that many people have. If you want to have fun with this, ask five of your youths in advance to mem-

orize the script and be prepared to present it to the group. Or, choose several students to simply read these parts aloud.

After the presentation of these interviews, ask your group to comment on what they have heard. Don't attempt to teach the lesson at this point, just listen to what your youths have to say.

Willard Spot

Willard Spot, TV's famous roving reporter, is at it again—conducting his “On the Spot” interviews somewhere close to the home-office in. He is stopping people on the sidewalk and asking, “What do you think God is like?” Let's join the broadcast . . .

WILLARD: Excuse me, sir. Could you tell our folks in TV-land what you think God is like?

FRANKLIN: Uh, let me think a minute. Oh, I've got it. I think God is like a lion tamer.

WILLARD: A lion tamer?

FRANKLIN: Yeah, you know, the guy that makes the big cats jump through hoops, and stands on a chair, and all that stuff. I think that's how God works. He's got all these hoops he wants us to jump through—and a long whip to keep us in line!

WILLARD: Well, thank you for your observation. By the way, do you spend a lot of time at the circus? Sir? Well, he's gone. Excuse me, madam, could I have a moment of your time?

MADELINE: A moment's all I've got, buster. Talk fast.

WILLARD: Well, actually it's you who will be talking. Can you tell us what you think God is like?

MADELINE: Boy, that won't take long, because

I've got his number. He's like the man I'm on my way to see right now, the loan officer at First National. I'm going to have to beg and plead and do cartwheels to get a penny out of the tightwad. And the whole time he'll be looking at me like I'm some insect that crawled under his door. Finally, after I've begged enough, he'll say, “I'll have to think about that for awhile. I'll be in touch.” If I'm lucky, I'll hear from him sometime this decade. If that's not how God works, I'll eat this loan application!

WILLARD: Bon appetite! Say, young man—yes, you with the baseball cap on. What do you think God is like?

TONY: That's easy man. He's like the Great Umpire in the Game of Life.

WILLARD: How so?

TONY: Well, you know, man. He watches all the plays, including the stuff going on behind Him. He's sharp, man--ready to catch some guy spitting on the ball, or putting pine tar on his bat—stuff like that. Then, when He catches the guy, He throws him out of the game. His biggest joy is when he gets to say, “You're outta here!”

WILLARD: Well, I can see where you spend your time. Thanks for the insight. I believe we have time for one more. Miss, excuse me. If you would just take those things out of your ears so you can hear me. There, that's better. Now, what do you think God is like?

HEATHER: Oh, wow! Like, am I on TV? That's awesome! What is God like? Well, I don't really know, not being acquainted with Him personally. But, I guess, He must be like my father. You know, like . . . there. Always present, but never really into what's going on. It's like he never recognizes your presence. If you want anything--just his attention--you have to nearly stand on

your head. It's like you need to make an appointment with his secretary. And if you want anything big—well, you can forget that. That's when he remembers all the little things you've done wrong--like not taking out the trash.

WILLARD: I see. I also see that we're out of time. Listen, give my regards to your father, OK? And, viewers at home, we're out of here. Until next week, this is Willard Spot, putting people "On the Spot."

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Overview

While you were studying Galatians, you probably got a sense of urgency, of immediacy, of specificity. Paul was writing to specific people at a specific location about a specific problem.

In the Book of Ephesians, however, you will get a totally different sense. Even though this book follows Galatians in the New Testament, it was written much later, while Paul was in prison in Rome (see Acts 28:16). Although the title of the book comes from Ephesus, a city in which Paul founded a church on his third missionary journey (see Acts 19:1-41 and 20:17-35), this letter was probably written to the "church-at-large" in Asia Minor. Because of its general nature, it tends to be more doctrinal or philosophical than Galatians, at least in the opening chapters

2. A Fountain of Spiritual Blessings (1:1-14)

Paul knows how to pack a lot of meaning into a short space. We could spend the rest of the year studying verses 3-14, which, by the way, are one long sentence in the original language. In these verses are some of the greatest theological truths in the entire New Testament. So don't rush through them. Have the class read these

verses and then answer these questions:

1. Verses 3-6 are about God the Father and His work on our behalf. Paul lists three things the Father has done for us. What are they?

2. Verses 7-12 are about God the Son and the blessings we have in Him. Again Paul lists three things we have through Christ. What are they?

3. Verses 13-14 are about God the Holy Spirit. Paul describes the Holy Spirit with two metaphors. Can you identify them?

4. Read verses 4, 5, and 11 together. Don't be thrown off by the word "predestined." There is a theological idea, accepted by some traditions, that God predestines certain people to be saved and others to be damned--and there isn't anything either group can do about it! That belief is frequently referred to as simply "predestination." But that's not what Paul is talking about here, is it? What is he saying in these verses?

5. Go through these verses and count how many times Paul uses the phrase "in Christ" or "in him." (You might want to keep a running tally of this phrase throughout the entire book.) What do you think the apostle means by this?

3. Paul Prays for us (1:15-23)

We should read all of Paul's letters as if they were addressed to us. This is especially true of Ephesians, given its general nature.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In verses 17-19a Paul prays for his readers, and for us. Twice Paul follows the same pattern: He prays for (_____) so that or in order that (_____). Find that pattern and complete the following:

- a. Paul first prays for:
- b. So that:
- c. Paul next prays for:
- d. In order that:

2. At some point in the middle of verse 19 or 20, Paul forgets that he is praying and starts preaching. (Does your pastor ever preach during his or her prayers?!) This is a “Christological” passage, meaning a passage that describes, defines, or lifts up Christ. What does Paul say about Christ in this passage?

4. From Death to Life (2:1-10)

In this section Paul contrasts spiritual death (vv. 1-3) with spiritual life (vv. 4-10). And what a contrast it is!

Have someone from the class read this section and then answer these questions:

1. Compare verses 1-3 with Galatians 5:17-21. What is Paul talking about?

2. Notice that the change from spiritual death to spiritual life is not the result of anything we have done, but rather because of God’s action (verses 4-5). What has God done?

3. Read verses 8-10. Does this sound familiar? How do these verses compare with what you’ve studied in Galatians?

5. United in Christ (2:11-22)

You will remember from our study of Galatians that Paul spent most of his life ministering to Gentiles (non-Jews). The recipients of this letter, consequently, would be predominately non-Jewish Christians. Think back about the controversy over Gentiles becoming Christians that was raging at the time Paul wrote Galatians. Then read these verses and answer these questions:

1. How is this discussion different from the discussion about the same issue in Galatians? How is the tone or attitude different?

2. To whom does Paul give the credit for reconciling the Gentiles with the Jews?

3. Remember that Paul is talking to you in these verses, especially if you are a Gentile (not of Jewish heritage). Read them again, perhaps substituting your name every time Paul writes “you,” and then record your feelings.

LIVE THE WORD

Love, Grace, and Mercy

This concluding activity focuses on the key to our receiving all that God has planned for us—our salvation. Have someone read aloud Ephesians 2:4-5. You can, of course, make this an evangelistic closing if you feel that would be appropriate. Otherwise, ask your students to express their appreciation for the spiritual wealth God has given them, beginning with their redemption and including the list of spiritual riches you identified in the previous activity. They can do this on paper, in a discussion format, in silent prayer, or in a group prayer with individual students offering sentence prayers.

Emphasize the goodness of God's grace and the power of His love. He truly does want the very best for our lives.

5 GROW UP INTO CHRIST

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 3:1–4:32

KEY VERSE: “From 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” (Ephesians 4:16).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Recognize that God’s design for the Church includes unity through maturity in Christ.
2. Desire to achieve unity.
3. Examine their own lives for ways they can contribute to unity in the Body of Christ

PERSPECTIVE

In Ireland, the Protestants have been fighting the Catholics for years—really fighting, with bullets and bombs. Is that any way for people who claim the name of Christ to behave? Is it any better in our country? We may not be fighting with deadly ammunition, but we’re fighting, nonetheless. And even within our own congregations, we often endure factions, schisms, and splits. What has gone wrong?

What has gone wrong is that we have forgotten that the Body of Christ is to be one body, unified under its Head, Jesus Christ. This lesson will help your youths understand the concept of

Christian unity and encourage them to work toward that goal

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Book of Ephesians falls naturally into two halves. The first half is doctrinal and philosophical. The second half is practical and specific. Because we have chosen to spend three lessons on this book, we find that dividing line in the middle of the passage we are studying in this lesson. But that helps us see the connection between the doctrinal and the practical.

At the end of chapter 2, Paul was talking about unity in the church—especially the unity between Jews and Gentiles. He begins chapter 3 by saying, “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—” and then he stops. He was about to say “. . . I kneel before the Father” (v. 14), but the word “Gentiles” reminded him of something else he wanted to say on that topic. He doesn’t return to his original thought until 13 verses later. So verse 1 must be read with verse 14, and the verses in between read as something of a big parenthesis.

We’ll start with this parenthetical section, 3:2-13. During Paul’s ministry he has realized that the whole idea of Gentiles being a part of the Church has been a “mystery” a truth not previously revealed. Paul understands that God

called him to be an apostle and missionary so that this truth would be revealed. Because of Paul's ministry in Asia Minor and Europe, the Church became international.

At verse 14, Paul resumes what he started to say in verse 1. He offers a prayer for his readers--and for us. He prays twice for power: power for faith and power for knowledge.

Verses 20 and 21 close the doctrinal section with a glorious benediction.

In chapter 4, Paul's thoughts turn more practical and more specific. One of his major concerns in all of his ministry has been the unity of the Church. With God's help, Paul almost single-handedly kept the Church from splitting apart during some of its most turbulent days. Paul points out the unity in all things spiritual: "one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" (vv. 4-6).

In this unity, however, is diversity, especially in tasks or offices. In verses 11-12, Paul lists some of those offices. But they all have one job--"to prepare God's people for works of service" (v. 12).

In 4:17-22, Paul talks about putting off the "old self" (v. 22) and putting on the "new self" (v. 24). Much like he described the "acts of the sinful nature" and the "fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5, here Paul is describing life before and after the redemptive encounter with Christ.

ENGAGE THE WORD

Letters from Abdul

In this activity a young exchange student from the Middle East writes home of his confusion about the plethora of Christian churches

in your country. Read this letter aloud to your students or ask one of them in advance to be prepared to read it.

Then ask your class the two questions printed after the letter. Let their responses help guide you as you lead the rest of the study.

Say, Abdul is a 17-year-old exchange student from the Middle East. He has been in our country for six months now, learning the language, adapting to the food, studying the culture. Being a Moslem, one of the things most difficult for him has been the religious culture.

He had been taught, of course, that there are many Christians here, with minority groups from other religious faiths, including his own. But something about this has bothered him. Let's be just a little bit nosy and read a section from one of his letters home.

One thing I have trouble with here is their religion. I was taught in school that many people here are Christians. That is true--I think. But it is very confusing. Some of them are Baptist Christians, some are Episcopalian Christians, some are Presbyterian Christians, some are Roman Catholic Christians, some are Nazarene Christians, and the list goes on and on. There must be at least a hundred different kinds of Christians. And they don't seem to get along too well with each other.

Each group has different buildings, different styles of worship, different hymnals, and even different beliefs--although they all claim to be Christian. And that's another funny thing. They all claim to be Christian, and yet many of them say that the others are not really Christian at all. If they're not Christian, what are they?

This is a confusing country!

- How would you explain this to Abdul?
- Do you think having different denominations and groups is the way God wants it?

Don't search for the "correct" answers yet. You'll continue dealing with this issue in the next two activities as well.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. It's a Mystery (3:2-13)

In this section Paul talks about a "mystery." By that he means a truth that had not been previously known. The revelation and explanation of this "mystery" was Paul's greatest gift to the Church.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What is the mystery?
2. Paul tells us that this mystery "was not made known to men in other generations." Why do you think this was so?
3. What benefit do we have because Paul was faithful to reveal this mystery, (v. 12)?

2. A Prayer for the Ephesians—and us (3:1, 14-21)

Do you ever start to say one thing, and then wind up saying something altogether different? Paul does that frequently. Here is a good ex-

ample. He starts off chapter 3 by saying, "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--" and then he just goes off on another thought without completing what he was going to say! Twelve verses later, he picks up his thought again, "For this reason I kneel . . ." (v. 14).

In this section Paul prays for the readers of his letter, which--don't forget--include us!

Have someone read this prayer and then answer these questions as a class:

1. What is "this reason" (vv. 1 and 14) that prompts Paul to pray for his readers? (Hint: Look back to what he said before chapter 3.)
2. Paul prays twice that his readers might have power (vv. 16-19). What is the purpose of this power?
3. The last two verses are a doxology, a blessing. Your pastor may even use these verses occasionally to end the church service. The first half of verse 20 is pretty important. Put it into your own words.

3. The Body of Christ (4:1-16)

This section is one of the most important sections for the church, because it says a lot about what the church should be--and what we should do to make it that way.

Read this section and then answer these questions:

1. Verse 3 is the key to this whole section. What is Paul urging his readers to do?

2. In verse 11 Paul lists some of the offices in the church, going on in verses 12 and 13 to explain what these men and women are to do. What is their primary task?

3. Notice in verses 14-16 Paul uses the metaphor of a child's body growing to maturity. Why is that a good illustration of the Christian life?

4. Read the last phrase of verse 16 with verse 2. What is our job in all this?

4. Put on the New Life (4:17–32)

The key to this section can be found in two phrases:

- “Put off your old self” (v. 22)
- “Put on the new self” (v.24)

It's as if Paul is telling us to trade in our old rags for a set of new clothes.

Read through this section and then answer these questions:

1. Paul gives us many characteristics of the “old self” in these verses. List those characteristics.

2. Paul also gives us attributes of the “new self.” List those attributes.

3. Are there any of the “old self” characteristics you are still wearing?

LIVE THE WORD

Blooming Where We're Planted

None of us, of course, can achieve global unity or even national unity. But we can work where we are, in our local congregations, to achieve unity among those around us. Ask your students to read 4:2-3. This is Paul's suggestion for achieving unity: humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

Have your students think of someone they know who demonstrates these traits. Then have your students discuss some specific things these people do that demonstrate these traits. Ask your students, How might these traits, especially when practiced by everyone, help to create unity in the church?

Close in a time of prayer, reflecting on Christ, who is the example of humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

6 BE IMITATORS OF GOD

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:1–6:24

KEY VERSE: “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:1-2).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Recognize that the sacrifices inherent in the Christian life are motivated by love and by God’s example, not by compulsion or by God’s demand.
2. Desire to exhibit God’s love through their own lives of sacrifice.
3. Seek for ways to express God’s love.

PERSPECTIVE

Anyone who claims that the Christian life is easy probably isn’t really living it. It is a life of discipline and sacrifice. If these ostensibly negative components of the Christian life are seen as mandates, or as ways to avoid punishment, or as responses to guilt, then the Christian life becomes burdensome and loathsome...as it indeed is for many youths.

But if discipline and sacrifice are seen as acts of love, freely accepted as a response to God’s example, then the Christian life becomes joyful and rewarding.

This lesson strives to challenge your youths with the call to the disciplined life of love.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Let no one say that understanding the mind of the apostle Paul is an easy matter! Just when you think you’ve got him cornered, he peels off another layer of understanding and eludes your grasp.

As you read Galatians and Ephesians (as well as his other books), one magnificent truth stands out in bold, capital letters: **WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, NOT BY WORKS!** There! Now we have Pauline thought in a nutshell! He is against rules, laws, and restraints. He rejoices in freedom, grace, and promise.

But just as we begin to feel confident in our understanding, the slippery apostle throws in a list of dos and don’ts, a catalogue of sins, or a description of a proper lifestyle as specific as the most conservative of legalists could desire. What is happening? Is Paul a closet legalist? Is he a theological schizophrenic?

No, he’s just deep. He’s a little tougher to read than the latest gothic romance. And un-

derstanding him takes a little more work than understanding the latest prime-time television show.

In the chapters we are studying in this lesson, Paul gets very specific, very practical, very down-to-earth. In doing so, it may appear that he also gets very legalistic. Our challenge is to explore these chapters without taking them out of their context, without violating the basic philosophical and theological principles Paul has worked so hard in Galatians and Ephesians to establish. That is no easy task.

It will help us if we first skim through these chapters and look for “flags” of thematic or theological thought that Paul gives us as guidelines. (Think of these like flags marking the holes on a golf course.) Identifying these flags will assist us in understanding the material in between.

For the sake of expediency, let’s list some of these flags:

- “Be imitators of God” (5:1).
- “Live a life of love” (5:2).
- “Live as children of light” (5:8).
- “Be careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise” (5:15).
- “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (5:21).

Each of these statements is positive, encouraging, and challenging. Nowhere is there a hint of coercion, threat, or demand. Paul upholds the Christian life as an ideal, a goal, a dream.

This is the same approach U.S. President John Kennedy used to challenge the youth of the early 1960s to give their lives in sacrifice for the “Camelot” he envisioned and helped them envision

as they flocked to sign up for the Peace Corps. This is the approach the military has used successfully to challenge young men and women to volunteer for service to their country. Inspiration has always attracted more followers than guilt.

Any good salesman, recruiter, or visionary knows that when an audience gets caught up in the excitement of the challenge, the first question they will ask is “What do I do?” And they do not ask that as a philosophical or rhetorical question. They mean “What do I do?”--specifically, observably, right now.

The material in these chapters is really a response to that question. Paul is not giving lists of dos and don’ts. He is not laying down rules and laws. He is giving examples of specific ways that those who desire to answer the call of love and sacrifice can exhibit their devotion.

A final thing to remember in looking at the specifics Paul gives in these chapters is that he is speaking to the redeemed, to those who have already responded to the call of grace. Just as no college basketball coach would attempt to force his or her training rules on the entire student body, it is unwise to attempt to force these specifics on those who have not yet answered the call to discipleship. While proper eating and sleeping habits would certainly be good for the entire student body, unless they were accepted as part of the exciting and rewarding challenge of being on a team, they would be drudgery for most students. Likewise, the sacrifices and discipline of the Christian life look pretty unappetizing to most non-Christians (especially, it seems, to youths reared in the church). We must be careful, then, not to force our “training rules” on others.

ENGAGE THE WORD

Training Rules

Many of your students will probably have been a part of an athletic team and will have known coaches like the two described here. Prior to your class session, ask three of your youths to study the radio interview and be ready to present it.

Obviously, the illustration here is about “training rules” and how they’re approached. When they’re just rules, given out with guilt trips or threats, they’re not very attractive and they make playing on the team pretty undesirable. However, when the rules are explained as part of the way to achieve a wonderful and inspiring goal—and when being on the team is an exciting thing—then the rules are embraced.

Without teaching the lesson at this point, make sure that your youths understand this illustration by discussing the questions printed at the end of the interview.

In the town of South Pass there are two secondary schools, Center High and Jackson High. Both schools have football teams.

At Center High, nearly every 9th grade guy aspires to be on the football (or basketball or baseball, whichever sport is popular in your area) team. The first day of practice is a madhouse, with everyone clambering to be noticed. It takes Coach Peak several weeks to cut the team to a manageable size. The day the cuts are posted, there are a lot of disappointed guys.

At Jackson High, however, Coach Bellows has real trouble getting anyone to come out for the team. He has to beg, plead, threaten, and even bribe guys to go out for football. Every year there’s doubt whether he’ll have enough athletes

to play the first game.

Alan Rockson, the DJ on the local radio station, is interviewing the two coaches prior to the football season, asking them about their techniques. Let’s listen in.

ALAN: Coach Peak, how do you get so many guys to come out for your team?

COACH PEAK: I really don’t know, Alan. At the orientation assembly, I just talk to them about what it’s like to be on a winning team. You know--how it feels to have teammates who love you and would do anything for you. The security of belonging to a group. The sense of accomplishment when you’ve done your best. I talk about holding your head up with pride because you belong to the greatest organization in the world. I talk about some of our former players who have become not only model athletes but also business and civic leaders. And I describe the incredible feeling of victory and reward when you overcome the obstacles.

ALAN: I understand from some of your players that you help your boys with more than just football. They say that you would do anything for them. I’ve even heard about how you have given up some of your weekends--after football season--to do stuff with them or to help them with their studies. Some of your former players credit you with changing their lives. Your players really idolize you, Coach.

COACH PEAK: Well, I really do love my players. They’re like sons to me. Maybe that’s why they work so hard for me.

ALAN: Well, now let’s bring Coach Bellows into the conversation. What about you, Coach? What do you talk about at orientation?

COACH BELLOWS: Well, I want to make sure

that those guys who are thinking about football know what they're getting themselves into. I tell them about our training rules: in bed every night by 10:00, lots of milk and vegetables, no junk food. I talk about how they're going to have to give up some of their social activities to be on the team. How they'll miss sitting down at the family table for dinner. How they'll have to get out of bed early for before-school drills. I warn them about the pain and injuries football players suffer. I let them know that playing football means making a lot of sacrifices! And I don't spend any time letting those kids think that just because they're on my team they are anything special to me. They're just pieces of meat for me to chop up!

ALAN: What about the ones who don't want to be on the team?

COACH BELLOWS: Those cowards who don't go out for the team should be ashamed of themselves--and I tell them so! They owe it to their school to play football. They're chickens and pansies if they don't play. And they don't really appreciate all our hard work if they don't support us by following our training rules.

ALAN: Coach Peak, do you have training rules?

COACH PEAK: Sure, but we talk about the rules only after the boys have caught the vision of being a team player and a winner. Once that happens, they don't care how much it costs--they want to taste the victory and pride. They are willing to make sacrifices for the sake of their teammates and themselves. When they see the goal, they'll pay the price.

ALAN: Do you ever suggest that people who don't go out for the team should feel guilty or should follow your training rules just because the rules are "good for them"?

COACH PEAK: Oh goodness, no. What would be the point? Those training rules are for athletes, not for others. Sure, the rules would be good for the others, but who wants to follow rules like that when you aren't part of the team? Why be so disciplined when you can't participate in the victory?

ALAN: Well, I guess that just about sums it up. We'll leave it to our listeners to decide why so many guys want to play for Coach Peak's Center High team and so few want to play for Coach Bellows' Jackson High team.

- Any clues why Coach Peak recruits more players than Coach Bellows?

- Is Coach Peak being untruthful with his players?

- Is Coach Bellows being untruthful with his players?

- Which team would you rather be on? Whose training rules would you rather follow? Why?

