



THE NAVIGATORS SINGAPORE

GROWING IN CHRIST

BY WONG KIM TOK

BOOK 2

GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

Book 2 Growing in Christ

Growing in Discipleship Bible Study Series



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INTRODUCTION

If you have completed Book 1 on Knowing Christ, this study will be of immediate value to you as you move into the next stage of life as a Christian. This study focusses on crucial and foundational topics on which your growth will be based on.

In this study you will learn what it means to acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord. Then you will be introduced to some key concepts of spiritual growth encapsulated in the 'Wheel Illustration'. This illustration captures the dynamic interplay of several spiritual practices like reading/studying the Word of God, Prayer, Fellowship and Witnessing.

The best way to benefit from these Bible studies is to study the chapters regularly. Many have found completing a chapter a week manageable. You will benefit more by personally answering the questions before meeting with your Bible study leader for discussion and clarification. He or she will treasure your discoveries. If time is an issue, do a section (sub-topic) of the chapter each time and discuss your discoveries subsequently.

It should be emphasised that knowing truths is only half the value. The other important principle is to relate the truths to your personal life. This is usually addressed at the end of each chapter. Head knowledge does not lead to life change.

As you do the studies, you will also be learning how to do systematic Bible study. The content will also gradually increase in depth as you continue the process. Questions are designed to help the disciple observe and extract Biblical truths for living. As you grow and mature, our eventual desire is that you would be ready to do independent Bible study. Subsequent materials will help you reach this goal.

Have a great learning journey!

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CHAPTER 1

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

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CHAPTER 1

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

In the previous book, we concluded that Jesus is God. This has important implications. If Jesus is God, then we must respond to Jesus as our Lord. The lordship of Jesus means that Christians not only recognise Him for who He is but also give to Him honour, glory, worship, and obedience.

When the disciples saw the glimpses of Jesus' deity, they responded in awe and worship and followed Him wholeheartedly. From the rest of the New Testament, we get the clear-cut descriptions of Jesus when God the Holy Spirit breathed on the writers of the Bible books and letters as they wrote.

1 The Glory of Jesus

- 1.1 Colossians 1:15-20 reveal much about the transcendent glory of Jesus. From the following selected verses, list some of the descriptions of who He is.

Colossians 1: 15,17,19 • Descriptions that show He is fully God

Colossians 1:16 • Descriptions that He created everything

Colossians 1:18 • Descriptions that He is supreme and above all

- 1.2 From Philippians 2:6-11, describe

Who Jesus was before He became man

Jesus' status after His death

What every creature will have to do in response to Jesus

2 Acknowledging Jesus' Lordship

Jesus Christ is Lord and God. We do not make Him Lord. He is Lord whether we recognise Him as Lord or not. What Christians have to do is to surrender their lives to Him.

2.1 Surrendering to Jesus' Lordship

How did the Apostle Thomas who earlier doubted Jesus' resurrection acknowledge Him when Jesus appeared to Him? John 20:26-29

The Apostle Paul began as a persecutor of Christians but when Jesus appeared to him, what were the two questions He asked of Jesus in Acts 22:6-11?

Paul's first question:

NOTE *Paul may have asked this question partly in ignorance at that time. — Yet, it is a question all Christians should continually ask to discover more of all that Christ is.*

Paul's second question:

2.2 **Your personal response**

Have you surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ? If not, would you like to surrender your life completely to him today? Write in the space below what you should say to Jesus. (In addressing Jesus, feel free to use the descriptions from verses in questions 1 and 2)

2.3 Who is Jesus to you now? Now that you have written your response down, speak to Jesus what you had just written.

Now pray to Jesus what Paul prayed in his second question:

What is Jesus saying to you?

2.4 Verbal acknowledgement of Jesus' Lordship is the first step in surrender. Let us continue to fully apply this great principle of surrender to as many areas of life as possible.

Surrender the big areas of life, those that make up who you really are.

3 Surrender Your Will

Surrendering your will means surrendering your choices, decisions, inclinations and the right to decide your own life. You align all these to God's will.

What did Jesus say to surrender His will to God's will? Luke 22:41-42

Surrendering your will is as simple as saying a few words as Jesus did. Yet the surrendering involves **embracing God's will**, whatever that may be. For Jesus, it meant giving up His life at the cross for the salvation of man.

4 Surrender Your Mind

When we live in the world, we will be vulnerable to the way the world thinks, its value systems and philosophies. To surrender your mind to Jesus is to reject the world's way of thinking and values. Instead, it requires us to think like Jesus, to fill our minds with God's Word to know Him, know God's will and fulfil His purposes.

According to Romans 12:2, how can we be transformed?

What does 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 tells us we should do in relation to worldly thinking?

5 Surrender Our Bodies

What does it mean to you to make Jesus the Lord of your body? To make Jesus Lord is to acknowledge that our bodies are no longer our own. What we believe should be reflected in how we live, including where we go, what we do, and what we say.

Why should we surrender our bodies to God? 1 Corinthians 6:20

For whom is our body a temple? 1 Corinthians 6:19

6 Specific Areas to Surrender

Having surrendered the major areas of life to Jesus, we can now evaluate more specific areas of our lives to be given over to His lordship. God's will is always good, acceptable and perfect hence it makes perfect sense to do that. The following areas mentioned in the table may not happen all at once together, but their surrender individually ensures that when you face these areas and issues you are living in obedience to God.

In the following table, each area has an attached verse (or two). After looking over the verse(s), put a check mark beside the areas you have surrendered to Jesus.

Areas	Key Verse	Surrendered?
Vocation/Career	Col 3:23	<input type="checkbox"/>
Money and Possessions	Matt 6:19-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage	Heb 13:4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans/Future	Jas 4:13-15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation	Prov 22:1	<input type="checkbox"/>

7 Obedience

Now that you have acknowledged Jesus as Lord, the big emphasis hereafter is to obey Him. Otherwise, the claim of having surrendered is false.

What did Jesus say to those who claimed to have obeyed Him but did not? Luke 6:46

What was He warning them about their lives? Luke 6:49

8 Conclusion

When you surrender your life to Jesus and seek to obey Him, you are entering into an exciting phase of life where you will discover the wonderful things God has planned for you. The pathway may not always be smooth or easy, but you will experience God's peace, grace, strengthening and wonderful presence. It is a priceless experience of the eternal God working in and through you for His glory. God's assurance from Jeremiah 29:11 is, 'I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'.

Evaluate what have you learned and what would you practically do in response to your lesson(s) from this study.



CHAPTER

2

**THE CHRISTIAN'S
SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

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CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTIAN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1 Spiritual Habits which Promote Growth and Maturity