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. **Darkness vs. Light (5:1-20)**

It is always tricky when we encounter a passage that has a list of dos and don'ts in it--especially when reading Paul's letters. He makes such a strong case in all of his writing against legalism that it would do him a real disservice to treat such a passage as a list of rules. But how else can we treat it, other than ignoring it com-

pletely. Let's read these verses and find out.

After you've read this section as a class, answer these questions:

1. Read verses 1, 2, 8, 15, and 16 together. Perhaps these verses provide a framework or overview of everything else in this section. If so, what do these verses say?

2. Now read verses 9-14 and 17 together. These verses provide a secondary framework. What do these verses say?

3. The first group of verses gives Paul's philosophical framework: He wants us to live godlike lives, full of love, light, and wisdom. The second group gives Paul's secondary framework: We can best serve God by understanding His will. Given this background, how should we read the list in verses 3-7 and 18-20? Should they be read as a list of rules and laws, or as a list of examples? What is the difference?

4. Now that we have a better understanding of how Paul meant this list to be used, let's look at it. Read verses 3-7 and 18-20. Don't overlook the fact that Paul identifies both positive activities to do and negative activities to avoid. What on this list do you need to work on?

2. Submission in Marriage (5:21-33)

If Paul had any idea of how much trouble the next few verses were going to cause in the centuries following this writing--he probably would have written them anyway! But perhaps he would have changed the order just a bit to make things clearer. These are dangerous verses, so read them carefully. Then answer these questions:

1. Verse 21 is the key verse for this section and the following passage. It provides the rationale for all that follows. Can you put that rationale in your own words?

2. Far too often in the past, verses 22-24 have been read without verses 25-33. So to prevent that from happening, let's look at the latter passage first! In verses 25b-27, Paul talks about what Christ has done for the church. Summarize these verses in one statement.

3. In verses 28-29a, Paul lays some pretty heavy instruction on husbands. Summarize what Paul is saying.

4. Now, let's look at verses 22-24. Since Christian husbands love their wives as much as they love themselves and since they would be willing to give their lives for their mates, how should wives respond?

5. Now read verses 21, 31, and 33 again. Keeping these three verses in mind, write one statement to summarize this entire section.

3. Submission in other Relationships (6:1-9)

Hold on to your hat--you may not like this section! Continuing the same theme he introduced in 5:21 ("Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ"), Paul moves next to children and parents. Read the first four verses of this section and then answer these questions:

1. Again, verses 1-3 often are read without also reading verse 4. Starting with verse 4, what are Paul's instructions for parents?
2. Now reading verses 1-3, what are Paul's instructions to you?
3. Remember that these verses must be read with the theme verse, 5:21. Does understanding that theme affect how you feel about these verses?

Now read the rest of this section, verses 5-9. Paul is talking about slaves and masters, a relationship we no longer deal with (unless you think it is a pretty good description of your relationship with your big sister!). But that doesn't mean we should ignore this section. If you will substitute "students" or "employees" every time you see slaves, and "teachers" or "employers" every time you see masters, you may find this passage extremely relevant.

4. Thinking particularly of the student/teacher relationship, do verses 6-7 have anything to say to you today?

5. If you have a job, do you ever consider your boss a symbol for Christ, as Paul suggests in verse 5? How would that change your work situation?

4. The Armor of God (6:10-24)

Paul frequently talks about the battle between evil and good, between the sinful nature and the life of the Spirit, between darkness and light. In these verses, he tells us how we can be prepared to fight this battle, outfitted with equipment even better than the state-of-the-art military equipment being used around the world today.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Verses 10-13 explain Paul's metaphor of spiritual warfare. How would you put this into your own words?
2. In verses 14-17, the apostle lists the specific items of equipment worn by the well-provisioned spiritual soldier. Read each of these phrases slowly, meditating on each item of "equipment." Is your battle gear in order? Which of these needs a little work?
3. In verse 18, Paul lists the most important element of this armor, the one that makes it all work. What is it?

LIVE THE WORD

A *“Life of Love”*

As always, the closing moments of your class session are important. During the session, watch and listen carefully as your youths work through the activities. Be sensitive to them and to the Holy Spirit, who will help you discern which portions of today’s scriptures have been most effective.

In the passages we have read today, Paul has given us a lot to think about. He has set the example of Christ before us. He has talked about living a “life of love” (5:2). He has talked about some specific behaviors and attitudes. He has encouraged us to “submit” to each other--including our parents, teachers, and bosses.

Ask your students the following questions: Has Paul hit home at any point today? Have you felt like Paul was speaking directly to you at any time? Is there any area of your life that you need to give over to God before this opportunity passes?

Close the session by emphasizing the concept (or concepts) you feel has been most significant for your class.

7 TO LIFE IS CHRIST

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Philippians 1:1-30

KEY VERSE: “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Realize that the meaning of life comes from spiritual values, not from material possessions.
2. Value the spiritual qualities that give meaning to life.
3. Commit their lives to serving Jesus Christ.

PERSPECTIVE

What gives life meaning? An education? Love? Money? Success? Without what would life seem meaningless? Paul had no trouble answering that question. For him, Christ was the meaning of life--so much so that he looked forward to death—not to escape living, but to experience more of Christ.

In a world of conflicting values, your youths are looking for something to provide a center for their lives. They are looking for that one key that will give life meaning. This lesson helps them understand that the only key that works is a relationship with Jesus Christ.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In each of Paul's letters we find jewels of truth and comfort that speak distinctly and significantly to believers. Certainly this is true of Philippians. A short book of only four chapters, Philippians reveals something of the heart of the great apostle. It includes some of his warmest and most inspired passages.

Paul first visited Philippi during his second missionary journey (see Acts 16:6-40). There he founded the first recorded Christian church in Europe. There he spent one of his many nights in a Roman jail. And there one of his most famous escapes (or releases) occurred.

As with the Book of Ephesians, Paul writes this letter from Roman imprisonment. It may be the same prison in Rome where he penned Ephesians, or it may be an earlier prison. It really doesn't matter. But it does matter that we keep his status constantly in mind as we read this letter. Some of what he says makes sense only if we remember that he is in jail. On the other hand, some of what he says is almost unbelievable, considering his surroundings.

In the first few verses of the first chapter, Paul reveals a warmth and love for the recipients of this letter that perhaps surpasses that in the other letters. It is obvious that Paul loved the Philippians. His prayer for them, recorded in verses 9-11, is beautiful.

In 1:12-18 we begin to see the apostle's attitude about imprisonment. He is very clear that he believes that God has a purpose for his hardships. Even in jail, Paul's life work as a missionary and evangelist continues.

As many men have done in prison, Paul apparently reflected on his life and the possibility of his death, always a very real possibility in a Roman jail. The result of his reflection, verses 19-26, provide some of the most challenging words in the Bible. In verse 21 Paul says, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." That may be somewhat cryptic to youths who are not familiar with Paul's writings. But to those who understand Paul, it is very clear that for the apostle both life and death gained meaning because of his relationship to Christ.

It has often been said that we see life most clearly as we approach our death. Many people who have survived near-death experiences undergo a complete change of values. There is something about death that gives us a perspective on life that we cannot get while we are in the midst of life.

The next three verses expand on this idea. These verses show us that Paul has no fear of death--indeed he desires it. But this is not the writing of a depressed or suicidal man looking for escape. It is the writing of a man convinced that death ushers him into a rich reward and fellowship. However, as he writes, staying alive is probably more helpful for the Philippians. And Paul is willing to remain alive to continue to serve Christ and the early believers.

Paul concludes the first chapter with a few personal remarks to the Philippians, encouraging them to remain steadfast in the face of trouble and opposition. The Philippians were no doubt facing some of the same false teach-

ing from the Judaizers that the Galatians were. And, of course, they were facing constant persecution from the nonbelievers.

ENGAGE THE WORD

I'm Living For . . .

Begin the study by asking your students, "What are you living for?" Ask them how they would complete the statement "I'm living for. . ." You may want to read aloud a few of the following responses to get them started.

- "I'm living for vacation!"
- "I'm living for the day I turn 18 and can move out of my parents' house!"
- "I'm living for the day that incredibly cute guy in my physics class finally asks me out!"
- "I'm living for graduation!"

Then ask, How about you? What are you living for? Complete the statement, 'I'm living for...'

As they respond, make a list of their answers on the chalkboard or overhead projector.

This activity is designed to help focus their attention on values, on what really matters to them. Allow it to be fun, without challenging or correcting their answers. Don't "overspiritualize" the idea at this point in the lesson.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Overview

Welcome to the third book in this study, Philippians. You're going to like this book. Words like joy and happiness are used frequently to describe its theme.

This book, even shorter than Galatians and Ephesians, can be read at one sitting without any trouble. As was suggested for Galatians, it would be an exciting adventure to read this short book all the way through several times as you study it—even every day! The first time or two through it might seem boring, but then watch out! Things begin popping out of the pages that you didn't see before. It can be an exciting way to study a book of the Bible, and few books can be studied this way as easily as Philipians.

So, let's begin now.

2. The Christian As a Sacrifice on The Altar (12:1-2)

It would be hard to read this short letter without recognizing the real affection the apostle Paul must have had for the Christians at Philippi. It flows out from every verse!

Have someone read the first 11 verses and then answer these questions as a class:

1. Paul led people into a relationship with Christ and founded the first Christian church at Philippi during his second missionary journey, described in Acts 16:6-40. Read that passage and summarize the main action in a sentence or two.

2. What do you think Paul is saying in verse 6?

3. Read verses 9-11 slowly, pausing after each phrase to let its meaning soak in. What speaks to you in these verses?

3. Joy Even in Prison (1:12-18)

When we studied the Book of Ephesians, we noted that Paul wrote it while in prison, probably in Rome (see Acts 28:16). This letter, too, was written from prison.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What does Paul mean by “what has happened to me” (v. 12)? Read 2 Corinthians 6:4-5 and 11:23b-27 for some clues.

2. All that “has happened” to Paul has been, in his eyes, for one purpose. What is that purpose?

3. What has been the result of Paul's imprisonment?

4. Perhaps some of Paul's friends were trying to get the apostle to feel sorry for himself, pointing out that other preachers, ones with less-than-pure motives, were free while he was in prison. How does he respond to this (vv. 15-18)?

5. In spite of all his hardships, what is Paul's emotional attitude (v. 18)?

4. Life or Death —It's all Christ (1:19-26)

For any prisoner in a first-century Roman jail, death was a constant thought. The Romans were cruel, and sometimes punishment came without warning. Other prisoners could be violent. Often the physical conditions made death

welcome. And, of course, prison gave a man of Paul's age and experience time to reflect on his life and his life's work.

Have your class read these verses, and then answer these questions:

1. In verse 20, Paul gives us insight into the goal for his life. What is it?

2. Verse 21 is short and puzzling. But it is an important verse. Read it over several times until you feel you understand what Paul is saying. Can you put this thought into your own words?

3. What two desires does Paul contrast in verses 23-24?

5. Keep on Keeping on! (1:27-30)

After concluding that God will probably allow him to live in order to be of more service to the Philippians, the apostle gives some personal advice to the believers there.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Think back on your study of Galatians and the problems in Galatia that Paul addressed in that letter. How does that help you understand verses 27-28?

2. In verse 29 Paul almost makes suffering sound like a gift. What do you think he means?

LIVE THE WORD

“ . . . To Die is Gain”

It would be very easy to allow this lesson to deteriorate into a morbid, “turn-or-burn” type of evangelistic appeal, given its obvious concern with death. But you must, at all cost, prevent that from happening. The focus on death should not be used to frighten or threaten. The question is not “Where will you spend eternity?” Rather, the focus on death should be used to help clarify values.

Here, the question is, “What things have so much value that they will survive even death? What things have so much value that they make life worth living?”

Obviously, for Paul the only answer is “Christ.” Only life lived in and for Christ is worth living. Only a relationship with Christ will survive death.

Conclude this session with that carefully controlled focus, dealing seriously but not morbidly with the idea of death. Engage your students' minds, but do not exploit their fears. Encourage them to examine their own value structures in light of this lesson.

Death is a concept we don't like to think about, especially when we're young. But we can't avoid it. It's in the newspapers, on television, on the radio. You probably have experienced the death of a loved one.

Is death something to be feared? Avoided at all cost? Is dying the “great unknown”? The an-

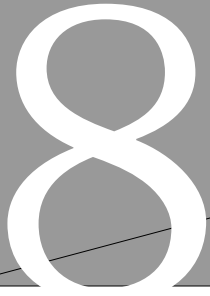
swer to that question to a great degree depends on how you are living.

Paul said, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

When we die, we lose everything--possessions, friends, jobs, dreams. We lose everything, that is, except one thing: our relationship with Jesus Christ. That is the one thing that we can have more of after death. That is the one thing that gives meaning to both life and death.

How is our relationship with Christ? Does it give meaning to our lives?

If you feel comfortable, and if the spirit of the class environment is appropriate, conclude with an evangelistic opportunity, inviting your students to experience the one value, the one relationship, that gives meaning to both life and death.



THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:1–30

KEY VERSE: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5)

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. See in Christ the perfect example of self-sacrifice.
2. Desire to emulate Christ’s example.
3. Search their lives for selfish attitudes and actions

PERSPECTIVE

In the 1970s the bookstore shelves were filled with books with titles like *Looking Out for Number One*, *Winning Through Intimidation*, and *Pulling Your Own Strings*. The decade was aptly nicknamed “The ‘Me’ Decade.” The odd thing is that the 1970s were not particularly different from the 1960s or the 1950s or, for that matter, the 1980s and the 1990s. In any decade, most people are, indeed, “*Looking Out for Number One*.”

Many of the emotional and psychological characteristics of adolescents turn them naturally toward selfishness. During this period of intense identity formation and increasing in-

dependence from authority figures, youth are quite normally focused on themselves. The call of Christ, however, is for self-sacrifice and humility. This lesson will attempt to distinguish between humility and low self-concept, one of the traps of adolescence, and strike a legitimate balance between self-interest and self-sacrifice.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In all of his writings, Paul focuses on a few central concerns: salvation through faith, the call of God to the Gentiles, and unity in the Church. It is that last theme that Paul begins to focus on in this chapter.

In the first four verses, the apostle makes a very personal appeal to the Philippians to be “like-minded” and unified, if for no other reason than out of their desire to make his “joy complete” (v. 2). Then, in verse 5, he turns their attention to Christ Jesus as the example of the attitude he is encouraging them to adopt.

The next six verses (vv. 6-11) form one of the most beautiful and inspiring passages in the entire New Testament. It is also one of the most theologically significant. If you are reading from the NIV or another modern translation, you may notice that these verses are typeset differently, in the form of a poem. That is because Paul is indeed quoting the words of a poem or possibly a hymn.

It is not uncommon in our own writing for us to be reminded of the words of a poem or hymn and include some of those words to illustrate our point. Preachers do this frequently in their sermons.

This poem or hymn Paul is quoting is probably one already known by the Philippians. It may have been well known in all the first-century churches. It may have been one Paul taught to all of the churches he founded on his missionary journeys. In all likelihood, it is one of his own compositions.

The poem can be divided into two sections. The first, comprising verses 6-8, is one of the strongest statements of the human/divine duality of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Without hesitation or qualification, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ was “in very nature God” and equal to God (v. 6). This verse forms the backbone for the doctrine of the Trinity, which states that Jesus Christ is not a partner with or inferior to God but is indeed God.

This section goes on to describe Christ’s self-sacrifice in taking on the “very nature” of a human, humbling himself even to the point of crucifixion. Again there is no hesitation or qualification. Jesus Christ did not simply “appear” to be human; He was human. This is, of course, one of the greatest mysteries of Christian theology, that Jesus Christ was, at the same time, both fully God and fully human.

The balance of this incredible poem is a hymn of praise to Jesus Christ, indicating His exalted position in the universe. The phrase “Jesus Christ is Lord” in verse 11 is considered by many to be the earliest confession or liturgy of the Church. This simple statement comprises the entirety of Christian belief. In making this statement, the first-century Christian was rec-

ognizing his or her complete surrender to the reign of Christ. This phrase was probably used as a baptismal confession, as a liturgical element recited aloud by congregations, and even as a greeting between Christians.

After this moment of sublime praise, Paul comes back to earth with an instruction for the Philippians to “work out” their salvation with “fear and trembling” (v. 12). This seems like strange language for the apostle of grace. It is important to understand that the tense of the verb is progressive, accurately translated by the NIV: “continue to work out.” Compare this with 1:6 in which Paul spoke of the progressive nature of salvation. It has been noted that the New Testament refers to salvation in several time frames. We were saved in Christ’s action on the Cross. We are being saved in the present moment through our belief in Christ and our obedience to His word. And we will be saved on that Judgment Day when the righteous will be ushered into eternal reward. It is important to understand that “being saved” is not like buying a piece of land which, once purchased, remains the possession of the owner. Rather, being saved is like being in love. It does have a beginning moment, but it is continued through faithfulness to the relationship, and it matures and changes through time.

Paul continues in this very practical mode, encouraging the Philippians to “do everything without complaining or arguing” (v. 14), an injunction which many of us, including youths, find difficult to obey!

This chapter concludes with a few words about two of Paul’s companions. The first, Timothy, we know well, having read of him frequently in other New Testament passages (see Acts 16:1-3; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:2).

The second, Epaphroditus, was sent to Paul by the Philippians to assist him during his imprisonment. Epaphroditus, however, became quite ill, though now recovered. Paul is sending this brave helper back to the Philippians with his commendation. (This is most probably the immediate reason for this letter.) Both of these men are examples of the kind of Christlike attitude Paul discusses earlier in this chapter.

ENGAGE THE WORD

Get an Attitude

This exercise asks your youths to decide which one in several pairs of activities they would prefer. This is a forced choice, with only two options. There can be no in-between choices, no extenuating circumstances, and no explanations. Encourage your students to be honest, and then give them time to check one response in each pair.

WOULD YOU RATHER . . .

- | | | | |
|--|----|--|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play video games with a friend | or | Help your mother shop for groceries | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spend \$16.00 on a new CD | or | Put \$10.00 in the offering plate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be declared "Best Student" | or | Have your best friend get the honor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a basketball or football game | or | Baby-sit a younger brother or sister | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spend two weeks at Disney World | or | Spend two weeks helping build a school | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch your favorite TV show | or | Help a brother or sister with homework | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to summer camp | or | Send a needy child to camp | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to the latest hit CD | or | Carry out the trash | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get a super birthday present | or | Give a super birthday present | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spend Saturday shopping at the mall | or | Spend a day helping paint an elderly woman's house | <input type="checkbox"/> |

After they have finished they should add up the checks in each column. Give them this scale to rate themselves:

9-10 checks in the right column = Ready for sainthood

7-8 " " " " " = Citizen of the Month award

5-6 " " " " " = Pretty decent kid

3-4 " " " " " = Pretty normal youth

0-2 " " " " " = Selfish brat

Be careful not to "over spiritualize" this activity. Make it fun--maybe even giving an award (a pocket mirror?) for the "most selfish brat" in class and one (a homemade halo?) for the "most saintly youth."

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Overview

How would you react if someone told you that the greatest passage in the entire New Testament is in this chapter? Would your response be “So what?” Or would you grab your Bible, flip to this chapter, and read with eagerness?

Well, some do feel that the greatest passage in the entire New Testament is Philippians 2:6-11, but that honor could go to many other passages as well.

The fact is that the greatest passage in the entire New Testament today is any passage that the Holy Spirit uses to speak to you. Let’s study this chapter with eagerness and expectation, looking forward to whatever the Spirit has to say to you.

2. Christian Unity (2:1-4)

The more you read Paul’s writing, the more you realize that he has two or three themes that form the bulk of his concern. One of those themes is unity in the Body of Christ. Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Compare these verses with Ephesians 4:1-6, 15-16. How are they alike?
2. Don’t get lost in the four “if” clauses that begin this section. They all say something similar. Can you boil them down into one “if” clause?
3. The main thought of the sentence begins in verse 2. How can the Philippians make Paul’s joy complete?

4. In verses 3-4 Paul gives us several “cures” or solutions for lack of unity. List them.

5. These verses provide a good check-list for the Holy Spirit to use to speak to you. Spend a few moments reading these verses meditatively. Any responses?

3. A Hymn of Praise (2:5-11)

Have you ever been in the middle of a letter to a friend and been reminded of the words to a popular song, or some poem you memorized in school, or even a hymn? Maybe you included those words in your letter to illustrate what you were thinking.

Perhaps your pastor often quotes from hymns or poems in his or her sermons.

That’s probably what happened in this wonderful passage. The topic of Christian unity Paul was discussing in verses 1-4 has reminded him of a poem--probably a hymn. Maybe it is one of his own composition. Maybe it is one that was sung regularly in first-century churches. Maybe Paul taught this hymn to all the churches on his missionary journeys years earlier. That’s why this section is typeset differently in some translations of the Bible, lined up as a poem.

Whatever the origin of this poem or hymn Paul quotes to the Philippians, it is one of the most beautiful and most theologically significant passages in the entire Bible.

Read it slowly and carefully to the class, then have them answer these questions:

1. Of course the “Who” referred to in verse 6 is

Christ Jesus, having been named in the previous verse. The first phrase of verse 6 is one of the greatest and most mysterious theological truths. What does “being in very nature God” mean?

2. Jesus Christ, who was not a companion or partner to God but who was God himself, voluntarily did what for us (vv. 7-8)? How do you feel about that?

3. Verses 9-11 form a hymn of praise. Take a few moments longer than you normally would for this study and meditate on these three verses. Any responses?

4. It has been speculated that four words from verse 11, “Jesus Christ is Lord,” actually form the first liturgy or confession of the Church. That means that it was perhaps the first statement that all Christians said in unison. Those four words have formed the absolute basis of Christian belief for nearly 2,000 years. Would you say them aloud, right now, hearing in your soul the voices of thousands of Christians from all the centuries affirming this great truth with you?

5. Before leaving this hymn, let’s remember why Paul included it. He says in verse 5, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus,” and then he quotes the hymn. What is the attitude of Christ Jesus that this hymn shows us? Is this your attitude?

4. Shine Like Stars (2:12-18)

After that great inspirational passage, Paul pulls himself and us back to earth with some very practical comments. Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In verse 12 Paul says, “work out your salvation.” After all that he has said about grace, about salvation being through faith and not through works, how can he say this to the Philippians? Here are two clues: First, the verb is in the progressive tense, meaning that he is talking about something already happening, as the NIV makes clear: “continue to work out.” Second, compare this verse with 1:6. Now, what do you think Paul is saying?

2. Watch out for verse 14. It will likely hit you right between the eyes. Do you think Paul really means this? Is this even possible? What is your reaction?

3. Notice that in verse 15, Paul isn’t hoping that the Philippians will “shine like stars”--maybe if they follow all of his instructions. He says that they already do “shine like stars in the universe.” Read carefully the phrases right before and right after these words. What is he saying? Are you shining like stars in the universe?

5. Fellow workers (2:19-30)

We sometimes forget that Paul was always surrounded with helpers in his missionary ventures. Just read some of the pages of Acts--Paul’s

name is always linked with his companions. Even in jail, apparently, Paul had helpers. This passage is about two of them.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What do you know about Timothy? (Check out Acts 16:1-3; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:2.) How would you characterize the relationship between Paul and Timothy?

2. Epaphroditus was a member of the church at Philippi who had been sent by the congregation to help Paul while he was in prison. What happened to him while he was with Paul?

3. These verses may seem inconsequential, especially when compared to the incredible verses earlier in the chapter, but they give us an insight into Paul, into the way he worked, and into the attitude of the early churches. What can you learn from these verses?

Being humble and self-sacrificing doesn't mean having a poor self-concept or being a doormat for everyone to walk on. It means understanding who you are and what your gifts are, and sharing both yourself and your gifts freely with others. It means voluntarily surrendering your rights if others would benefit. It means having the attitude of a servant, like Christ Jesus.

- In which area of your life do you struggle with most: being conceited or selfish?

- Can you think of a specific time during the past few days when you were particularly self-centered?

- How can Christ's example challenge you to resist selfishness and arrogance?

- What will you do this week to work on this?

Close the session with a prayer of thanksgiving for Christ's example of self-sacrifice.

LIVE THE WORD

What Is Your Attitude?

This activity asks your students to look at their own lives and assess their own self-centeredness. Give your class several minutes of "quiet time" to respond to the questions below. Assure them that they will not be asked to share their responses with anyone else.

9 REACHING THE GOAL

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Philippians 3:1–4:23

KEY VERSE: “But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13b-14).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Realize that spiritual life is an ongoing journey, not a non-changing possession.
2. Desire to remain faithful to the calling to follow Christ in spite of hardships or setbacks.
3. Trust in God for help in remaining faithful.

PERSPECTIVE

Our tradition, with its emphasis on a crisis point of conversion, sometimes gives people the idea that spiritual life is something you “get,” and once “gotten,” something you “have” until you die or, more likely, until you “lose” it, at which point you can “get” it again.

This get-got, have-hold idea can rob us of the rich relational aspect of life in Christ. And it can also leave us unprepared for the spiritual hardships and traumas which can damage that rela-

tionship. Frequently, this approach to salvation is the cause for so much of the roller-coaster spiritual life so many youths experience.

The purpose of this lesson is to help your students understand the nature of spiritual perseverance, spiritual growth, and spiritual tenacity.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

In chapter 3, Paul returns to one of his recurring themes: circumcision. Mincing no words, the apostle warns the Philippians to watch out for the Judaizers who would trap them into placing confidence for their salvation in legalistic and external operations. Although we do not today fight the battle over circumcision and Jewish legalism, we do have our own ways of putting “confidence in the flesh.” Anything we are depending upon to earn us favor in God’s sight--the size of our tithe check, the frequency of our church attendance, the number of elected and appointed positions in the church we hold, the fidelity of our adherence to church rules and practices--comes under the label of “flesh.”

Paul indicates that, if there were to be a contest of “flesh” items, he would win. His “spiritual pedigree” would make even the most diligent Judaizer jealous. But all of these things are “rubbish” when compared to the personal relationship with Christ Jesus which Paul enjoys (v. 8).

Perhaps fearing for a moment that it may

sound like he is bragging, Paul assures us that he has not already “obtained” spiritual perfection. (Compare this with the comments about “getting” salvation in the Perspective, above.) At this point, Paul uses an athletic metaphor to illustrate his point. The Christian life is like a race in which, regardless of your present status--whether at the head of the pack or at the rear--you must forget “what is behind,” strain “toward what is ahead,” and “press on toward the goal to win the prize,” which is, of course, eternal life in Christ (vv. 13-14).

In this, Paul is speaking of the progressive nature of salvation, as we discussed in the last lesson. (See the commentary on 2:12.) He says, “let us live up to what we have already attained” (v. 16).

In the fourth chapter, as he is winding down his epistle, Paul makes some specific and personal comments. He urges two members of the Philippian congregation to settle their differences (vv. 2-3). He enjoins the Philippians to “Rejoice in the Lord always” (v. 4). And he gives them, in a familiar verse, an instruction to let their minds dwell on good things, rather than being anxious about evil (v. 8).

In his concluding paragraphs, the apostle thanks the Philippians for their many personal gifts to him. At the same time he assures them that he is not in need. Certainly, in prison as he is, Paul has many needs. But he has learned to live above material concerns.

ENGAGE THE WORD

The YOUth Version

Read aloud Philippians 3:18-21. You may want to write these verses on the board. Divide

the verses among your students and have them write these verse(s) in their own words. After they have finished, combine each student’s work by writing the newly-translated version on the board. Ask them if it seems to be more clear or if it takes on a different meaning now than it did before. Ask them what they have learned from this activity in regard to what Paul expressed in these verses.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Being a Christian is Like . . .

Have a student read aloud Philippians 3:12-14. Then read the following four statements to your students (or write them on the board for everyone to read):

- Being a Christian is like earning a prize--you worked for it, you get to keep it!
- Being a Christian is like owning a very precious jewel you must guard it carefully or you might lose it.
- Being a Christian is like being the child of your parents--it’s something you can never get rid of, even if you want to!
- Being a Christian is like running a race--it’s an ongoing endeavor.

Ask your class to choose one of these statements as being most accurate. (Don’t worry if they get the wrong answer. That’s what the scripture study is for.)

2. Profit and Loss (3:1-11)

A popular bumper sticker reads, “The one with the most toys WINS!” Many people structure their lives by that bumper sticker philoso-

phy. Paul has some comments in this section about winning and losing, and about what success is.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. When you read verse 1, remember that Paul is writing from prison, the victim of many hardships. What does this verse tell you about Paul's attitude?

2. Verse 2 is a reference to the Judaizers who preached circumcision and obedience to Old Testament Jewish laws. We certainly know about them after reading Galatians and Ephesians. If "the circumcision" are those who are God's chosen people, Paul says "we . . . are the circumcision" (v. 3). Who is he talking about?

3. In verse 3 Paul refers to people who put "no confidence in the flesh." What does he mean? Confidence for what? What does "the flesh" stand for?

4. In verses 4-6 Paul lists his religious "pedigree," the lines on his resume that would make him a model Judaizer. But how does he feel about these things (v. 7)?

5. In verses 7-11 Paul gives an insight into his value system, into what constitutes "winning" for him. What is at the bottom of his value system? What is at the top?

3. Onward and Upward (3:12–4:1)

Continuing on with the theme of winning and losing, of what constitutes real value, Paul reflects for a moment on his position in life. In doing so, he gives some rich spiritual food for thought.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What do you think Paul is referring to by "that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me" (v. 12)?

2. Paul uses an athletic metaphor in verses 12-14. How is spiritual life like a race?

3. In verse 20 Paul says that "our citizenship is in heaven." Think about the meaning of citizenship. What is Paul saying?

4. Read together 3:13b-14, 16; and 4:1. In light of these verses, what would you say the theme of this section is?

4. Final Instructions (4:2-9)

As always, when Paul is just about through with this letter, he throws in several very specific instructions about daily life in Christ.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Apparently two of the women in the Philippian congregation were involved in a disagreement. What does Paul say to them?

2. Read verses 4-7, remembering that Paul is writing them from prison. What kind of spirit would a person need to have in order to be able to maintain this kind of attitude? Would you be able to maintain an attitude like this in prison?

3. Verse 8 is a good one to memorize. Don't rush through the "whatever" clauses. Give each clause a few moments of meditation. What is Paul saying to you in this verse? What generally occupies your thoughts?

5. Thanks for the Memories (4:10-23)

Paul concludes his letter with thanksgiving for the Philippians' assistance to him in prison. Again, the warmth of their relationship is clear.

Have someone from the class read these last few verses and then answer these questions as a class:

1. Read verses 11 and 12 carefully. Do you think Paul is telling the truth? Do you think most of the people you know--friends and family--could say this? Could you say this?

2. In verse 13, Paul says "I can do everything." What does he mean by "everything"?

3. Verse 19 is a good one to copy on an index card and put where you can see it often. By "needs" does Paul mean the latest fashions, CDs, or automobiles? Of course not. What does he mean?

Make sure your students understand these concepts by the end of this section:

- The Christian life is not a thing we possess or own, it is a relationship.
- The Christian life is an ongoing endeavor, constantly growing and changing.
- Stumbling or lagging behind doesn't mean that the Christian life is ended. Like a runner, a Christian can pick himself or herself up, dust himself or herself off, and keep running.
- Like any athletic endeavor, the Christian life is helped by discipline, hard work, and tenacity

LIVE THE WORD

Running the Race

Just like a coach giving final instructions before the big race, use the concluding moments of this session to encourage your students to persevere in their faith. Remind them of Paul's wonderful statement in 4:13. Pray with them for the courage and strength to stay with the race until the goal is achieved.

In the passages we have studied in this lesson, Paul sometimes sounds like a coach giving his team a pep talk before the big race: 'Press on!', 'Take hold!', 'Don't look back!', 'Keep your eyes on the goal!', 'Don't worry!', 'Keep your mind on winning!' If you have ever been on a team, you

have probably heard a coach say such things. And you have probably heard such words as ‘perseverance,’ or ‘tenacity’!

What is causing you to stumble or be discouraged in your race? What hardships or handicaps do you have to endure?

Remember Paul’s words: ‘I can do everything through him who gives me strength’ (Phi 4:13).

Before you meet, put the names of your students in a hat (or something of the sort) and mix them up. During this activity, have your students draw a name out of the “hat.” Make sure they do not draw their own name. Then have each student write a personal note of encouragement to the person whose name they drew, and have them distribute their notes at the end of class.

10 THE FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:1-29

KEY VERSE: “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (Colossians 1:19-20)

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Distinguish between orthodox and non-orthodox Christology.
2. Appreciate orthodox Christology as both objective truth and personal benefit.
3. Look for orthodox Christology in the various systems they encounter.

PERSPECTIVE

In the 1970s evangelical Christianity went through a glut of cult sensationalism, capitalizing on everyone’s ignorance and fear of the many new and not-so-new cults springing up as a result of the “hippie” movement. Articles in Christian magazines focused on the cults that virtually kidnapped their “victims,” starved and mistreated them while “brainwashing” them with heretical principles, and then put them to work as slaves or automatons in communes or

airports. Although some of these things did happen, the sensationalism surrounding this topic went far beyond the impact of the cults on most Christians.

In studying Colossians, however, one cannot ignore Paul’s concern with false doctrine and the heresies that were threatening the very fabric of first-century theology. The theological great-grandchildren of those first-century heresies are still with us. When they come in the form of “weird” or extreme cults, we can usually recognize them. But often they come in the form of accepted, legitimate, churchlike groups whose appearance of orthodox Christianity hides their non-orthodox theology. Youths are particularly susceptible to such groups.

This lesson will focus on the orthodox theology of Christ and the heresies, both ancient and modern, which twist or pervert this theology.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

As we begin our study of the Book of Colossians, we will notice several similarities between it and the three previous books we have studied, especially the Book of Ephesians. Paul uses much the same format and deals with many of the same issues.

There are, however, several differences. For one, in Colossians Paul is writing to Christians he has not met. He did not found the church at

Colosse, and he knows them only by reputation. Another difference is the specific purpose of the letter.

Although there were false teachers in Galatia, Ephesus, and Philippi, they were mostly Judaizers who were teaching that Gentiles must become Jews first and must follow the various laws and ceremonies of the Old Testament. These were primarily Jewish Christians who simply were not ready yet to let go of their Hebrew roots.

In Colosse, however, a much more serious form of false teaching was occurring. We must understand clearly that at the time Paul was writing, the Christian Church was still in the process of formation. Its hierarchy, its methodology, its liturgy, and its theology were all being formulated. One might say that the Church was building its boat as it was sailing out into the ocean. Much of this can be seen in the pages of Acts and Paul's Epistles.

One of the significant theological questions with which the Church was grappling concerned Christology. ("Christology" is a term that generally applies to any study of Christ--His life, His mission, and His nature. It is technically used to denote a specific branch of theology: theology that concerns the Christ.) The Church and its leaders were attempting to answer the question "Who is/was Jesus Christ?"

From our perspective, that seems to be such an easy question. It's all spelled out for us in the pages of the New Testament and in our various theology texts. Doesn't everyone know who Jesus Christ was and is?

But remember that as Paul was writing, there was no New Testament. Standard or orthodox theology was being decided by the people con-

cerned. What we now consider "orthodox" is the theology that "won out" in the "contest" (because, we believe, of the activity of the Holy Spirit).

The "Colossian Heresy" as it has become known was a combination of Christian, Jewish, Greek, and Oriental philosophies. It had several focuses, including angel worship, circumcision, and ceremonialism. The primary focus with which Paul is concerned, and with which we will be concerned in this lesson, was a skewed Christology.

Much of the content of the heresy at Colosse came from a wide group of teachings generally classified together under the term Gnosticism (pronounced as if the initial "G" were not there). Its primary philosophies were these:

1. All spiritual things are good; all material (physical) things are evil.
2. Both the spiritual and material (good and evil) have been eternally existent.
3. God is spiritual and good, but very distant and holy. This God could have no contact with anything material or physical, so he could not be the creator of the world.
4. From this God came several "emanations" (sort of like photocopies), each one being a little more removed from the original. Christ is one of these emanations, as are the angels and other "heavenly" beings.
5. The last of the emanations is so far removed from God as to be actually evil, though still a God. It was this God that created the world out of the already existing evil physical/material elements.
6. Because the physical is evil, the good God

could never have taken on the form of a human. Consequently, Jesus was either an apparition--the divine Christ merely appearing to be a human--or a human who was only temporarily taken over by the divine Christ.

7. Because the spiritual is good and the physical is evil, a human cannot be fully redeemed as long as he or she remains in a body. (This philosophy resulted in two groups. The first simply gave up trying to reconcile and kept their spirits “pure” while allowing their bodies to do whatever they chose. The second attempted to beat, starve, and deny their bodies, hoping to force them into submission.)

8. Only people with special “knowledge” can understand truth and be saved. (Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, which means “knowledge.”)

In the Book of Colossians, Paul countered these Gnostic philosophies with some of the clearest and strongest statements about the nature of Christ in the New Testament. Included are these:

1. Christ was present and active at the Creation. He is not a created being (1:15-17).

2. Christ is not an “emanation” or copy of God. He is fully God, having the full divine nature (1:19; 2:9).

3. When Christ became incarnate, He became fully human, with a physical body (1:22).

4. In Christ, humankind can be reconciled to God (1:20, 22; 2:13).

Paul also touches on other heretical practices being taught at Colosse--including angel worship (2:18), ceremonialism (2:16), “special” knowledge (2:18), and harsh treatment of the

body (2:21-23)--which we don't have time to address in this lesson.

Where does all of this leave us? Many youths (as well as adults) would respond to this by saying, “So what? That's all first-century mumbo-jumbo. There are no Gnostics today. You don't look in the yellow pages under ‘Churches’ and find the ‘First Church of Gnosticism’ or ‘Sunnyside Gnostic Church.’ So why should I worry about it?”

In actuality, the philosophies of Gnosticism and other such heresies are present in the 20th century. Often they form part of the theology of groups which many assume are simply other denominations, such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Church of Christ Scientist, the Worldwide Church of God, the Unity School of Christianity, or even the Unification Church (“Moonies”). Sometimes they are elements of groups which seem to be parachurch organizations. (“Parachurch” refers to religious groups which supplement the work of churches without being actual churches. Legitimate parachurch organizations include Campus Crusade, the Navigators, and Youth for Christ.) The heretical groups which appear to be merely Bible studies or discipleship groups include the Children of God and The Way International. Other groups appear to be philosophies rather than religions, such as the New Age Movement, the Theosophical Society, and Scientology.

All of these groups, however “normal” or mainstream some may appear, contain heretical or non-orthodox theologies. The first tip-off is often their Christology. While on the surface it may sound orthodox, it really isn't. For example:

- Christian Scientists do not believe that Christ

was divine. They believe that Jesus was a good man who embodied the truth more than any other.

- Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Christ was a created being, really a high angel.
- For Mormons, Jesus is something of a "super-man," a perfect example of the kind of god all humans can become.

A clear understanding of orthodox Christology and a firm belief in the Christ of the Bible will protect us--and our youths--from being fooled by these and other heresies

ENGAGE THE WORD

Jesus Christ was . . .

This activity lists 12 statements about Jesus Christ. Ask your students to choose which one(s) they believe to be true. Give them a few minutes to work individually, checking any and all statements they agree with.

Then go through the statements one by one, asking the students who checked each one to raise their hands. Do not make any commentary about the choices at this point. Do not tell students which statements are "wrong." Do not disagree or argue with any of the statements or allow students to argue with each other. Merely take a poll. (Be careful, you might be surprised!) The orthodox statements, by the way, are the 2nd and the 11th.

Which of the following statements reflects what you believe about Jesus Christ? You may check as many as you wish.

___ Jesus Christ was the most perfect human being who ever lived on this earth.

___ Jesus Christ was present at and active in the creation of the world.

___ Jesus Christ was half-God and half-human.

___ Jesus was a super holy man whom God chose to become His Son, the Christ.

___ Jesus Christ is our "Elder Brother," an example of what we all can become.

___ Jesus Christ was God appearing to be a man. He didn't really have a physical body.

___ Jesus Christ was created by God.

___ God the Son (Jesus Christ), God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit are the three Gods who rule this earth.

___ Jesus was a very devout and obedient man in whose body God chose to live from the time of Jesus' baptism until the time of his death, at which time God left him.

___ Jesus is an idea of what perfection looks like. He did not really exist but was created by humans to illustrate what God might look like in human form.

___ Jesus Christ, while divine, had a body of real flesh and blood.

___ The life of Jesus Christ shows us what a redeemed life looks like, although he didn't have anything to do with our own redemption.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Overview

Welcome to the fourth book in this study, Paul's letter to the church at Colosse. Don't you wish you had a friend who is as faithful to write letters as Paul was?

Like the three previous books, this one is

short but packed with wonderful insight. You can read this book in about a half-hour. A good goal would be to read this book straight through several times during this study. That will help you keep the context in mind as you work on specific verses

2. Thanksgiving and Prayer (1:1-14)

As you read this letter you will notice many similarities to the apostle's letter to the Ephesians. They were both probably written about the same time, from the same Roman prison. They were both intended to be read aloud to a single congregation or a group of congregations. They deal with many of the same themes.

But there are also some differences. While Paul had founded the church at Ephesus and knew the Ephesians well, he did not personally know the church at Colosse (see 2:1). His knowledge of them was second-hand, by reputation.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer these questions as a class:

1. What has Paul heard about the Colossians?
2. Who was apparently the founder of the church at Colosse (v. 7)?
3. If you are reading in the NIV, you will notice a colon (:) in the middle of verse 10. That punctuation mark means "what follows explains or gives examples of what has just been said." Paul has just said, "And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: . . ." What follows the colon, then, are ways that the Colossians--and

we, too--may please God. The thought continues through verse 12 and contains four examples. List the four examples.

3. A Christological Jewel (1:15-20)

First, a definition. Something that refers to Christ, His mission, or His nature can be called "Christological."

These five verses comprise one of the most carefully written, meaning-packed, and theologically precise Christological statements in the entire Bible.

As you read this section, remember that in the first century, as in every century since, one of the key questions the Church had to deal with was this: "Who is the Christ?" At the time Paul wrote the Colossians, the theology of the Church was still being formed. Obviously the New Testament was in the process of being written, and the Old Testament gave only partial guidance about Christological questions. There were many theories or theologies being put forth and circulated at the time Paul was writing. The primary purpose for this passage, and indeed this letter, is to refute one or more of these false theories, called "heresies."

Have someone read these five verses slowly and carefully, then answer these questions as a class:

1. In this section there are several main points of theology that we take for granted. We assume that the Church has always taught these things and that everyone who is a Christian believes them. Can you identify these main points?

2. Knowing that Paul wrote this section to refute a significant heresy, we can reconstruct that heresy by taking the opposite of everything in this passage. I'm going to read several of Paul's statements. After each one, tell me its opposite.

a. "By him [Christ] all things were created" (v. 16).

b. "He [Christ] is before all things" (v. 17).

c. "In everything he [Christ] might have the supremacy" (v. 18).

d. "God was pleased to have all his [God's] fullness dwell in him [Christ]" (v. 19).

e. "God was pleased . . . through him [Christ] to reconcile to himself [God] all things" (vv. 19-20).

3. What do you think the heresy that Paul was refuting probably asserted?

4. How would our spiritual lives be different if this heresy had won out over Paul's theology?

4. Reconciliation (1:21-23)

In this section Paul is still making Christological statements and still refuting heresy. But these verses are perhaps a bit more personal and practical.

Have someone read these three verses and then answer the questions as a class:

1. What causes alienation or separation from God?

2. In verse 22 the apostle is again heresy-hunting. He uses two very carefully written phrases: "Christ's physical body" and "through death." Look again at the opposites of these statements. What more do we know about the heresy Paul was fighting?

3. Notice in verses 22-23 the same emphasis on the progressive aspects of salvation that we have seen earlier (see Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; 3:12-16). And we are given a clear understanding of God's role in salvation compared with our role in salvation. Can you put these verses in your own words to make all this clearer?

5. The Apostle's Labor (1:24-29)

Remember from our previous studies that Paul is in prison, having suffered many hardships for the sake of the gospel. These verses may sound like Paul is either bragging or playing "poor me," but if you read them carefully, you understand that he is simply reviewing his life and work.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What do you suppose Paul means when he says, "I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions" (v. 24)? (Look also at 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.)

2. What is the “mystery” Paul refers to in verses 26-27?

LIVE THE WORD

I Believe

The lesson must move at this point to a personal level to keep it from just being an interesting but somewhat sensational discussion of cults. Ask your students, working individually, to decide on four things they believe about Jesus Christ and record those, in their own words, on paper.

Then ask them to think about why these statements are important. What would happen if they weren't true? (For example, if Christ were not divine--merely a very good man, how could we accept as absolute truth anything He said? Would He not be as susceptible as the rest of us to error?)

Ask them to take each of the statements they have written and next explain why those statements are important to them, writing their answers on paper.

If you have time, ask for volunteers to share their responses to this activity.

Close the session with a prayer thanking God for our Christian heritage that has been passed down through the centuries and for making His word and will available to us through the Bible.

11 FREEDOM IN CHRIST

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:1–23

KEY VERSE: “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:6-7).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand the necessity of spiritual growth after conversion.
2. Desire to become mature Christians through spiritual growth.
3. Determine strategies for spiritual growth.

PERSPECTIVE

We live in an “instant” world: instant global communication through E-mail and the Internet, instant meals through microwave cooking, instant problem-solving through high-speed computers. Consequently, we have little patience with things that take time.

Youth who have grown up in this “instant” world assume that any process can be shortened. And they tend to see their world in binary, on-off, black-white, all-or-nothing terms. Frequently this backfires on them, as they demand

instant perfection of themselves. They want to be ready for the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament after one or two tennis lessons. They want to be ready to pass a test with one reading of the material. And they want to be mature Christians the moment they leave the place of prayer where they have invited Jesus Christ into their hearts.

This lesson, like lesson 9, focuses on the progressive nature of our relationship with Christ. While that lesson emphasized perseverance, this one emphasizes growth. This lesson will help your students set goals for spiritual growth and plan strategies for reaching those goals.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

There can be no doubt that the persons Paul is addressing in the Book of Colossians are born-again Christians. He begins the book with high praise for these disciples he has never seen: “We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints” (1:3-4).

Paul goes on in several places to refer clearly to the conversion experience of his readers, noting that they have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life: “giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light” (1:12); “Once you were alienated from God . . . but now he has reconciled you . . . to present you holy in his

sight” (1:21-22); “When you were dead in your sins . . . God made you alive with Christ” (2:13).

Paul indeed makes clear that the Christians at Colosse are “without blemish and free from accusation” in God’s sight (1:22). And yet, in 1:24--2:5, the apostle discusses his labors on behalf of the Colossians (and others), “admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom” in order that he might “present everyone perfect in Christ” (1:28). One cannot help but ask, If these believers are “without blemish and free from accusation,” what more do they need in order to be “perfect in Christ”? How can they at the same time be both “without blemish” and yet imperfect?

It will help us if we realize that the word translated “perfect” in 1:28 has the meaning of “complete” or “mature,” as some other modern English versions indicate. It does not mean absolute perfection, in the sense of being without flaw.

In the spiritual realm, we are declared “without blemish and free from accusation” on the day we trust God for salvation. Through His grace, God removes our guilt and makes us morally pure and legally innocent. As long as we remain in relationship with Christ, we remain, in God’s eyes, free of moral culpability.

That does not, however, mean that we are without flaw. As new Christians, fresh out of the world, we lack many of the qualities that mark the saintly, while still carrying many of the qualities that mark the unredeemed. As the result of previously living by the sinful nature, we have habits, attitudes, and personality traits that do not change immediately when we become Christians.

That is where spiritual growth comes in.

Through study, discipline, and sometimes hard work--all under the guidance of the Holy Spirit--we can progressively become more Christlike.

Let it be clear that such progress does not in any way alter our “legal” relationship with God. We are justified by His grace and not by our works. But the desire of the Christian should be to become more like the Master daily in “word, thought, and deed.”

In several places Paul gives us an idea of the nature of this spiritual growth. In 1:9, he writes that he is praying for God to fill the Colossians “with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.” In 1:10-11 he lists four of the characteristics of spiritual growth:

- “bearing fruit in every good work”
- “growing in the knowledge of God”
- “being strengthened with all power . . . so that you may have great endurance and patience”
- “joyfully giving thanks”

In 2:2, he lists his desire for them to be “encouraged in heart and united in love” so that they might enjoy “the full riches of complete understanding.”

ENGAGE THE WORD

Perfect!

Prior to the session, ask one of your students to be prepared to read the story that follows.

It was 4:00 A.M., and John and Susan were exhausted. But they were also thrilled, because just an hour earlier Susan had given birth to a 9-pound, 5-ounce baby boy, their first child.

Now they were both in Susan's hospital room, holding their precious gift from God.

"He is so beautiful," Susan marveled. "Isn't he, John?"

"I can't say that I have ever seen a more handsome baby," John claimed, with just a trace of pride.

"He is absolutely perfect!" Susan squealed with delight.

"Well, I don't know that I would go that far," John cautioned his wife.

"What do you mean?" Susan shot back. "He has 10 toes and 10 fingers, 2 eyes and 2 ears, a mouth and a nose, and everything else I can think of. The doctors and nurses have pronounced him absolutely healthy. He is everything we have dreamed of and prayed for. What more could you want? God has given us a perfect child."

"But look," John pointed out, "he has no hair. And he is so small. He can't walk, talk, or mow the lawn. I doubt if he knows the Pythagorean theorem. And as far as I can tell, he won't be able to earn a decent wage for at least a couple of decades!"

By this point, Susan had finally recognized the off-the-wall humor that had attracted her to John when they first met. "It's not nice to tease someone as sleepy as I am. Besides, he might hear you! He has plenty of time to grow hair. And, anyway, by the time he has a head-full, you'll be bald—at the rate you're going! So let's not get too picky with our definition of 'perfect!'"

After the presentation of the story, ask your class the following two questions:

- What does Susan mean when she says "perfect" in relation to her baby?
- What does John mean by "perfect"?

Be sure that they understand that by "perfect" Susan means that the baby has everything it needs, everything it could be expected to have, and everything they had hoped for. It is "perfect"—in her eyes. John, however, is humorously judging the baby's "perfection" by adult standards, indicating that it isn't yet all that it will be.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. The Apostle's Continued Labor (2:1-5)

Have someone read this section to the class and then answer these questions as a class:

1. Remembering that Paul is in a Roman prison, what kind of "struggling" (v. 1) do you suppose he could be engaged in?
2. In verses 2-3, Paul summarizes the purpose of the work he is doing on behalf of the Christians at Colosse, Laodicea, and other places. Can you put these verses in your own words?
3. Verse 4 makes reference to the false teachers we discussed in the last chapter. What relevance does this verse have in the 20th century?
4. What attitude does Paul reveal in verse 5?

2. Continue to Live in Christ (2:6-12)

In this section Paul gets back to refuting the Colossian heresy he dealt with in the first chapter. He begins by complimenting the Christians at Colosse and then moves into theology.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Why do you think Paul makes reference to the past in verses 6-7 before moving into theological warnings?

2. Knowing what you know about the false teachers in Colosse, what do you think Paul is trying to say in verse 8?

3. In verse 9, Paul repeats a critical Christological principle he has stated earlier, but then in verse 10, he adds an interesting twist. Can you identify this?

4. We know that Paul was strongly opposed to requiring the circumcision of Gentiles before they could become Christians. The people to whom he was writing this letter were probably not circumcised. And yet he says, "In him you were also circumcised" (v. 11). If you read the rest of the verse you'll understand this puzzle. What is Paul saying?

3. Alive With Christ (2:13-15)

In this section, Paul discusses the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross. Remember, he's not just writing nice, devotional material. He's battling against a serious heresy.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Paul reminds the Colossians (and us) that they were once "dead" in their sins. But at that point, what did God do? Compare this verse with Romans 5:8 (also written by Paul). What do these verses say about who takes the initiative in salvation?

2. What is the "written code" Paul refers to in verse 14? Why is this statement an important part of the refutation of the Colossian heresy?

3. Whom do you think Paul is referring to by "powers and authorities" (v. 15)?

4. The Reality is Christ (2:16-23)

In this section, Paul makes some of his strongest appeals to the Colossians to resist the false teachers who were trying to lead them astray.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Verse 16 begins with "therefore," a word that

means “because what I have just said is true, something else true will follow.” Review what Paul has said in verses 13-15 and put it into one statement.

2. Read verses 16, 18, 20-21, and 23 together. In the last session, we discussed at some length the theological--especially the Christological--components of the Colossian heresy. Here Paul talks about some of the other components. What picture do you get of what was happening at Colosse?

3. Remember that, as a Jew, Paul had been raised with the Old Testament law, including its rituals, ceremonies, and calendar. Although he frequently insists that Gentile Christians are not bound by those laws, nowhere does he say that those laws are bad. Most likely, Paul is still following those laws himself--at least most of them. Verse 17 gives us a clue to what Paul really thinks about the Jewish law. Compare this verse with Galatians 3:24-25. What was Paul's opinion of the law?

4. Compare verse 20 with Galatians 3:1-3.

LIVE THE WORD

How Are You Doing?

Have each youth draw a straight line on a piece of paper, and on one end of the line write “Newborn Christian Baby” and on the other end, write “Mature Christian” like below.

Newborn Christian Baby

Mature Christian Saint

Your students should first place an “X” on the line that indicates where they might place themselves in terms of spiritual growth. Assure them that they will not be asked to share this, and encourage them to respond honestly.

Then you together make a list of characteristics of a mature Christian. These should be qualities that they most desire in their own lives.

Finally, they should choose three characteristics and list three actions, one for each characteristic they have chosen. These actions should be specific, practical, and “do-able.”

Encourage them in their journey and reassure them that God desires them to be mature Christians and will help them if they allow Him to.

12 RULES FOR CHRISTIANS

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:1–4:18

KEY VERSE: “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand that believers and non-believers are different at the core because of a different “citizenship,” focus, and value structure.
2. Set their hearts on things above (3:1).
3. Orient their lives and lifestyles toward their eternal home.

PERSPECTIVE

Why is it that youth seem especially tuned to all the little things but are “clueless” about the big things? Youth reared in the church are experts at church language, church discipline, and church policy. But frequently they are woefully ignorant about the very basics of Christianity which give the church its very reason for existence.

It is not unusual to find youths who appear to be Christians--saying all the right things, doing all the right things, not doing any of the wrong things--but who, upon further investiga-

tion, have never had the change-of-heart experience of salvation. Why? They observed all the specific, identifiable, imitable, concrete aspects of Christianity as children (and that’s the main function of Christian education with children—cultural education). But when their own mental development allowed them to grasp the broader, abstract concepts of salvation, somehow they missed it.

Some youths are even so focused on externals and specifics that they actually believe that being a Christian is merely adopting a system of rules, behaviors, and terms. They really do not know that Christians are different at the very core from non-Christians.

This lesson seeks to focus on some of the reasons behind the external specifics and help youths understand what really changes when one becomes a disciple.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Paul’s letters all follow the same pattern. After the initial greetings, the apostle lunges into the theological concern which prompted his writing. In the first half of the letter he argues, defends, waxes eloquent, and otherwise proves his point. Then at about midpoint in the letter, he drops the theology and shifts--sometimes abruptly—to the practical.

In the previous two studies, we have looked

at the theological issues in Colossians. Now we will move to the practical section. But we should keep in mind that even the practices are grounded in theology.

Paul begins chapter 3 with “Since, then. . .” This is his transition from the previous section. In that section he was discussing their spiritual death with Christ. Now he is saying, “Since, then,” you have died and been raised with Christ, some things are (or should be) different in your lives.

His first comment is that the focus of their lives should be on “things above” rather than on “earthly things” (3:2). This is reminiscent of Philippians 3:20, where Paul reminds us that “our citizenship is in heaven,” and of Matthew 6:21, where Jesus explained that “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Because of the expansion of the Roman Empire into territories vast and wide, the entire Roman world was keenly aware of citizenship, of relocations, and of cultural differences from one province to the next. Paul uses this idea, likening the Christian to a person living in one country but with citizenship in another. If that person’s loyalties are to the country of his citizenship rather than to the country of his residence, his lifestyle may well be different from those of his neighbors.

Paul goes on to urge the Colossians to “put to death” all the values and behaviors that belong to the country of their residence (and of their former citizenship)—in other words, the world or the “earthly nature” (v. 5). He then lists several specific examples of the kind of values and behaviors he means in verses 5-6 and 8-9a.

But never let it be said that the Christian value system is simply a list of “don’ts.” Paul moves

in verses 10-17 to describe the freedom inherent in the Christian lifestyle. Here, too, he switches imagery. Now he is using the metaphor of clothing, noting that the Colossians have “taken off . . .” an old suit of clothes and “have put on . . .” a new suit. Carrying on with this idea, in verse 12 he urges them to “clothe” themselves with certain characteristics.

The idea here is that, just as a man would change his clothes after working outside before he goes to a formal dinner party, so the Christian has changed life-styles. Just as that man would be quite out of place wearing his soiled work shirt to the party, so is a Christian out of place engaging in sexual immorality or impurity (3:5). And just as that man would be correctly attired in bow tie and tuxedo, a Christian is correctly attired in compassion and kindness (v. 12).

Paul finishes off chapter 3 with a short version of Ephesians 5:21–6:9. It is interesting that he rushes through the instructions to wives, husbands, children, and fathers, in order to focus on slaves and masters. No doubt this is because of his concern for Onesimus (4:9), whom we will discuss in much detail when we study Philemon.

In chapter 4, Paul gives some instructions about the devout life, including injunctions about prayer and about conversation. Then he writes specific greetings to and about his various colleagues.

ENGAGE THE WORD

Black Ties

The following story illustrates the metaphor Paul uses: clothing. Ask one of your students in advance to be prepared to read this story at the beginning of your session.

At the end of the story, conduct a short discussion using the questions listed as starters.

Chad had been dating Karen, who came from a very wealthy family, for only a few weeks when she asked him to attend a dinner with her. “It’s being hosted by Daddy’s corporation and it’s very uptown,” she told him. “Black tie and all that.”

Chad accepted her invitation, but he wasn’t sure what he was getting himself into. He had a black tie, so he figured that and his new sweater he would be OK. However, when he told his mom about the dinner and his wardrobe plans, she laughed.

“Black tie’ means that the dinner is formal, Chad,” she explained. “You’ll have to rent a tuxedo suit. I hope you’ve got some money saved up, because you’ll need it.”

A week later, Chad was dressed up in his rented tux, complete with a pleated shirt, studs instead of buttons, a black bow tie, and a cummerbund. “I feel like the head waiter at Antonio’s Restaurant!” he complained.

Just as he was about to go out the door to go pick up Karen, his father stopped him. “Hold on, Mr. ‘Uptown.’ You can’t go with those shoes on your feet.”

“What’s wrong with them,” Chad protested. “I spent an hour polishing them.”

“But they’re casual shoes,” his Dad explained. “When you wear formal clothes you need formal shoes. I’ve got a pair of dress shoes I think will do the trick. They’ll be a little tight for your big feet, but at least you won’t look like a country bumpkin at this fancy dinner.”

1. What do you think would have happened if

Chad had gone to the dinner wearing his casual shoes?

2. Do you think Chad should have been able to attend the dinner dressed any way he wanted to?

3. What will Chad probably have to do if he continues dating Karen?

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Dressed in Holy Clothes (3:1-17)

As always, when Paul gets into specific lifestyle issues, we must deal with the old question of grace vs. law. If we are saved by grace and not by our good deeds, then why is Paul so anxious that our deeds be good?

Before you get involved with the specifics of each phrase and each verse in this section, try to see the broad strokes of Paul’s argument. Have someone read these verses and then answer the questions as a class:

1. Paul’s primary metaphor here is changing clothes. He says in verse 9-10 “since you have taken off . . . and have put on . . .” In verse 12 he says, “Clothe yourselves.” Thinking about Paul’s broad argument, and about how in your life you know that certain clothes are appropriate for certain occasions and others aren’t, try to put Paul’s thought into your own words.

2. In verses 1-2 Paul urges us to keep a certain focus. What is that focus? Compare these verses with Matthew 6:19-21.

3. Almost every time Paul talks about things a Christian should not do, he refers to them as belonging to the “sinful nature” (verse 5; compare with Galatians 5:19-21; 6:8; Colossians 2:11). What does he mean by this phrase?

4. If, as Christians, we have put on a new suit of clothes, what are the characteristics of those clothes? Read verses 12-17 slowly, checking off each “item of clothing” as you read it and comparing it to the “clothes” you are wearing. How’s your wardrobe looking?

2. Submission Partners (3:18–4:1)

This next section is a shortened form of Ephesians 5:21–6:9. As you did there, you should be sure to keep the pairs together: wives and husbands, children and fathers, slaves and masters.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. Why is it so important to keep the pairs together?

2. Any idea why Paul rushes through the first two pairs (wives/husbands and children/fathers) and then spends much more time on the last pair (slaves/masters)?

3. As you did in Ephesians, read verses 22-25 substituting the words “students” or “employees” every time you see “slaves.” Also substitute “teachers” or “employers” for “masters.” What do these verses say to you after you have made these substitutions?

3. The Devout Lifestyle (4:2-6)

These five short verses read a lot like the Book of Proverbs. Each sentence is a new instruction. Read these slowly out loud and then answer these questions as a class:

1. Notice that Paul, in a sense, defines prayer as “being watchful and thankful.” What do these two words mean?

2. Verse 5 contains two ideas. The first refers to the problem Paul deals with in the first half of this letter. What do you think the second idea refers to?

3. Verse 6 is one of those that speaks to us on an every-minute basis. Allow the Holy Spirit to interpret this verse for you and apply it to your life. What does He say to you?

4. Personal Greetings (4:7-18)

Paul always closes his letters with personal greetings, much the same way we write things like “Give my love to Grandpa” at the end of our letters. We are often tempted to skip over these verses, since we don’t know who these people are. But there are always some gems in these greetings. Don’t miss them.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. In this section the apostle mentions Aristarchus, a Macedonian Jew; Onesimus, a slave; Epaphras, a native Colossian pastor; and Nympha, a Laodicean woman. What do these facts tell you?

2. As we will discover in our next lesson, Onesimus was a runaway slave, being sent back to his master, Philemon. What does Paul’s reference to him in verse 9 tell us about both Onesimus and Paul?

3. In verse 10, Paul refers to Mark. This young man was at the center of one of the most disturbing chapters of Paul’s life. Remembering that Mark’s full name was John Mark and that he is frequently referred to as John, read Acts 13:5, 13; 15:36-40. Now, read verse 10 here and 2 Timothy 4:11. Summarize what happened in the Acts passages and then what you surmise must have happened between that incident and these passages. Can you learn anything about Paul and about Mark in all this?

4. In verse 14 Paul refers to “Nympha and the church in her house.” Remember that in the first century Christians did not meet in church buildings. What does this verse tell you?

5. As we have discussed before, Paul generally dictated his letters to a scribe, or secretary, who wrote them down. What does this tell you about verse 18?

5. Old Clothes, New Clothes

Introduce this portion of the lesson by communicating to your students the essence of the following paragraphs. This exercise will continue exploring the metaphors of “citizenship” and “new clothing” that were discussed in the previous exercise. Your students will discover exactly what Paul has to say about these issues in regard to the Colossians, and how these same truths can apply to us today.

Last session we discussed that the people the apostle Paul is writing to in Colosse are definitely Christians. Paul begins Colossians 3 with that idea: “Since, then...” you are Christians, he writes, act like Christians. Then he gives them some specific examples of what he means. He tells them what they should not be doing and what they should be doing.

Before you think this is just another listing of “Dos” and “Don’ts,” let’s look at what Paul says to find out exactly what he means.

LIVE THE WORD

Where Is Your Treasure?

Read to your class the two verses printed below.

- For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21).
- Set your hearts . . . [and] your minds on things above, not on earthly things (Colossians 3:1).

Then slowly read through the questions that follow--without asking for an oral or written response. Some of these questions are addressed to your students who are acting like Christians but who have never had the life-changing experience of accepting Jesus Christ into their lives. Keep this from being a moment fueled by guilt. We are not talking about hypocrites. We are talking about youths who are trying to be Christians but have the wrong idea of what it takes. Other questions speak to your Christian students who may still have in their lives attitudes or habits from their non-Christian lives. The following questions illustrate the double focus of this lesson:

- Where is your treasure? What is your mind and heart set on?
- Are you just living by the rules and customs of heaven, when your citizenship is really on earth? Are you wearing new clothes while still being the old you? Or are you a citizen of heaven while still keeping some of the customs of earth?

- Have you genuinely changed, but still have something in your life that is part of your old wardrobe--something you're holding on to, just because you haven't been brave enough, or trusting enough, or committed enough to throw it away?

- What do you need to pray about?

Be sensitive to the mood of the group and to the Holy Spirit as you close this session. The questions you have just asked may have allowed the Holy Spirit to speak to one or more of your students. They may need time to pray and perhaps someone to help them pray. Perhaps closing by singing a hymn or chorus would be helpful. Don't rush this conclusion.

13 BETTER THAN A SLAVE

STUDY SCRIPTURE: Philemon 1-25

KEY VERSE: “No longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother” (Philemon 16).

TEACHING AIMS

To help the learners:

1. Understand that in the Body of Christ there should be no artificial barriers to fellowship and love.
2. Desire brotherhood with persons of all races, cultures, and genders.
3. Examine their own lives to eliminate traces of prejudice.

PERSPECTIVE

In spite of the impressive gains made by various races, racial prejudice often seems as strong now as ever. And as our countries have become increasingly populated with persons of various origins and cultures, racial prejudice has extended to more groups.

It would be foolish to think that our youths are immune from this type of mindset. Even our youths who are members of minority groups are exposed to prejudice against the majority or against other minority groups.

This lesson looks at Paul’s letter to Philemon in order to consider the Christian response to artificial barriers of race, culture, and gender.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

Paul’s letter to Philemon is a unique book. It is the one of the few one-chapter books in the New Testament. And unlike the other four Pauline Epistles we have covered in this study, Philemon is a personal letter, addressed to a single individual rather than to a congregation.

Paul writes this short letter to his friend and fellow-Christian, Philemon, a member of the congregation at Colosse. This letter was written at the same time as the letter to the Colossians and was carried, along with that letter, to Colosse by Tychicus and Onesimus (see Colossians 4:7-9).

One of the bearers of these two letters, Onesimus, is the subject of the apostle’s letter to Philemon. Onesimus was formerly a slave to Philemon and apparently ran away, perhaps after stealing money or possessions from his owner (see v. 18). Somehow Onesimus wound up in Rome. Although we are not told how, he came in contact with Paul. Under the apostle’s influence, the runaway slave became a Christian (vv. 10, 16). After his conversion, Onesimus became Paul’s helper (vv. 11, 13). He also became dear to Paul. The apostle refers to Onesimus as his

“son” (v. 10) and as his “very heart” (v. 12).

But because of Paul’s regard for Philemon (v. 14), the apostle is sending the runaway slave back home. This was a risky thing to do. The punishment for a runaway slave could be virtually anything the owner desired--up to and including death. But Paul trusted Philemon.

Although, as an apostle, Paul felt he had the right to order Philemon to grant Onesimus his freedom (v. 8), he instead chose to appeal to the slave owner “on the basis of love” (v. 9). This letter is rich with the aroma of tender persuasion.

In spite of its warmth and beauty, however, this little letter has caused some difficulty in the centuries since its writing. Although the letter’s purpose is the freeing of the slave Onesimus, nowhere in the letter does Paul comment on the institution of slavery. He does not condemn slavery, nor does he condemn Philemon for practicing it. Surely Philemon was not the only slave-owner in the congregation at Colosse, and he probably owned other slaves in addition to Onesimus. But Paul does not plead for the release of these other slaves, just for Onesimus.

Supporters of slavery through the ages have used this book as proof that slavery is approved by God. Other Pauline passages—such as Ephesians 6:5-8 and Colossians 3:22-25—haven’t helped much either.

But Paul’s silence on the institution of slavery in this book cannot be taken as implied approval. Slavery had been a fact of life in virtually every society up to the Roman Empire. And in the Roman Empire it was everywhere. It has been estimated that slaves constituted one-third of the population of Rome and other major cities.

Because this letter was addressed to one individual, it is natural that Paul would not attempt in it to take on one of the largest and most firmly rooted institutions of society. He was simply doing his part to combat slavery where he could.

It cannot be overlooked that this letter must have been influential in the church at Colosse. The reappearance of Onesimus with Tychicus was a public event. No doubt the entire church knew of the circumstances and of the content of Paul’s letter. Assuming that Philemon granted Paul’s request to free Onesimus, certainly a precedent was set.

It also cannot be overlooked that the basis for Paul’s argument--that Philemon and Onesimus were really brothers in Christ--applied to most Christian slave owners. (Usually when the master of the house became a Christian, his entire household followed suit.) While Paul did not technically argue for the abolition of slavery in this letter, the application of this principle would do so.

This letter must be read in light of three other Pauline passages: 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28; and Colossians 3:11. Let’s look at the second of these passages, Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

It is clear in these passages that Paul tolerated no artificial barriers to brotherhood and fellowship in the Body of Christ. Neither race, social status, nor gender should separate disciples. This concept was crucial in taking the gospel to the world. And it is crucial in a multinational and pluralistic society such as the one in which we live.

ENGAGE THE WORD

It's Better to Be...

Begin this session by asking your youths to complete the following survey copied below.

Please indicate your choice by checking one response in each group of responses (If paper is not available, have them answer by raising their hands.)

It is better to be:

1. Male Female

2. Upper class Middle class Lower class

3. From a large city From a medium-sized city From a small town
 From a farm or ranch

4. A college graduate A high-school graduate A high-school drop-out

After they have individually recorded their responses, ask for a show of hands for each item in each group of characteristics.

Remember that your students have been asked to check one item in each group. If they follow instructions, they have been forced into making prejudiced statements!

Ask your students if the choices they made were easy or difficult. Read aloud Philemon 17-20. Ask you students why they think it was necessary for Paul to emphasize welcoming Onesimus as they would welcome Paul. Why couldn't Paul assume they would be just as "welcoming" to Onesimus as they would be to him? Point out the fact that accepting or not accepting others is often related to prejudice. Emphasize the fact that thinking in a prejudiced way is often easier than we may realize. But in Christ Jesus, we are all the same. It is important to view one another as Christ does.

EXPLORE THE WORD

1. Brother Philemon

With the exception of its address to an individual rather than a group, this letter begins much like the others we have studied. It is obvious that Paul has high regard for Philemon, a member of

the Colossian congregation.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. What words does Paul use in verses 1 and 7 to describe his relationship with Philemon? (Check also verse 17.)

2. After reading verses 4-7, what kind of fellow does Philemon appear to be?

3. Given this introduction, what might you expect the rest of the letter to be about?

2. No Longer as a Slave (8-25)

In this section, Paul gets into the main point of the letter. Remember that this is a letter, not a chapter in a history book. You have to hunt for clues, read between the lines, and put several verses together to figure out the story.

Have someone read these verses out loud and then answer the following questions as a class:

1. There is a three-part story told here. Can you find it?

a. What was the original relationship between Philemon and Onesimus? How did Onesimus get to Rome?

b. What happened to Onesimus while he was in Rome under Paul's influence (v. 10, 16)?

c. What is Paul now asking of Philemon?

2. In Greek, the name "Onesimus" means "useful." How does Paul use this fact to make a play on words in verse 11?

3. Why doesn't Paul just keep Onesimus?

4. Paul says that he could "order" Philemon to release Onesimus. Why doesn't he? What tactics does he use?

5. Notice that Paul refers to himself as a "prisoner" in verses 1 and 9. He also refers to his "chains" in verses 10 and 13. We know that the apostle was in prison when he wrote this, but these references seem to be more than casual information. Do you think he is trying to point something out to Philemon?

6. If Philemon grants Paul's request, what will be the new relationship between Philemon and Onesimus?

7. We know that the punishments for a runaway slave could be severe, including even death. What kind of risk is Onesimus taking by returning to Philemon? Why do you think he is taking this risk?

3. The Institution of Slavery

Before we conclude our study, we must discuss an important issue. During the first half of the 19th century, some people in the world actually used this book as an argument for slavery. How could they do that? First of all, nowhere does Paul say that slavery itself is wrong. He is just pleading for the freedom of one particular slave. Second, Philemon wasn't the only slave owner in Colosse, and Onesimus probably wasn't Philemon's only slave. Yet Paul does not plead for the release of any other slaves. Thirdly, Paul regards Philemon to be a Christian--and a good one. He doesn't indicate anywhere that Philemon will cease being a Christian if he doesn't free Onesimus.

Was Paul really in favor of the institution of slavery? As you think about this problem, consider these questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28; and Colossians 3:11. How do these verses help illuminate Paul's feelings about slavery?

2. Slavery was an accepted institution in the ancient world. In fact, it had been an accepted institution in almost every civilization prior to the Roman Empire. Does Paul's failure to condemn this universal practice in this one, personal letter, mean that he approved of the practice?

3. Certainly, there is no question that Paul does not technically condemn slavery in this letter. But if all slave owners lived by the spirit of this letter, what would happen to the institution of slavery?

LIVE THE WORD

On the Basis of Love

Read the following and ask your students to examine this list of types of individuals whom we sometimes are prejudiced against. Encourage your students to check any item that causes them to look down on individuals. Assure your students that they will not be asked to share with the group how they respond to this list.

Take a few moments to examine your life. Are there prejudices that shouldn't be there? Do you look down on people who . . .

- ___ are of a different race?
- ___ come from a different part of the country or world?
- ___ speak differently from you?
- ___ have less (or more) money?
- ___ have family traditions and customs that are different from your family's?
- ___ are not as intelligent as you? (or who are more intelligent?)
- ___ are handicapped?
- ___ are a different gender?
- ___ are short? tall? unattractive? uncoordinated?

Paul said to Philemon,

I appeal to you on the basis of love (v. 9) to consider Onesimus no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother (v. 16).

Can you, on the basis of love, look at those around you especially at any of those who fit the descriptions you checked above--as brothers and sisters? Can you accept them, love them, value them, as someone just like you?

After the students have had a few minutes of quiet time to work, read to them Philemon 9 and 16. Emphasize that it is love that destroys prejudice. Give your class a few moments to silently consider this lesson. Close as you feel appropriate.

BIBLE QUIZZING

A PERSPECTIVE

What is Bible Quizzing?

Bible Quizzing is a program that helps youths study and learn about the Scriptures. About once a month, youths from different churches gather for a time of fellowship and competition. In each competition, there are questions about a specific pre-announced portion of Scripture and the teams compete in order to correctly answer those questions.

The official slogan of the Nazarene Youth International is quoted from I Timothy 4:12 - "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity". The purpose of Bible Quizzing is to help cultivate the actions, attitudes, and the lifestyle that are necessary to accomplish this slogan. The Bible Quiz program intends to reach this goal through a tactic that is divided in these different areas:

- An avenue of meaningful Bible study for youth to attain a deep and intimate knowledge of Scripture.
- A means of increasing fellowship and interaction among youth around the world.
- An integral part of the outreach and discipleship aspects of local church youth ministry.
- A medium for the training and mentoring of youth leadership.

- A catalyst for encouraging active participation in ministry and mission projects.
- A bridge for building relationships between youth from different world regions.
- An arena for exciting Christian competition.

Rules alone can never prevent unfair tactics or unsportsmanlike attitudes. However, these rules are necessary in order for the competition aspect of Bible quizzing to be clear and consistent. It is the duty of every individual associated with Bible quizzing to uphold the integrity and intent of these rules and guidelines. Any attempt to gain an advantage by circumvention, disregard, or manipulation is un-ethical and detrimental to the mission and purpose of Bible quizzing. The pursuit of success must never dominate the commitment to exhibit a Christ-like example.

How to Organize a Bible Quizzing Ministry?

1. Bible Quizzes are intended to be for youths between 12 and 25 years old. You may want to divide the competition into two categories: 12-18, and 19-25.
2. The year for Bible Quizzing starts in August through May or June of the following year, or January 1st and continues until

November or December (whichever works better for your district). Decide how much Scripture to be covered at each weekly meeting (e.g. one chapter or one story) and plan a calendar study chart.

3. During the year a tournament will be planned for every one or two months, generally on a Saturday or a Sunday afternoon.
4. Every local church can have one or more teams that meet together for Bible study and competition practice. Each team is composed of 4 or more people in a small group setting.
5. The location for the competition events (tournaments) must be rotated amongst all the churches participating in the District.
6. For every year, there is a book (or books) from the New Testament that is used as a resource material for the questions of the competition.

Following is the 8 year cycle that is used around the world for Quizzing.

- Romans and James
- Acts
- Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon
- Luke
- 1 & 2 Corinthians
- John
- Hebrews and 1 & 2 Peter
- Matthew

Then the cycle begins again.

7. Every church must have someone who is

the Bible Quiz chairman and two or three more mature helpers to help train the teams and lead them in a weekly Bible study over the Scripture. (e.g. If meeting twice a week, spend time in Bible study, discussion, devotion and make an effort to understand the material together in one meeting. In a second meeting spend time practicing for competition. If meeting once a week divide the time between Bible Study and Competition practice.)

8. The District must have an elected or nominated Bible Quiz chairman, to plan and organize the calendar of the competition and also co-ordinate the different tournaments.

How to organize a weekly Bible team meeting

1. Before the meeting, the leader should read and study the material to be covered during the meeting. Pray for the Lord's guidance.
2. The leader should arrive at the church where the Bible Study will take place before the time in order to prepare.
3. The group can play a game that helps the group begin thinking about the Scripture being covered.
4. Pray together.
5. Read the material out loud together. Spend time asking and answering questions regarding the passage. Help everyone in the group understand what the Scripture means.
6. Allow God to speak through the message of the text. Share a story or a personal experience that relates to the Scripture.
7. Allow time for more questions or input re-

garding the understanding.

8. Talk about what kind of response the Scripture calls for in the life of the church or in individual lives.

9. Close with prayer.

10. Encourage the study of material for next meeting. Hand out a paper w/ the material to be covered in the next meeting, the time, the place, and some study questions.

How to organize a weekly competition practice

1. After the Bible Study or at a separate time during the week, practice for competition.

2. Encourage the memorization of important verses; spend time memorizing and quoting to each other.

3. Play a learning game to familiarize the group with the material being covered (ex. Hangman or Pictionary or charades).

4. Ask quizzing questions from the material being covered. (see examples)

5. Divide the group and compete against each other.

6. Keep the focus on knowing and understanding the Word and not on winning and losing.

7. Give out study “homework” for next practice.

COACHING

Coach’s Job Description

1. Plan and attend practices

2. Arrange for personnel at practice and quizzes

3. Arrange trips to district invitationals and coach a team

4. Plan and participate on trips to off district tournaments

5. Contact quizzers on a weekly basis using notes (maybe an email) and phone calls

6. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all quizzing events

7. Demonstrate and facilitate interest in God’s Word

8. Plan quiz parties at least twice during the quiz year

9. Recruit new quizzers and coaches

10. Plan a demonstration quiz with local pastors

11. Mentor assistant coaches

12. Organize and lead weekly devotionals (at practice or maybe during Sunday School)

13. Keep statistical records from quizzes

14. Manage a quiz budget if available from the local NYI

15. Keep an organized quiz schedule and keep parents of quizzing up to date

16. Keep local pastors updated on the state of quizzing. Encourage announcements, make sure events are on the church and NYI calendars and interact with the pastors on a regular basis

17. Product a newsletter to keep everyone, especially parents, up to date

18. Attend non-quizzing activities that the quizzers may be involved in. For example, a band concert or play at school

19. Integrate with the rest of the youth group. Be involved in other activities with the youths and work together with the NYI president or youth pastor. They will feel more comfortable with you when that occurs.

Assistant Coach's Responsibilities

1. Attend practices and assist with the quiz activities – be a quizmaster or scorekeeper
2. Coach at district invitationals and off district tournaments
3. Call quizzers during the week to encourage them to study and see how things are going
4. Check quizzer's memory verse recall at practice
5. Fill in during the coach's absence
6. Help lead devotionals
7. Assist in team formation – give opinions about how quizzers are doing and share with the coach

HOW TO MOTIVATE

Every individual has a personal agenda, the "Real Reason" he or she wants to be on the team. That personal agenda is the key to motivating each person.

It has been said that the only true motivation is self-motivation. If that is true, then our responsibility is to remove the barriers that demotivate an individual. Some factors that can limit a quizzers motivation is the fear of failure, not being successful, lack of excitement, lack of chal-

lenges and not seeing what they are capable of achieving in quizzing.

A quizzer may become less motivated because they do not realize what they are capable of accomplishing. When a quizzer experiences success or sees what they might accomplish, they become excited. Our goal should be to help them have big dreams or the desire to do better.

Quizzers like to be involved in things that provide them a sense of success. If they do not perceive that they have been successful, then they will not give more than the minimum effort required or they will drop out altogether. They must also have a sense of security and safety within the group. If they do not feel safe or accepted, many quizzers will not risk failure.

The biggest thing that makes quizzing different from any other Bible study is the competition factor. This factor is also a key to motivating most quizzers. Most people like to win and will often go to great lengths to win as long as the correct environment is there. Most quizzers are naturally motivated by the competition, but lack the safety from failure, and the vision to push themselves.

Seeing and knowing that there is more to achieve can be just the challenge needed to motivate. Help your quizzers see what they can accomplish if they work hard enough. Let them see really good teams quiz, great individual quizzers and award ceremonies. Discuss what it will take to accomplish what they have seen. It may take a while to convince them that they can accomplish the same thing.

Help them to create individual and group goals. Make some of them easily attainable and others that require a great stretch to achieve. Most quizzers also need to see how they have been

successful before they will dare try to accomplish more. Each of us is normally our harshest critic. Take every opportunity to point out the successes, no matter how small they may be. Look hard to find things to compliment every quizzers on.

True motivation is internal, but external factors can play an important role in motivation. Consider these ideas when motivating.

- Set a good example – your enthusiasm will rub off on them
- Set appropriate goals – create multiple goals including some that will challenge them
- Give lots of feedback – praise first and then improvement
- Help quizzers measure success against themselves not others
- Provide incentives for reaching goals
- Keep track of personal scores and awards
- Make trips to tournaments
- Allow quizzers the opportunity to quizmaster when they reach certain goals like quizzing out or studying a certain amount
- Provide public recognition in church

Another effective way to help motivate is to create some yearly awards. Feel free to make up some unique ones of your own. Make sure the quizzers know exactly how to earn them and try to keep them updated on how they are doing.

Organizing a Quiz Competition Tournament

What to do before the tournament

1. Announce, clearly, to all the participants, coaches, and officials the details of the Quiz (date, time and place, what to study, etc.)

2. Prepare the questions

a. Write down the questions or use prepared questions.

b. Divide the questions into groups of 22 or 23 (That would be 20 questions, plus extras for bonus questions or challenges.) You will need enough groups of questions for all the rounds.

3. Choose a format for the Quiz (Each team quiz each team; Round-robin style with each team quizzing within a group of 4-5, and the winner of each group quizzing against each other for the championship, etc.)

4. Arrange for people to serve as Quiz Chairman (he or she reads the questions and rules on the correctness of the answer) and scorekeepers/jump judges (He or she keeps score and determines who jumped first for each question. Jump judges are not used if electronic jump seats are used.) If you have enough teams, you might have 3, 4, or more competitions going on at the same time in different rooms. If that is the case, you will need a Quiz Chairman and a scorekeeper for each competition.

5. Organize with someone to provide something to eat and drink. You may charge a fee for lunch, or have each person bring their own lunch.

6. Make or buy the prizes

a. Choose some special prizes (Bibles, books, trophies, etc.)

b. Make strips or ribbons (for individu

als and for teams)

7. Make copies of points sheets
8. Make a list of the announcements for the beginning of the competition
9. Choose someone to lead a short devotional time before the tournament begins.

What to do on the tournament day

1. Arrive at the church where the tournament will take place at least one hour before the time in order to prepare the venue.

2. Items to take to the tournament

- a. Points sheets
- b. Groups of questions (hidden from the participants)
- c. Pencils or pens for the quizzing officials
- d. Prizes
- e. Tape recorder and music tapes (optional)

3. Organize the venue

- a. A table and chairs for the quizzing of officials. (One set needed for each competition location.)
- b. 2 benches or 8 chairs for the contestants
- c. Seats for the quiz officials
- d. Microphones (optional) - 1 for the quiz chairman and 1 for the contestants
- e. Tape recorder and music tapes

f. Prizes

4. Begin the quiz with the devotion and the announcements

5. After the quiz

- a. Sum up the points and organize the contestants according to their points
- b. Give the prizes.
- c. Pray
- d. Clean the church

Rules for Youth Bible Quizzing for the Church of the Nazarene

These rules are necessary to run a program whose purposes are clear and solid. Every member of the Bible Quizzing program must make sure that the rules and the program are respected. However, these rules cannot prevent unfair acts or attitudes that are not fair play. The actions and attitudes of those who are involved (teams members, coaches, competition officials, etc) must reflect the purposes and objectives of the program and of NYI. The pursuit of success must not dominate the goal of exhibiting a Christ-like attitude.

METHODS OF COMPETITION - Before any competition, the chairman should choose the quizzing method (electronic jump seats or jump judges) for all the teams. The methods that are going to be used must be clearly indicated to the officials, coaches, and captains of the team before the beginning of the competition.

THE TEAM

1. The Team is composed of four or more

contestants who regularly attend the Church of the Nazarene and are members of the local NYI. More than five contestants can be used on a team during a competition, but only five can be included in the team in each round. No one can be a member of the team if he or she has attended any university, college, Bible school, or any other educational training beyond high school.

2. The coach can talk with or assist his team only during the breaks between the questions.
3. Only four contestants per team can be competing. The fifth one is substitute.
4. Specific members of each team must be designated by the coach before the competition as the captain, and another as co-captain.
5. Only the captain can talk with the quiz chairman after a decision, either to challenge a decision, to protest, or to correct.

THE OFFICIALS OF THE QUIZ

A. The Quiz Director - the person who organizes the tournament. His or her responsibilities include:

1. Prepare the study and tournament calendar in advance
2. Obtain all the officials necessary for the competition.
3. Provide all necessary materials for the competition: seats, groups of questions, score sheets, copy of biblical material, a stopwatch, pencil, etc.
4. Prepare enough groups of questions for the competition.

5. Prepare or buy the prizes for the quiz: certificates, trophies, or others
6. Advertise the time, place and date of the tournament in all local churches and to all the people involved.

B. The Quiz Chairman - the person who leads and controls the rounds in the tournament. His or her responsibilities include:

1. A good knowledge of the rules and of the material in the competition. During a competition, the interpretation of the Quiz Chairman is final.
2. Be unbiased and consistent.
3. Read each question during the round
4. Recognize the first contestant and ask for the answer.
5. Judge the correctness of each answer
6. Consult, if necessary and wanted, with the scorekeeper when judging answers, challenges, or appeals.
7. Note faults when they take place

C. The Scorekeeper - the person who maintains the official scoring sheet during the tournament rounds. His or her responsibilities include:

1. A good knowledge of the rules of the Bible Quiz
2. Register each member of the competing teams onto the scoring sheet.
3. Register points obtained and/or lost by each team and individual contestant.

4. Notify the Quiz Chairman when a contestant:
 - a. Has correctly answered four questions
 - b. Has committed three errors
5. Regularly notify the Quiz Chairman of the running score
6. Register the final team and individual results
7. Serve as timekeeper.

THE TOURNAMENT

1. Duration of the tournament.
 - a. There are 20 questions in a round
 - b. If there is a draw after twenty questions, there will be play-off questions until the draw is broken. Only one question is necessary to break the draw, unless no one answers it.
2. Composition of the teams
 - a. Each team's coach must give the names of his or her team to the scorekeeper before the first question is read.
 - b. The captain and the co-captain of the team must be designated before the first question is read.
3. Breaks.
 - a. A break lasts for one minute and can only be asked between questions.
 - b. Each team can ask for two breaks per round, and only the captain, the coach, or one of the officials can ask for a break.
4. Substitutions
 - a. The coach can only change an active mem-

ber during a break. The contestant that leaves a round is a substitute and can come back in the competition later. The substitute comes back automatically to the competition when one of the contestants answers all the questions he has to answer, or makes all the faults and/or errors he is allowed to make.

b. Only a substitute can take the place of a contestant - two contestants who already are competing cannot exchange places.

5. Questions

a. All the questions will be based on the same version of the Bible (announced ahead of time).

b. A question for all can be read only once.

c. If no contestant stands to answer a question within five seconds after it has been read, it will be considered closed. The Quiz Chairman must read the answer, and go on. No points will be given for that question.

d. At any time before beginning to read the next question, the Quiz Chairman can throw out a question that contains incorrect information or has not been well read.

e. A captain may appeal to the Quiz Chairman if there is incorrect information in a question, if the question was not well read, or if the question could not be understood because of interference.

6. Electronic Seats

a. The equipment used for a Bible Quizzing competition is called "jump seats". The cushions are plugged in to a box at the officials' table. Each cushion functions as a switch that shows with a light who stood up first.

b. When all the lights are off (all the contestants are seated) the Quiz Chairman can start reading a question.

c. When the question is being read, the first contestant to stand must answer the question

d. The Quiz Chairman observes the lights while reading the questions.

e. When a light is on, the Quiz Chairman stops reading, and calls the name of the contestant whose light is on.

N.B. Most quizzing programs will not have access to jump seats to begin with. In that case, a Jump Judge (or scorekeeper) will determine who jumped first.

7. Answers

a. A contestant cannot answer before being recognized by name by the Quiz Chairman.

b. The time limit of 30 seconds starts immediately after the contestant is recognized by the Quiz Chairman.

c. The contestant must finish the question (if he interrupted the reading of the question) and give the correct and complete answer during the 30 seconds time limit.

d. The Quiz Chairman cannot repeat the question or give any information to the contestant. The contestant must answer without any help.

e. If the correct question and answer are given in the correct time limit, without any errors in information, the answer will be considered as correct.

DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS

The Quiz Chairman must judge if the answers

are correct this way:

1. When the contestant gives all the necessary information for the question and the answer, and sits back down, the Quiz Chairman will judge if the answer is correct.

2. The Quiz Chairman must not interrupt the contestant. The only exception is when the contestant gives enough incorrect information to eliminate any possibility to give a correct answer. If more information is necessary, the Quiz Chairman will not say anything until the contestant sits down or the 30 seconds time limit has ended.

3. If the Quiz Chairman considers that an answer is “correct” the points will be given to the team and the contestant.

4. If the Quiz Chairman considers that an answer is “incorrect”, the points will be deducted from the score of the team and/or contestant (if after question 16), and a bonus question will be read.

5. The Quiz Chairman will not judge an answer “incorrect” because of a pronunciation error.

ERRORS AND BONUS QUESTIONS

1. If an incorrect answer is given, the contestant with the corresponding seat on the opposite team can answer that question as a bonus.

2. The Quiz Chairman must read the question completely before the contestant answers the bonus question.

3. The contestant must answer the bonus question within 30 seconds.

4. A correct answer to a bonus question is worth 10 points for the team of the contestant.

ant who answered the question. Individual points are not given for bonus questions.

5. Points will not be deducted for incorrect answers given to bonus questions.

CHALLENGE AND APPEALS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS

1. Only the acting team captain can challenge or appeal the decisions of the officials.

2. The captain may not challenge or appeal before the question and the bonus question (if necessary) are asked, answered and judged. All the challenges or appeals must be done before the beginning of the next question.

3. There may be no communication between the coach & captain, between two contestants, or the contestants and the audience.

4. Each captain can challenge a question only once.

5. Challenge

- a. A captain may challenge a decision of the Quiz Chairman if he thinks an incorrect decision has been taken.
- b. The captain can ask the Quiz Chairman to read the correct question and answer before challenging.
- c. The captain of the other team can refute the challenge, once it is complete.
- d. After hearing the challenge and the refutation, the Quiz Chairman will judge the validity of the challenge.
- e. The challenge will be invalidated if it contains incorrect information, or if the argument does not justify a differ-

ent decision than the first one.

f. The challenge will be accepted when the argument justifies the modification of the previous decision. When a challenge is accepted and the previous decision is reversed. The points will be adjusted as if the error happened in the beginning.

6. Appeals

- a. The captain can appeal to the Quiz Chairman to invalidate the answer due to an incorrect reading, incorrect information in the question, or visual/audio interference.
- b. After hearing the appeal, the Quiz Chairman may consult the scorekeeper for the final decision.
- c. The appeal will be upheld if the argument justifies the change of the first decision.
- d. When an appeal is upheld, the question appealed will be invalidated, and another question will be asked.
- e. The official point sheet must be changed as if the appealed question was not asked. The points given after the first decision will be deducted and the points deducted after the first decision are given again.

FAULTS

1. There is a fault when:

- a. There is communication (verbal or non-verbal) after the Quiz Chairman asks the Question and before the points are given.

b. A contestant begins answering a question before being recognized by the Quiz Chairman.

2. Any contestant who does three faults in a round must leave the round. He may be substituted.

POINTS

1. A correct answer to a question is worth 20 points for the team and the individual contestant.

2. A correct answer for a bonus question is worth 10 points for the team.

3. Four correct answers (not including bonus questions) by any one contestant is worth 10 bonus points for the team and the contestant who answered the four questions. This is called a “quiz out”. When a contestant has quizzed out, he or she must step down from the quizzing seat and may be substituted for if there is a substitute.

4. When 3 members from the same team answer at least one question correctly, there is a 10 point bonus for the team.

a. The fourth contestant who answers correctly gains 10 points for the team

b. The fifth contestant who answers correctly gains 10 more bonus points

5. Beginning with question #16, 10 points are deducted from the points of the team for each error.

6. At the third error of a contestant, 10 points are deducted from the points of the team and of the contestant. This is called an “error out” and the contestant may no longer answer questions for that round. The contestant may be substi-

tuted for.

7. For the fifth error of the team (and each subsequent error) 10 points will be deducted from the points of the team.

8. The points for the play-off questions after the time limit are not part of the individual or team points.

Study Tips: Memorization

Memory Verses

If your quizzers plan to learn all the memory verses this year, you’ll want to pay special attention to the prejump list in the back of Book 1. The purpose of having a prejump list is to show them where the earliest “safe” place to jump on each memory verse is, and to help you learn to complete the verse with the fewest possible beginning words. Use it to perfect their skills in jumping on memory verses. Also, download the free memory verse flash cards from www.youthquiz.com or from the Power Tools CD.

“15” Method

1. Read the verse through a couple of times.

2. Have them say it without looking. If they get stuck, check the Scripture, and then go on.

3. When they can say the verse through without looking, they’re ready to start memorizing. (You thought you were through, didn’t you?)

4. Have them say the verse through as fast as they can, five times, without a mistake. If they make a mistake, start over.

5. Read the verse again to make sure they are saying it right. If not, do it over.
6. Have them say the verse five more times without a mistake. Then five more times. (That makes 15.) If at any time they make a mistake, start over with that group of five.
7. Do the next verse the same way, then return to the first verse memorized to make sure they still know it?
8. Continue the process until they are done memorizing.

Writing Questions

It's a proven fact that the more you deal with a subject, the better you learn and remember it. It is a great idea to have your quizzers write their own questions as they study the material. Make sure they have a solid knowledge of the material before they begin to write questions. Once they do, they will find that practicing forming questions and answers will really test their knowledge of the material. Once they learn this method, you might find they don't need to actually write the questions and answers down on paper; it may be enough to simply form questions mentally and answer them in their mind. Those written questions could be used in practice and compared to the questions in this book.

Phrase Method

1. Read the verse carefully, making sure they understand its meaning.
2. Break the verse into phrases (punctuation marks do this pretty well) and say each phrase several times, emphasizing words that are difficult to remember.
3. Read the entire verse again, concentrating on difficult parts.

4. Quote the verse 5 or 6 times, or until they can say it smoothly without error.
5. Review the verse about 10 times the same day they learn it.
6. Review the verse at least once a day for three or four days after they learn it.

3-5-7 Plan

Assume that you've just studied 1 Corinthians 8. Now have the quizzers review the chapter three chapters before this chapter—chapter 5. Then review the chapter five before—chapter 3. Then review the chapter seven before your original chapter—chapter 1. Hence, the name 3-5-7 Plan. When the total number of chapters gets high enough, it will need to become the 3-5-7-9 Plan.

Index Cards

A great way to help quizzers learn the memory verses (or all of the material) is to create a catalog of the verses they (or you want them) want to memorize. Write or type each verse on one side of an index card and put its reference on the back. Computer programs have made this a somewhat simple task, especially with the ability to purchase the NIV for that computer. (It's important that they do this step themselves (regardless of the method); try not to have their parents or you as coach do this for them. The cards will mean much more to them—and they'll remember the verse much better as well—if they take the time to mentally process each verse as they prepare the catalog.) Once they have all the verses on cards, they're now ready to begin. They'll probably want to memorize the verses in the order as they appear in the Scripture. Have them use any of the memorization methods already mentioned to actually learn the verse.

The big advantage of this method is being able to separate those verses that they're having difficulty learning. They will also be able to review the verses by looking at the reference or review the references by looking at the verses.

Study Tip: Comprehension Underline Method

Have the quizzers read the chapter enough times that they know most of it, starting at the beginning of the chapter and underlining every fact in the chapter that they are not sure they would remember in a quiz without further study. Then, beginning with the first verse, have them study all the underlined phrases. To fully complete the study method, have them continue working on all these phrases until they know each of them well enough to recall details in a quiz.

Study Tip: Reading

CD/Cassette Method/MP3/Podcast

Learning comes easier when one can not only see the words but hear them as well. You can purchase a pre-made audio recording of the book to help your quizzers read and memorize. You might consider making your own recording using a blank recordable CD, (you will need a computer with a microphone and appropriate recording software) or a cassette tape and recording your own voice reading each chapter for study purposes. (Remember that it is illegal to make copies of pre-made Bible recordings, or to distribute or sell copies of your own voice recording of Bible passages without permission.) This may take some time, but you'll find it worth your while in the long run. Remember to read clearly and loudly. You might want to identify each chapter and/or verse with its reference as you come to it. Recorded CD's should be avail-

able at www.youthquiz.com.

There are several ways you can use a recording like this in your study. Here are a couple:

- **Straight Reading**—Read along in the Bible or scripture portion, and listen carefully to the recording at the same time while reading. In this way, they will not only see the words on the page but hear the words as well. This combination will help them remember the material better. A variation is to try to quote the material along with the recording.
- **Pantomime Reading**—Turn on the CD/Tape player/MP3 player. As the verses are read, pantomime (act out) everything that is happening. Exaggerate! Do fun, crazy things to act out the passages. If they are not too self-conscious, have your quizzers act out the passages. You'll be surprised to see how well this method helps them remember the material.

Straight Reading Method

Simply have them read through the chapter carefully and thoughtfully five times. The more they read something, the better they will know it. Also, have them read the related scripture or commentary if they have some type of reference Bible. Be careful to use only the NIV for memory work but other versions can be helpful when trying to understand what the author is trying to convey.

Repetition Method

1. Read verse 1 (of the chapter they are studying) three times.
2. Read verse 2 three times, verse 3 three times, verse 4 three times, and verse 5 three times.

3. Now read verses 1 through 5 all together at once.
4. Read verses 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 three times each.
5. Now read verses 6 through 10 all together at once.
6. Now go back to verse 1 and read straight through to verse 10.
7. Read verses 11 through 15, each three times; then read them together once; then go back to verse 1 and read through to verse 15.
8. Read verses 16 through 20 three times each; then 16 to 20 once all together; then 1 to 20 altogether.
9. Keep doing this until they finish the chapter.

Paraphrase Method

Have you ever stopped to think that if you were writing some of the Scriptures you're studying; it would sound a lot different from what you are reading?

Before you suggest this method to your quizzers, they'll need about three or four pieces of notebook paper. At the top of the first page they should write the number of the chapter they'll be reading. Have them read the chapter, through a couple of times. Now the goal is for them to rewrite the chapter, verse by verse, in their own words.

They can make it serious or funny, creative or normal—however they usually talk. They should paraphrase (explain how to accomplish paraphrasing) at least 10 verses of a chapter just to find out if they like this method. They do not even have to use it all the time. They should try it once in a while to lend variety to their study-

ing.

Study Tip: Prejumping

Question Writing

In order to fine tune your quizzers prejumping ability it is really not as important for them to write hundreds of questions as it is for them to learn how to write questions. You will eventually have them move from actually writing questions and answers to simply forming them mentally. The key to good prejumping is not simply winning the jump but being able to correctly complete the question from the point where they jumped. Learning to recognize questions and answers in their mind will be of tremendous advantage as they begin to prejump.

In the average verse, there are four or five possible quiz questions. Even though several questions may cover the same information, the way a quizzer prejumps on each question is different. So, it is helpful to be able to look at a verse and see the different questions that can come from it. To write a question, have them begin by finding the answer in the verse and then decide how to ask a question about it. Beginning at the first verse, have them look at each phrase, each noun, each action verb, each adjective, and each adverb, to see if any could be an answer to questions. Then, have they written the questions.

Key Word Spotting

Key word spotting is to help a quizzer be able to jump faster. It is very difficult to improve their jump reaction time without learning to spot key words.

What is a key word? The key word is the word that comes at that place in the question where, for the first time, one can tell what the rest of the question is. In other words, if they hear a ques-

tion and the quizmaster stops reading just before the key word, they won't know for certain what the rest of the question is. There may be only a few possibilities, and they may make an educated (or lucky!) guess, but they won't be for certain. However, if they were to hear one more word—the key word—they would know without a doubt what the correct question is.

Your job as a coach is to help the quizzer learn to locate that key word so that they can jump at that place in the question. In a quiz, that means faster decision-making under pressure. To get started, though, have them practice with a few questions and take all the time they need to decide what is the key word.

Here is an important point to remember: the key word will not always be the same for everyone! The better they know the chapter, the sooner they will be able to jump. Right now the key word for questions may be the last word; but by the end of the year, the key word on some of the very same questions could possibly be the third or fourth word. The key word changes as their knowledge of the material improves.

Anticipating the Key Word

Anticipation is accurately predicting that the next word of the question will be the key word. Why anticipate you ask? If a quizzer can tell that the next word of a question will be the key word, then they can jump just as the quizmaster begins to say it, but late enough that he or she does not have time to stop before he or she says at least the first syllable of the key word. The quizzer can then identify the key word by watching the quizmaster's mouth as a clue to the remainder of the word. This means that they will actually jump before they hear the complete question! If they can learn to anticipate accurately, they will obviously win many more jumps than a quizzer

who does not anticipate. Remember, though, that anticipating is taking a definite risk; they will want to be sure that they know the material well enough to take this risk before you jump! Prejumping is a major hurdle for most quizzers to overcome, but when they do, they will find competition much easier.

Recording Jumping

To practice their jumping and to improve anticipation of the key word, you may want to try this method. In order to use this method they will need computer recording equipment and a CD/DVD/MP3 burner, or a simple cassette recorder. To prepare for the study, record some of the questions and the answers to the CD/DVD/MP3 or cassette. Start the CD/DVD/MP3 or cassette and have them “jump” (either physically or mentally), and stop the recording at the point where they jump. Now have them try to complete the question and give the correct answer. To check yourself simply restart the cassette and then listen to the correct question and answer. They'll find that as their knowledge of the material increases, their ability to prejump earlier also improves.

Study Tip: General Review

After studying one-fourth of the chapters, take time out for a general review of all the chapters they've covered. Test them in each of the following areas:

1. Have them read through each chapter again. If there is time, they may even want to use a repetition method (Read chapter 1, then read chapters 1 and 2, then read chapters 1, 2, and 3, etc.)
2. Have them write out either a chapter-by-chapter outline, or a list of what events are in

each chapter.

3. Have them review all the underlined phrases that they thought they might not remember in a quiz. Test them to see how well they still remember those verses. If they've forgotten any of the phrases, spend some more time studying with them.

4. Work with the prejump list of memory verses, and test their ability to complete each verse and give the reference.

Repeat this general review after completing one-half, then three-fourths, then all of the chapters. In each case, review all the chapters they've covered.

Study Tip: Using a Concordance

Have you ever noticed how some quizzers always seem to be able to jump way before your quizzers do? And how you could say almost any word in the material and they can tell you exactly what verse it's in? Chances are that those quizzers have been using a concordance.

What is a concordance? A concordance is a type of index—you know, those lists in the back of books that tell you where a certain subject is mentioned. A biblical concordance will tell you where and how many times any word is used in the Scripture. (Would it surprise you to know that the word “the” is used 55,728 times throughout the Bible?!) There are several types of these concordances: entire Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, and individual book concordances.

How can you use a concordance to help your quizzers in their study? Each year, youthquiz.com makes available a Quizzer's concordance that covers only the material being covered during that quiz year. This resource will tell you where and how many times each word is used

in this book. Of special help to a quizzer is the list of “Unique Words.” These are words that are used only once in the material.

Being familiar with these words can be invaluable to a quizzer. A quizzer knowing that a particular word is used only once throughout an entire year's material will more quickly direct them toward the right passage when answering a question. Once they've acquired a concordance, find the unique word list, or go through the entire list of words and note those that are used only once. Have them mark these words with a certain color of marker or colored pencil—blue, perhaps. Then have them take their Scripture portion or Bible and locate each of these “blue” words and mark them. Now as they read and study the Scripture, they will be able to note when they come across a “blue” word. Many quizzers use the same approach with words used two or three times throughout the material, marking them with a different color, such as red and green.

Now, as soon as they hear one of these unique words, they should be able to recognize it as a key word, remember the reference, and quickly go there mentally to form their question and answer. You will find that knowing these key words will greatly enhance your quizzer's ability to prejump. (You can also tailor this system as it suits their study style).

However you decide to have your quizzers use a concordance, be sure they have a good understanding of the material, as well as of the individual words. The concordance should supplement a good study plan—don't let them rely on it to solve all of their study problems.

Knowing the Scripture in this way will also help them in the future. It may help them find a verse that they need when speaking to a person seek-

ing God. The Holy Spirit will bring that verse they learned years ago to memory at the appropriate time.

Study Tip: Variety in Your Study

Throughout this book the quizzers will find many different study methods for use in individual study times. Chances are no one study method is right for everyone. What works best for one may not work for teammates. Just as important, however, is that their knowledge and recollection of the material will improve if they vary the study methods they use. Have them try a new method every now and then so they don't get bored and frustrated using the same technique over and over.

PRE-ANNOUNCING KEY

Remember that all questions will be “preannounced” in actual quizzing competition. In order to prepare your quizzers for this practice (and in case your team decides to use these questions in practice), we've included the preannouncing codes in this book as well.

PRE-ANNOUNCING KEY

(Code=Question Type)

G = General

X = Context

A = According to

S = Situation

I = In What Book and Chapter

Memory: Q = Quote;

V = Finish this (these) verse(s) (no reference);

R = Finish this (these) verses and give the reference

PRACTICE

QUESTIONS

GALATIANS 1

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 1, who is an apostle?

A. Paul (G 1:1)

G Who raised Jesus Christ from the dead?

A. God the Father (G 1:1)

X Two-part question: By whom was Paul not sent and by whom was he sent?

A. (1) Man (2) Jesus Christ and God the Father (G 1:1)

X To whom is Galatians addressed?

A. To the churches in Galatia (G 1:2)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 3, what are from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. Grace and peace (G 1:3)

G For what did the Lord Jesus Christ give himself?

A. Our sins (G 1:4)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 5, what be to God?

A. Glory for ever and ever (G 1:5)

G Who are so quickly deserting the one who called them by the grace of Christ?

A. The Galatians (G 1:6)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 6, why is Paul astonished?

A. That the Galatians are so quickly deserting the one who called them by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel (G 1:6)

G What are you so quickly doing?

A. Deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ (G 1:6)

G What are some people evidently doing?

A. Throwing you (the Galatians) into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ (G 1:7)

G What if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you?

A. Let him be eternally condemned (G 1:8)

G What if anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted?

A. Let him be eternally condemned (G 1:9)

G When would Paul not be a servant of Christ?

A. If he were still trying to please men (G 1:10)

Q Quote Galatians, chapter 1, verse 10.

A. "Am I now trying to win the approval of

men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ” (G 1:10)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 11, what does Paul want you to know?

A. That the gospel he preached is not something that man made up (G 1:11)

V Finish this verse: “I want you to know, . . .”

A. “. . . brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up” (G 1:11).

G What did Paul not receive from any man?

A. The gospel he preached (G 1:12)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 13, of what have you heard?

A. Paul’s previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely he persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it (G 1:13)

G Beyond whom was Paul advancing in Judaism?

A. Many Jews of his own age (G 1:14)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 14, what was Paul doing?

A. Advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of his own age (G 1:14)

G Whom did God set apart from birth?

A. Paul (G 1:15)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 15, how did God call Paul?

A. By his grace (G 1:15)

G Why was God pleased to reveal his Son in Paul?

A. So that Paul might preach him among the Gentiles (G 1:15,16)

G Whom might Paul preach among the Gentiles?

A. God’s Son (G 1:16)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 17, whom did Paul not go up to see?

A. Those who were apostles before he was (G 1:17)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 18, when did Paul go up to Jerusalem?

A. After three years (G 1:18)

G Whom did Paul not see when he went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter?

A. Any of the other apostles (only James, the Lord’s brother) (G 1:19)

G Who assures you before God that what he is writing you is no lie?

A. Paul (G 1:20)

G When did Paul go to Syria and Cilicia?

A. Later (after he went up to Jerusalem) (G 1:21)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Later I went to Syria and Cilicia”?

A. Galatians 1 (G 1:21)

G To whom was Paul personally unknown?

A. The churches of Judea that are in Christ (G 1:22)

G Who only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy”?

A. The churches of Judea that are in Christ (G 1:23)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 23, what did they only hear?

A. The report: “The man who formerly per-

secuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy” (G 1:23)

A According to Galatians, chapter 1, verse 24, whom did they praise?

A. God (G 1:24)

GALATIANS 2

G Where did Paul go up again fourteen years later?

A. Jerusalem (G 2:1)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 2, what did Paul set before them?

A. The gospel that he preaches among the Gentiles (G 2:2)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 3, who was with Paul?

A. Titus (G 2:3)

X Complete in essence the following: “This matter arose because some . . .”

A. “. . . false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves” (G 2:4)

G Why did we not give in to some false brothers for a moment?

A. So that the truth of the gospel might remain with the Galatians (G 2:5)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 6, what does God not do?

A. Judge by external appearance (G 2:6)

G To whom had Peter been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel?

A. The Jews (G 2:7)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 8, who was an apostle to the Gentiles?

A. Paul (G 2:8)

G Who was also at work in Paul’s ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles?

A. God (G 2:8)

G Who recognized the grace given to Paul?

A. James, Peter and John (G 2:9)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 10, what was all they asked?

A. That we (Paul and Barnabas) should continue to remember the poor (G 2:10)

A Who came to Antioch?

A. Peter (G 2:11)

X Where did Paul oppose Peter to his face?

A. Antioch (G 2:11)

G From whom did certain men come?

A. James (G 2:12)

G Of whom was Peter afraid?

A. Those who belonged to the circumcision group (G 2:12)

G By what was even Barnabas led astray?

A. The hypocrisy of Peter and the other Jews (G 2:13)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 14, what did Paul see?

A. That they (Peter, the other Jews, and Barnabas) were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel (G 2:14)

A According to Galatians, chapter 2, verse 15, who are not Gentile sinners?

A. We who are Jews by birth (G 2:15)

G Who know that a man is not justified by observing the law?

A. We who are Jews by birth and not “Gentile sinners” (G 2:15-16)

G Who will be justified by observing the law?

A. No one (G 2:16)

X What does Christ absolutely not promote?

A. Sin (G 2:17)

G What if Paul rebuilds what he destroys?

A. He proves that he is a lawbreaker (G 2:18)

G Why did Paul die to the law through the law?

A. So that he might live for God (G 2:19)

R Finish this verse and give the reference: ““I have been crucified with . . .”

A. “. . . 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.” (G 2:20)

G Who loved Paul and gave himself for Paul?

A. The Son of God (G 2:20)

V Finish this verse: “I do not set aside . . .”

A. “. . . the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing” (G 2:21)

GALATIANS 3

G How was Jesus Christ clearly portrayed before your very eyes?

A. As crucified (G 3:1)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 2, what one thing would Paul like to learn from you?

A. “Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?” (G 3:2)

G By what are you now trying to attain your goal?

A. By human effort (G 3:3)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Have you suffered so much for nothing - if it really was for nothing?”

A. Galatians 3 (G 3:4)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 5, who works miracles among you?

A. God (G 3:5)

X Complete, in essence, the following quotation: “He believed God, and it . . .”

A. “. . . was credited to him as righteousness” (G 3:6)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 7, what should you understand?

A. That those who believe are children of Abraham (G 3:7)

G Through whom will all nations be blessed?

A. Abraham (G 3:8)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 9, what is Abraham?

A. The man of faith (G 3:9)

G What is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law?

A. Cursed (G 3:10)

Q Quote Galatians, chapter 3, verse 11.

A. “Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith”” (G 3:11)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 11, who will live by faith?

A. The righteous (G 3:11)

G Why is no one justified before God by the law?

A. Because “The righteous will live by faith” (G 3:11)

G On what is the law not based?

A. Faith (G 3:12)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 13, from what did Christ redeem us?

A. The curse of the law (G 3:13)

G Who redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us?

A. Christ (G 3:13)

V Finish this verse: “He redeemed us in order . . .”

A. “. . . that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit” (G 3:14)

G Who can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established?

A. No one (G 3:15)

X Two-part question: What is the meaning of “and to seeds,” and what is the meaning of “and to your seed”?

A. (1) Many people; (2) One person, who is Christ (G 3:16)

G When was the law introduced?

A. 430 years later (G 3:17)

G Through what did God in his grace give the inheritance to Abraham?

A. A promise (G 3:18)

G What was put into effect through angels by a mediator?

A. The law. (G 3:19)

G Through whom was the law put into effect?

A. Angels (G 3:19)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 20, who is one?

A. God (G 3:20)

G When would righteousness certainly have come by the law?

A. If a law had been given that could impart life (G 3:21)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 22, what is given through faith in Jesus Christ?

A. What was promised (G 3:22)

G When were we held prisoners by the law?

A. Before this faith came (G 3:23)

G Why was the law put in charge?

A. To lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith (G 3:24)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law”?

A. Galatians 3 (G 3:25)

G Under what are we no longer now that faith has come?

A. The supervision of the law (G 3:25)

G Who have clothed themselves with Christ?

A. All of you who were baptized into Christ (G 3:27)

A According to Galatians, chapter 3, verse 28, in whom are you all one?

A. Christ Jesus (G 3:28)

R Finish this verse and give the reference: “If you belong to Christ, . . .”

A. “. . . then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”(G 3:29)

GALATIANS 4

G When is the heir no different from a slave?

A. As long as he is a child (G 4:1)

G Who is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father?

A. The heir (as long as he is a child) (G 4:2)

G Under what were we in slavery when we were children?

A. The basic principles of the world (G 4:3)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 4, whom did God send?

A. His Son (G 4:4)

G Why did God send his Son when the time had fully come?

A. To redeem those under law that we might be receive the full rights of sons (G 4:4-5)

V Finish this verse: “Because you are sons, God . . .”

A. “. . . sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’”(G 4:6)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 7, what has God made you also?

A. An heir (G 4:7)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 8, to whom were you slaves formerly?

A. To those who by nature are not gods (G 4:8)

G When are you turning back to those weak

and miserable principles?

A. Now that you know God—or rather are known by God (G 4:9)

X Four-part answer: What are the Galatians who are known by God observing?

A. (1) Special days; (2) Months; (3) Seasons; (4) Years

G Who fears for you, that somehow he has wasted his efforts on you?

A. Paul (G 4:11)

G Who became like you?

A. Paul (G 4:12)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 13, what do you know?

A. It was because of an illness that Paul first preached the gospel to you (G 4:13)

G What was a trial to you?

A. Paul’s illness (G 4:14)

G What would you have torn out and given to Paul if you could have done so?

A. Your eyes (G 4:15)

X How has Paul become the Galatians’ enemy?

A. By telling them the truth (G 4:16)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 17, what do those people want?

A. To alienate you from us (G 4:17)

G Who want to alienate you from us?

A. Those people (who by nature are not gods) (G 4:17)

G What is it fine to be provided the purpose is good?

A. Zealous (G 4:18)

G Until when is Paul again in the pains of childbirth?

A. Until Christ is formed in the Galatians (G 4:19)

G What does Paul wish because he is perplexed about you?

A. That he could be with you now and change his tone (G 4:20)

I In what book and chapter is the following: “Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says?”

A. Galatians 4 (G 4:21)

G By whom did Abraham have two sons?

A. One by the slave woman and the other by the free woman (G 4:22)

G How was Abraham’s son by the free woman born?

A. As the result of a promise (G 4:23)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 24, how may these things be taken?

A. Figuratively (G 4:24)

G Who stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia?

A. Hagar (G 4:25)

A According to Galatians, chapter 4, verse 26, what is free?

A. The Jerusalem that is above (G 4:26)

G Why should a barren woman be glad?

A. Because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband (G 4:27)

G Like whom are you children of promise?

A. Isaac (G 4:28)

G Who persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit?

A. The son born in the ordinary way (G 4:29)

G Who will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son?

A. The slave woman’s son (G 4:30)

GALATIANS 5

G For what has Christ set us free?

A. Freedom (G 5:1)

G What should you mark?

A. Paul’s words (G 5:2)

G Who declares to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law?

A. Paul (G 5:3)

G Who have fallen away from grace?

A. You who are trying to be justified by law (G 5:4)

A According to Galatians, chapter 5, verse 5, what do we do by faith?

A. Eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope (G 5:5)

X In Galatians chapter 5, how does faith express itself?

A. Through love (G 5:6)

V Finish this verse: “For in Christ Jesus neither . . .”

A. “. . . circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”(G 5:6)

G What were you running?

A. A good race (G 5:7)

A According to Galatians chapter 5, verse 8, what does not come from the one who calls you?

A. That kind of persuasion (G 5:8)

G What works through the whole batch of dough?

A. A little yeast (G 5:9)

G Who is confident in the Lord that you will take no other view?

A. Paul (G 5:10)

G What offense has been abolished in that case?

A. The offense of the cross (G 5:11)

G Whom does Paul wish would go the whole way and emasculate themselves?

A. Those agitators (G 5:12)

A According to Galatians, chapter 5, verse 13, how should you serve one another?

A. In love (G 5:13)

G What is summed up in a single command?

A. The entire law (“Love your neighbor as yourself”) (G 5:14)

G What if you keep on biting and devouring each other?

A. Watch out or you will be destroyed by each other (G 5:15)

G When will you not gratify the desires of the sinful nature?

A. If you live by the Spirit (G 5:16)

V Finish this verse: “So I say, live by . . .”

A. “. . . the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” (G 5:16)

G What does the Spirit desire?

A. What is contrary to the sinful nature (G 5:17)

G When are you not under law?

A. If you are led by the Spirit (G 5:18)

X Name the acts of the sinful nature.

A. Sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. (G 5:19-21)

G What is the fruit of the Spirit?

A. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (G 5:22-23)

R Finish this verse and give the reference:

“Those who belong to Christ . . .”

A. “. . . Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”(G 5:24)

V Finish this verse: “Since we live by the . . .”

A. “. . . Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”(G 5:25)

G Whom should we not provoke?

A. Each other (G 5:26)

GALATIANS 6

A According to Galatians, chapter 6, verse 1, why should you watch yourself?

A. Or you also may be tempted (G 6:1)

G Whom should you who are spiritual restore gently?

A. Someone caught in a sin (G 6:1)

G Whose burdens should you carry?

A. Each other's (G 6:2)

G What if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing?

A. He deceives himself (G 6:3)

G Whose actions should each one test?

A. His own (G 6:4)

G Who should carry his own load?

A. Each one (G 6:5)

G What must anyone who receives instruction in the word share with his instructor?

A. All good things (G 6:6)

A According to Galatians, chapter 6, verse 7, what should you not be?

A. Deceived (G 6:7)

V Finish these verses: "Do not be deceived: God . . ."

A. ". . . cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life." (G 6:7-8)

R Finish this verse and give the reference: "Let us not become weary . . ."

A. ". . . in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (G 6:9)

V Finish this verse: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, . . ."

A. ". . . let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (G 6:10)

A According to Galatians chapter 6, verse 11, what does Paul use?

A. Large letters (G 6:11)

G Who are trying to compel you to be circumcised?

A. Those who want to make a good impression outwardly (G 6:12)

G What do not even those who are circumcised obey?

A. The law (G 6:13)

G Through what has the world been crucified to Paul?

A. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (G 6:14)

G What do neither circumcision nor uncircumcision mean?

A. Anything (G 6:15)

X Complete, in essence, the following: "Peace and mercy to all . . ."

A. ". . . who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God." (G 6:16)

G What should no one cause Paul?

A. Trouble (G 6:17)

I In what book and chapter is the following: "Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus"?

A. Galatians (G 6:18)

EPHESIANS 1

X To whom is Ephesians addressed?

A. To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus (E 1:1)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 2, from whom are grace and peace?

A. God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (E 1:2)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 3, to whom be praise?

A. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (E 1:3)

G In whose sight did God choose us to be holy and blameless?

A. His (God's) sight (E 1:4)

G In accordance with what did God predestine us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ?

A. His pleasure and will (E 1:5)

G What has God freely given us in the One he loves?

A. His glorious grace (E 1:6)

G Through what do we have redemption?

A. His (Christ's) blood (E 1:7)

R Finish these verses and give the reference: "In him we have redemption . . ."

A. ". . . through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding." (E 1:7-8)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 9, what did God purpose in Christ?

A. The mystery of his will according to his good pleasure (E 1:9)

G Under whom will God bring all things in heaven and on earth together?

A. One head, even Christ (E 1:10)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 11, what were we in him?

A. Also chosen (E 1:11)

G Why were we also chosen in him?

A. In order that we, who were the first to hope

in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory (E 1:11-12)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 13, what have you heard?

A. The word of truth, the gospel of your salvation (E 1:13)

G Who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession?

A. The promised Holy Spirit (E 1:13-14)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 1, verse 15, in whom is your faith?

A. The Lord Jesus (E 1:15)

G Who has not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in his prayers?

A. Paul (E 1:16)

G Who may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation?

A. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ [OR the glorious Father] (E 1:17)

G What does Paul also pray may be enlightened?

A. The eyes of the your (the Ephesians') heart (E 1:18)

A According to Ephesians chapter 1, verse 19, what is for us who believe?

A. His incomparably great power (E 1:19)

A According to Ephesians chapter 1, verse 20, whom did God raise from the dead?

A. Christ (E 1:19-20)

X Far above what did God seat Christ at his right hand in the heavenly realms?

A. 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)
(E 1:20-21)

G Who placed all things under Christ's feet?
A. God (E 1:22)

X What is Christ's body?
A. The church (E 1:22-23)

EPHESIANS 2

G Who is the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient?
A. The ruler of the kingdom of the air (E 2:2)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 3, what were we by nature?
A. Objects of wrath (E 2:3)

V Finish these verses: "But because of his great . . ."
A. ". . . love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved." (E 2:4-5)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 5, in what were we dead?
A. Transgressions (E 2:5)

G Who raised us up with Christ?
A. God (E 2:6)

G When might God show the incomparable riches of his grace?
A. In the coming ages (E 2:7)

A According to Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8, by what have you been saved?
A. Grace (E 2:8)

G Why have you not been saved by works?
A. So that no one can boast (E 2:9)

G What are we created in Christ Jesus to do?
A. Good works (E 2:10)

X Who called those who are Gentiles by birth "uncircumcised"?
A. Those who call themselves "the circumcision" (E 2:11)

G What were you to the covenants of the promise?
A. Foreigners (E 2:12)

G Through what have you who once were far away been brought near?
A. The blood of Christ (E 2:13)

G What barrier has Christ himself destroyed?
A. The dividing wall of hostility (E 2:14)

G What did Christ abolish in his flesh?
A. The law with its commandments and regulations (E 2:15)

A According to Ephesians chapter 2, verse 16, through what did Christ reconcile both of them to God?
A. The cross (E 2:16)

G What did Christ put to death by the cross?
A. Their hostility (E 2:16)

X Two-part answer: To whom did Christ come and preach peace?
A. (1) You who were far away (2) Those who were near (E 2:17)

G Through whom do we both have access to the Father by one Spirit?
A. Christ (E 2:18)

G With whom are you fellow citizens?
A. God's people (E 2:19)

A According to Ephesians chapter 2, verse 20, what is Christ Jesus himself?

A. The chief cornerstone (E 2:20)

G In whom is the whole building joined together?

A. Him (Christ Jesus) (E 2:21)

G By whom does God live in the dwelling you are being built together to become?

A. His Spirit (E 2:22)

EPHESIANS 3

G For whose sake is Paul the prisoner of Christ Jesus?

A. For the sake of you Gentiles (E 3:1)

G About what have you surely heard?

A. The administration of God's grace that was given to Paul for you (E 3:2)

G What was made known to Paul by revelation?

A. The mystery (E 3:3)

G What will you be able to understand in reading this then?

A. Paul's insight into the mystery of Christ (E 3:4)

G To whom was the mystery of Christ not made known?

A. To men in other generations (E 3:5)

G Who are members together of one body?

A. The Gentiles together with Israel (E 3:6)

G Through what was the gift of God's grace given Paul?

A. The working of God's power (E 3:7)

G Than whom is Paul less ?

A. The least of all God's people (E 3:8)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 3, verse 9, who created all things?

A. God (E 3:9)

G In whom did God accomplish his eternal purpose?

A. Christ Jesus our Lord (E 3:11)

G Whom may we approach with freedom and confidence?

A. Christ Jesus our Lord (E 3:12)

G What are Paul's sufferings for you?

A. Your glory (E 3:13)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 3, verse 14, what does Paul do?

A. He kneels before the Father (E 3:14)

G What derives its name from the Father?

A. His whole family in heaven and on earth (E 3:15)

G Who prays that the Father out of his glorious riches may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being?

A. Paul (E 3:16)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 3, verse 17, what may Christ do?

A. Dwell in your hearts (through faith) (E 3:17)

A According to Ephesians chapter 3, verse 18, what may you have power to grasp?

A. How wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ (E 3:18)

A According to Ephesians chapter 3, verse 19, what does this love surpass?

A. Knowledge (E 3:19)

X In Ephesians chapter 3, what is God able to do?

A. Immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (E 3:20)

G To whom be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations?

A. God (or the Father—him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine) (E 3:21)

EPHESIANS 4

G As what does Paul urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received?

A. A prisoner for the Lord (E 4:1)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 2, what should you be?

A. Completely humble and gentle; patient (E 4:2)

Q Quote Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 3.

A. “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (E 4:3)

G When were you called to one hope?

A. When you were called (E 4:4)

X In the section entitled “Unity in the Body of Christ,” of what is there one?

A. Body, Spirit, Lord, hope, faith, baptism, and God and Father of all, of us, who ascended higher than all the heavens (E 4:5)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 6, who is over all and through all and in all?

A. One God and Father of all (E 4:6)

G What has Christ apportioned to each one of us?

A. Grace (E 4:7)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 8, what did he give to men?

A. Gifts (E 4:8)

G To what regions did he also descend?

A. The lower, earthly regions (E 4:9)

G Who is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens?

A. He who descended [OR Christ] (E 4:10)

G Who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers?

A. Christ (He who descended) (E 4:11)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 12, what may be built up?

A. The body of Christ (E 4:12)

G Until when may the body of Christ be built up?

A. Until 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 (E 4:12-13)

G By what will we no longer be blown here and there?

A. Every wind of teaching and the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming (E 4:14)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 15, who is the Head?

A. Christ (E 4:15)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 16, what does its work?

A. Each part (E 4:16)

X Who are ignorant because of the hardening of their hearts?

A. The Gentiles (E 4:17)

G Why are the Gentiles darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God?

A. Because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts (E 4:18)

G Over to what have the Gentiles given themselves?

A. Sensuality (E 4: 19)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 20, what did you not do?

A. Come to know Christ that way (E 4:20)

G In accordance with what were you taught in Christ?

A. The truth that is in Jesus (E 4:21)

X Three-part answer: What were the Ephesians taught?

A. (1) To put off their old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, (2) To be made new in the attitude of their minds, (3) To put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (E 4:22–24)

G What were you taught to be made in the attitude of your minds?

A. New (E 4:23)

G What is created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness?

A. The new self (E 4:24)

G Why must each of you put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor?

A. For we are all members of one body (E 4:25)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 26, in what should you not sin?

A. Your anger (E 4:26)

G Whom should you not give a foothold?

A. The devil (E 4:27)

G Who must steal no longer?

A. He who has been stealing (E 4:28)

G What should you not let come out of your mouths?

A. Any unwholesome talk (E 4:29)

G With whom were you sealed for the day of redemption?

A. The Holy Spirit of God (E 4:30)

G Along with what should you get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander?

A. Every form of malice (E 4:31)

V Finish this verse: “Be kind and compassionate to . . .”

A. “. . . one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (E 4:32)

EPHESIANS 5

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 1, what should you be?

A. Imitators of God (E 5:1)

G How should you live a life of love?

A. Just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (E 5:2)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 3, for whom are these improper?

A. God’s holy people (E 5:3)

G Why must there not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed among you?

A. Because these are improper for God's holy people (E 5:3)

G What are out of place?

A. Obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking (E 5:4)

G What does an idolater not have in the kingdom of Christ and of God?

A. Any inheritance (E 5:5)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 6, with what should you let no one deceive you?

A. Empty words (E 5:6)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 7, what should you not be?

A. Partners with them (those who are disobedient) (E 5:7)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 8, how should you live?

A. As children of light (E 5:8)

G What consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth?

A. The fruit of the light (E 5:9)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 10, what should you find out?

A. What pleases the Lord (E 5:10)

A According to Ephesians chapter 5, verse 11, what should you rather do?

A. Expose the fruitless deeds of darkness (E 5:11)

G What should you have to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness?

A. Nothing (E 5:11)

G Who do in secret what is shameful even to mention?

A. The disobedient (E 5:12)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 13, what becomes visible?

A. Everything exposed by the light (E 5:13)

X Complete, in essence, the following: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, . . ."

A. ". . . and Christ will shine on you" (E 5:14)

G What does light make everything?

A. Visible (E 5:14)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 15, how should you not live?

A. As unwise (E 5:15)

G Why should you make the most of every opportunity?

A. Because the days are evil (E 5:16)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 17, what should you understand?

A. What the Lord's will is (E 5:17)

G What leads to debauchery?

A. Getting drunk on wine (E 5:18)

G To whom should you speak with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs?

A. One another (E 5:19)

G When should you give thanks to God the Father for everything?

A. Always (E 5:20)

G In whose name should you always give thanks to God the Father for everything?

A. The name of our Lord Jesus Christ (E 5:20)

G To whom should you submit out of reverence for Christ?

A. One another (E 5:21)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 22, how should wives submit to their husbands?

A. As to the Lord (E 5:22)

X Two-part question: Who is the head of the wife and who is the head of the church?

A. (1) The husband, (2) Christ (E 5:23)

G Who is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church?

A. The husband (E 5:23)

G To whom does the church submit?

A. Christ (E 5:24)

G Whom did Christ give up for the church?

A. Himself (E 5:25)

G By what did Christ cleanse the church through the word?

A. The washing with water (E 5:26)

G What did Christ present to himself without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish?

A. The church (E 5:27)

G Whom does he who loves his wife love?

A. Husbands (E 5:28)

G What did no one ever hate?

A. His own body (E 5:29)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 30, of what are we members?

A. Christ's body (E 5:30)

G Who will become one flesh?

A. The two (a man and his wife) (E 5:31)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 33, whom must each one of you also love as he loves himself?

A. His wife (E 5:32)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 33, whom must each one of you also love?

A. His wife (E 5:33)

EPHESIANS 6

V Finish this verse: "Children, obey your parents in . . ."

A. "... the Lord, for this is right." (E 6:1)

A According to Ephesians chapter 6, verse 2, whom should you honor?

A. Your father and mother (E 6:2)

X Two-part answer: Why should you honor your father and mother?

A. (1) That it may go well with you, (2) That you may enjoy long life on the earth (E 6:2-3)

G What may you enjoy on the earth?

A. Long life (E 6:3)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 4, what should fathers instead do?

A. Bring their children up in the training and instruction of the Lord (E 6:4)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 5, how should slaves obey their earthly masters?

A. With respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as they would obey Christ (E 6:5)

G How should slaves serve?

A. Wholeheartedly, as if they were serving the Lord, not men (E 6:7)

V Finish this verse: "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you . . ."

A. "... were serving the Lord, not men." (E 6:7)

G Why should slaves serve wholeheartedly, as if they were serving the Lord, not men?

A. Because they know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free (E 6:8)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 9, what do Masters know?

A. That he who is both their slaves' Master and theirs is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him (E 6:9)

X Two-part question: In whom should you be strong and in what should you be strong?

A. (1) The Lord, (2) His mighty power (E 6:10)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 11, what should you put on?

A. The full armor of God (E 6:11)

G Against what is our struggle?

A. The rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (not against flesh and blood) (E 6:12)

G When may you be able to stand your ground?

A. When the day of evil comes (E 6:13)

A According to Ephesians chapter 6, verse 14, how should you stand firm?

A. With the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place (E 6:14)

G What should be fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace?

A. Your feet (E 6:15)

G What shield should you take up?

A. The shield of faith (E 6:16)

A According to Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 17, what should you take?

A. The helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (E 6:17)

G When should you keep on praying for all the saints?

A. Always (E 6:18)

G Why should you pray also for Paul?

A. That whenever he opens his mouth, words may be given him so that he will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel (E 6:19)

G For what is Paul an ambassador in chains?

A. The gospel (The mystery of) (E 6:19-20)

G Who will tell you everything?

A. Tychicus (E 6:21)

G Why will Tychicus tell you everything?

A. So that you also may know how Paul is and what he is doing (E 6:21)

G From whom is peace to the brothers and love with faith?

A. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (E 6:23)

A According to Ephesians chapter 6, verse 24, to whom is grace?

A. To all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love (E 6:24)

PHILIPPIANS 1

X To whom is Philippians addressed?

A. To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons (P 1:1)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 2, from whom is grace and peace?

A. God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (P 1:2)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 3, when does Paul thank his God?

A. His God (P 1:3)

G In what does Paul always pray with joy?

A. In all his prayers for all of you (P 1:4)

G In what is your partnership from the first day until now?

A. The gospel (P 1:5)

G Until when will he who began a good work in you carry it on to completion?

A. Until the day of Christ Jesus (P 1:6)

G Who has you in his heart?

A. Paul (P 1:7)

G Who can testify how Paul longs for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus?

A. God (P 1:8)

G How may your love abound in knowledge and depth of insight?

A. More and more (P 1:9)

G Until when may you be pure and blameless?

A. The day of Christ (P 1:10)

G Through whom does the fruit of righteousness come?

A. Jesus Christ (P 1:11)

G What has really served to advance the gospel?

A. What has happened to Paul (P 1:12)

G What has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else?

A. That Paul is in chains for Christ (P 1:13)

G What have most of the brothers in the Lord been encouraged to do because of Paul's chains?

A. Speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly (P 1:14)

G What do some do out of envy and rivalry?

A. Preach Christ (P 1:15)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 16, why is Paul put here?

A. For the defense of the gospel (P 1:16)

G Why do the former preach Christ out of selfish ambition?

A. They suppose that they can stir up trouble for Paul while he is in chains (P 1:17)

G Who will continue to rejoice?

A. Paul (P 1:18)

G Why will Paul continue to rejoice?

A. For he knows that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to him will turn out for his deliverance (P 1:19)

X Complete, in essence, the following: "I eagerly expect and hope . . ."

A. ". . . that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death" (P 1:20)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 21, what is Christ to Paul?

A. To live (P 1:21)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 22, what does Paul not know?

A. What he shall choose (P 1:22)

G With whom does Paul desire to be?

A. Christ (P 1:23)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 24, what is more necessary for you?

A. That Paul remain in the body (P 1:24)

G For what will Paul continue with all of you?

A. Your progress and joy in the faith (P 1:25)

G What will overflow on account of Paul?

A. Your joy in Christ Jesus (P 1:26)

G For what will Paul know that you contend as one man?

A. The faith of the gospel (P 1:27)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 28, by whom will you be saved?

A. God (P 1:28)

X Two-part answer: What has been granted to you on behalf of Christ?

A. (1) To believe on him, (2) To suffer for him (P 1:29)

A According to Philippians, chapter 1, verse 30, what are you going through?

A. The same struggle you saw Paul had, and now hear that he still has (P 1:30)

PHILIPPIANS 2

X From what might you have any encouragement?

A. From being united with Christ (P 2:1)

G What if you have any encouragement from

being united with Christ?

A. Then make Paul's joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose (P 2:1-2)

G What should you make Paul's joy?

A. Complete (P 2:2)

V Finish this verse: "Do nothing out of selfish . . ."

A. ". . . ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (P 2:3)

G To whose interests should each of you look?

A. Not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others (P 2:4)

G What should your attitude be?

A. The same as that of Christ Jesus (P 2:5)

G What did Christ Jesus not consider something to be grasped?

A. Equality with God (P 2:6)

G Who was made in human likeness?

A. Christ Jesus (P 2:7)

G To what did Christ Jesus become obedient?

A. Death (even death on a cross) (P 2:8)

G Whom did God exalt to the highest place?

A. Christ Jesus (P 2:9)

G At what name should every knee bow?

A. The name of Jesus (P 2:10)

G What should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord?

A. Every tongue (P 2:11)

G What should you continue to work out

with fear and trembling?

A. Your salvation (P 2:12)

X Complete, in essence, the following: “For it is God who . . .”

A. “. . . works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (P 2:13)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse 14, how should you do everything?

A. Without complaining or arguing (P 2:14)

G How do you shine in a crooked and depraved generation?

A. Like stars in the universe (P 2:15)

G Who may boast on the day of Christ that he did not run or labor for nothing?

A. Paul (P 2:16)

G Who is being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith?

A. Paul (P 2:17)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse 18, what should you do too?

A. Be glad and rejoice with Paul (P 2:18)

G Who hopes to send Timothy to you soon?

A. Paul (P 2:19)

G What does Timothy take in your welfare?

A. A genuine interest (P 2:20)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse 21, what does everyone do?

A. Look out for their own interests (P 2:21)

G How has Timothy served with Paul in the work of the gospel?

A. As a son with his father (P 2:22)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse

23, what does Paul hope to do?

A. To send Timothy (as soon as Paul sees how things go with him) (P 2:23)

G In whom is Paul confident that he himself will come soon?

A. The Lord (P 2:24)

G Who thinks it is necessary to send Epaphroditus back to you?

A. Paul (P 2:25)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse 26, what did you hear?

A. That Epaphroditus was ill (P 2:26)

G Who almost died?

A. Epaphroditus (P 2:27)

A According to Philippians, chapter 2, verse 28, when may you be glad?

A. When you see Epaphroditus again (P 2:28)

G Why should you honor men like Epaphroditus?

A. Because he almost died for the work of Christ (P 2:29)

G For what did Epaphroditus almost die?

A. The work of Christ (P 2:30)

PHILIPPIANS 3

G For whom is it no trouble to write the same things to you again?

A. Paul (P 3:1)

X In Philippians, chapter 3, who are those dogs?

A. Those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh (P 3:2)

G In what do we put no confidence?

A. In the flesh (P 3:3)

A According to Philippians, chapter 3, verse 4, who has reasons for such confidence?

A. Paul (P 3:4)

G Who is of the people of Israel?

A. Paul (P 3:5)

G What is Paul as for legalistic righteousness?

A. Faultless (P 3:6)

G What does Paul now consider whatever was to his profit?

A. Loss for the sake of Christ (P 3:7)

A According to Philippians, chapter 3, verse 8, what does Paul consider a loss?

A. Everything (compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord) (P 3:8)

X Two-part question: What righteousness does Paul not want to have and what righteousness does he want to have?

A. (1) A righteousness of his own that comes from the law, (2) That which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith (P 3:9)

G Who wants to know Christ?

A. Paul (P 3:10)

G Who wants somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead?

A. Paul (P 3:11)

G What has Paul not already been made?

A. Perfect (P 3:12)

G Toward what is Paul straining?

A. What is ahead (P 3:13)

A According to Philippians, chapter 3, verse

14, where has God called Paul in Christ Jesus?

A. Heavenward (P 3:14)

G Who should take such a view of things?

A. All of us who are mature (P 3:15)

G Of whom should you take note?

A. Those who live according to the pattern we gave you (P 3:17)

A According to Philippians, chapter 3, verse 18, what has Paul often told you before?

A. Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ (P 3:18)

G Who live as enemies of the cross of Christ?

A. Many (P 3:19)

A According to Philippians, chapter 3, verse 20, whom do we eagerly await?

A. Our citizenship (P 3:20)

G By what will the Lord Jesus Christ transform our lowly bodies?

A. The power that enables him to bring everything under his control (P 3:21)

PHILIPPIANS 4

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 1, in whom should you stand firm?

A. The Lord (P 4:1)

G With whom does Paul plead to agree with each other in the Lord?

A. Euodia and Syntyche (P 4:2)

G In what have these women contended at Paul's side?

A. The cause of the gospel (P 4:3)

G In whom should you rejoice always?

A. The Lord (P 4:4)

G To whom should you let your gentleness be evident?

A. All (P 4:5)

G About what should you not be anxious?

A. Anything (P 4:6)

G What transcends all understanding?

A. The peace of God (P 4:7)

X What seven things does Paul say the Philippians should think about?

A. Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy (P 4:8)

G In whom does Paul rejoice greatly?

A. The Lord (P 4:10)

G Who has learned to be content whatever the circumstances?

A. Paul (P 4:11)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 12, what does Paul know?

A. What it is to be in need, and what it is to have plenty (P 4:12)

G What can Paul do through him who gives him strength?

A. Everything (P 4:13)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 14, what was good of you?

A. To share in Paul's troubles (P 4:14)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 15, what do you Philippians know?

A. In the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when Paul set out from Macedo-

nia, not one church shared with him in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only (P 4:15)

G What did you send Paul again and again when he was in need in Thessalonica?

A. Aid (P 4:16)

G For what is Paul not looking?

A. Gift (P 4:17)

G What are the gifts you sent?

A. A fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God (P 4:18)

G Who will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus?

A. God (P 4:19)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 21, who send greetings?

A. The brothers who are with Paul (P 4:21)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 22, who send you greetings?

A. All the saints, especially those belonging to Caesar's household (P 4:22)

A According to Philippians, chapter 4, verse 23, what be with your spirit?

A. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (P 4:23)

COLOSSIANS 1

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 1, who is our brother?

A. Timothy (C 1:1)

G Who are in Christ at Colosse?

A. The holy and faithful brothers (C 1:2)

G What do we always do when we pray for

you?

A. Thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (C 1:3)

G Why do we always thank God when we pray for you?

A. Because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints (C 1:4)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 5, about what have you already heard?

A. The hope that is stored up for you in heaven (C 1:5)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 6, what did you understand?

A. God's grace (in all its truth) (C 1:6)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 7, who is our dear fellow servant?

A. Epaphras (C 1:7)

G Of whom is Epaphras a faithful minister?

A. Christ (C 1:7)

G Who also told us of your love in the Spirit?

A. Epaphras (C 1:7-8)

G Since when have we not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will?

A. Since the day we heard about you (C 1:9)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 10, why do we pray this?

A. In order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way (C 1:10)

X In Colossians, chapter 1, with what are the Colossians being strengthened?

A. All power (according to his glorious might)

(C 1:11)

G Who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints?

A. The Father (C 1:12)

G Who has rescued us from the dominion of darkness?

A. The Father (C 1:13)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 14, what is redemption?

A. The forgiveness of sins (C 1:14)

G Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation?

A. Christ (The Son whom the Father loves) (C 1:15)

V Finish this verse: "For by him all things ..."

A. "... were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him." (C 1:16)

G What hold together in Christ?

A. All things (C 1:17)

G Who is the head of the body, the church?

A. Christ (C 1:18)

G What was God pleased to have dwell in Christ?

A. All his fullness (C 1:19)

G Through whom was God pleased to reconcile to himself all things?

A. Christ (C 1:20)

G What was shed on the cross?

A. Christ's blood (C 1:20)

G Why were you once alienated from God

and enemies in your minds?

A. Alienated from God and enemies in your minds (C 1:21)

G Who has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death?

A. God (C 1:22)

G What has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven?

A. The gospel (C 1:23)

G Who rejoices in what was suffered for you?

A. Paul (C 1:24)

G How has Paul become the church's servant?

A. By the commission God gave him to present to you the word of God in its fullness (C 1:25)

G What is now disclosed to the saints?

A. The mystery (the word of God) (C 1:26)

G To whom has God chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery?

A. The saints (C 1:27)

A According to Colossians, chapter 1, verse 28, why do we proclaim him?

A. So that we may present everyone perfect in Christ

G In whom does all Christ's energy so powerfully work?

A. Paul (C 1:29)

COLOSSIANS 2

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 1, what does Paul want you to know?

A. How much he is struggling for you and for

those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met him personally (C 2:1)

G Why may they be encouraged in heart and united in love?

A. So that they (the Colossians and Laodiceans) may have the full riches of complete understanding (C 2:2)

G What treasures are hidden in Christ?

A. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (C 2:3)

G By what may no one deceive you?

A. Fine-sounding arguments (C 2:4)

X Two-part question: How is Paul absent from the Colossians, and how is he present with them?

A. (1) In body, (2) In spirit (C 2:5)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 6, how did you receive Christ Jesus?

A. As Lord (C 2:6)

G In what should you be strengthened as you were taught?

A. The faith (C 2:7)

G What depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ?

A. Hollow and deceptive philosophy (C 2:8)

G In whom does all the fullness of the Deity live in bodily form?

A. Christ (C 2:9)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 10, what have you been given?

A. Fullness in Christ (C 2:10)

G In what were you also circumcised in

Christ?

A. The putting off of the sinful nature (C 2:11)

G Through what have you been raised with Christ?

A. Your (the Colossians') faith in the power of God (C 2:12)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 13, in what were you dead?

A. In your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature (C 2:13)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 14, what did he take away?

A. The written code (with its regulations) (C 2:14)

G By what did God triumph over the powers and authorities?

A. The cross (C 2:15)

G Whom should you not let judge you by what you eat or drink?

A. Anyone (C 2:16)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 17, what is found in Christ?

A. The reality (C 2:17)

G Whom should you not let disqualify you for the prize?

A. Anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels (C 2:18)

A According to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 19, how does the whole body grow?

A. As God causes it to grow (C 2:19)

A According to Colossians chapter 2, verse 20, to what do you submit?

A. This world's rules (C 2:20)

X Three-part answer: What are the rules of

this world?

A. (1) Do not handle, (2) Do not taste, (3) Do not touch (C 2:20-21)

G Why are these rules destined to perish with use?

A. Because they are based on human commands and teachings (C 2:22)

G What do such regulations lack in restraining sensual indulgence?

A. Any value (C 2:23)

COLOSSIANS 3

X Complete, in essence, the following: "Since, then, you have been . . ."

A. "... raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (C 3:1)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 2, what should you set on things above?

A. Your minds (C 3:2)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 3, what is now hidden with Christ in God?

A. Your life (C 3:3)

G With whom will you also appear in glory?

A. Christ (C 3:4)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 4, who is your life?

A. Christ (C 3:4)

G What is coming because of sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed?

A. The wrath of God (C 3:5)

A According to Colossians chapter 3, verse 6, what is coming?

A. The wrath of God (C 3:6)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse

8, of what must you now rid yourselves?

A. All such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips (C 3:8)

G To whom should you not lie?

A. Each other (C 3:9)

G What is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator?

A. The new self (C 3:10)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 11, who is in all?

A. Christ (C 3:11)

G Who are holy and dearly loved?

A. God's chosen people (C 3:12)

A According to Colossians chapter 3, verse 13, who forgave you?

A. The Lord (C 3:13)

G With whom should you bear?

A. Each other (C 3:13)

G Over what should you put on love?

A. All these virtues (C 3:14)

V Finish this verse: "Let the peace of Christ..."

A. "... rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." (C 3:15)

G When should you let the word of Christ dwell in you richly?

A. As you (the Colossians) teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God (C 3:16)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse

17, what should you do in the name of the Lord Jesus?

A. Whatever you do (whether in word or deed) (C 3:17)

G Who should submit to their husbands?

A. Wives (C 3:18)

G Who should love their wives?

A. Husbands (C 3:19)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 20, what pleases the Lord?

A. For children to obey their parents in everything (C 3:20)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 21, what should fathers not do to their children?

A. Embitter them (C 3:21)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 22, when should slaves obey their earthly masters in everything?

A. Not only when there eye is on you and to win their favor (C 3:22)

R Finish this verse and give the reference: "Whatever you do, work at . . ."

A. "... it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." (C 3:23)

G What do slaves know they will receive as a reward?

A. An inheritance from the Lord (C 3:24)

A According to Colossians, chapter 3, verse 25, what is there?

A. No favoritism (C 3:25)

COLOSSIANS 4

G Who should provide their slaves with what is right and fair?

A. Masters (C 4:1)

G How should you devote yourselves to prayer?

A. Being watchful and thankful (C 4:2)

G What door may God open?

A. A door for our message (C 4:3)

G What should you make of every opportunity?

A. The most (C 4:5)

G Why should your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt?

A. So that you may know how to answer everyone (C 4:6)

G Who will tell you all the news about Paul?

A. Tychicus (C 4:7)

G Who is sending Tychicus to you?

A. Paul (C 4:8)

G Who is coming with Onesimus?

A. Tychicus (C 4: 9)

G What does Aristarchus send you?

A. His greetings (Mark) (C 4:10)

G Who is called Justus?

A. Jesus (C 4:11)

G Of whom is Epaphras a servant?

A. Epaphras (C 4:12)

G What is Epaphras doing for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis?

A. Working hard (C 4:13)

A According to Colossians, chapter 4, verse

14, who send greetings?

A. Luke and Demas (C 4:14)

G To whom should you give Paul's greetings?

A. The brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house (C 4:15)

G What should you see that you in turn read?

A. The letter from Laodicea (C 4:16)

G What does Paul write in his own hand?

A. This greetings (C 4:18)

PHILEMON

A According to Philemon, verse 1, who is our dear friend and fellow worker?

A. Philemon (Philemon 1)

A According to Philemon, verse 2, who is our fellow soldier?

A. Archippus (Philemon 2)

A According to Philemon, verse 3, from whom are grace and peace?

A. God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Philemon 3)

A According to Philemon, verse 4, whom does Paul always thank?

A. His God (Philemon 4)

G In whom is Philemon's faith?

A. The Lord Jesus (Philemon 5)

A According to Philemon, verse 6, what does Paul pray?

A. That you (Philemon) may be active in sharing your faith (Philemon 6)

G Why has Philemon's love given Paul great

joy and encouragement?

A. Because Philemon had refreshed the hearts of the saints (Philemon 7)

A According to Philemon, verse 8, what could Paul order Philemon to do in Christ?

A. What he (Philemon) ought to do (Philemon 8)

G On what basis does Paul appeal to Philemon?

A. On the basis of love (Philemon 9)

G Who is an old man?

A. Paul (Philemon 9)

G For whom does Paul appeal to Philemon?

A. His son Onesimus (Philemon 10)

X What does Onesimus mean?

A. Useful (Philemon 10)

G Who was formerly useless to Philemon?

A. Onesimus (Philemon 10-11)

G To whom was Onesimus formerly useless?

A. Philemon (Philemon 11)

G Who is sending Onesimus back to Philemon?

A. Paul (Philemon 12)

G Whom would Paul have liked to keep with him?

A. Onesimus (Philemon 13)

A According to Philemon, verse 14, what did Paul not want to do?

A. Anything without your (Philemon's) consent (Philemon 14)

G Who was separated from Philemon for a

little while?

A. Onesimus (Philemon 15)

X Two-part answer: As what is Onesimus even dearer to Philemon?

A. (1) As a man, (2) As a brother in the Lord (Philemon 16)

G Who is very dear to Paul?

A. Onesimus (Philemon 16)

G What if Philemon considers Paul a partner?

A. He should welcome Onesimus as he would welcome Paul (Philemon 17)

G What if Onesimus has done Philemon any wrong or owes him anything?

A. Charge it to Paul (Philemon 18)

G Who owes Paul his very self?

A. Philemon (Philemon 19)

G In whom should Philemon refresh Paul's heart?

A. Christ (Philemon 20)

G Of whose obedience is Paul confident?

A. Philemon's (Philemon 21)

G In answer to what does Paul hope to be restored to Philemon?

A. Philemon's prayers (Philemon 22)

A According to Philemon, verse 23, what is Epaphras?

A. Paul's fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus (Philemon 23)

G What do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke send you?

A. Greetings (Philemon 24)

Memory Verse List

<i>Galatians</i>	<i>Gal. cont...</i>	<i>Eph. cont...</i>	<i>Phil. cont...</i>	<i>Colossians</i>
1:10	5:22-23	3:20-21	1:21	1:13
1:11	5:24	4:2	2:3	1:16
2:16	5:25	4:3	2:4	1:17
2:20	6:1	4:11-13	2:5-7	2:6-7
2:21	6:2	4:26-27	2:8	2:8
3:11	6:7-8	4:29	2:9-11	2:13-14
3:13	6:9	4:32	2:13	3:2
3:14	6:10	5:1-2	2:14	3:3-4
3:23-25	6:14	5:21	3:7	3:12
3:28	<i>Ephesians</i>	5:24-25	3:8	3:13
3:29	1:3	6:1	3:12	3:14
4:6	1:4-6	6:2-3	3:13-14	3:15
4:7	1:7-8	6:4	4:4	3:17
5:1	1:13-14	6:7	4:6-7	3:23
5:6	2:4-5	6:10	4:8	4:2
5:13	2:8-9	6:13	4:12	4:6
5:14	2:10	<i>Philippians</i>	4:13	<i>Philemon</i>
5:16	2:13	1:6	4:19	4-6
5:17-18	2:19-20	1:9-11		

NAZARENE YOUTH BIBLE QUIZZING SCORE SHEET

ROUND _____ DATE _____ Winner _____

TEAM:																									
NO.	NAME OF QUIZZER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	OT	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL ERRORS	
1																									
2																									
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4																									
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BONUS AND PENALTY POINTS																									
RUNNING SCORE																									

TEAM:																									
NO.	NAME OF QUIZZER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	OT	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL ERRORS	
1																									
2																									
3																									
4																									
S																									
BONUS AND PENALTY POINTS																									
RUNNING SCORE																									

20pts for each correct "jump" answer
 10pts for each correct bonus answer

10pts bonus for 3rd, 4th, 5th quizzer correct "jump" answer
 10pts bonus for quiz-out with no error

10pt penalty for error-out
 10pt penalty on errors after question 15

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TEAM MEETING AND PRACTICES

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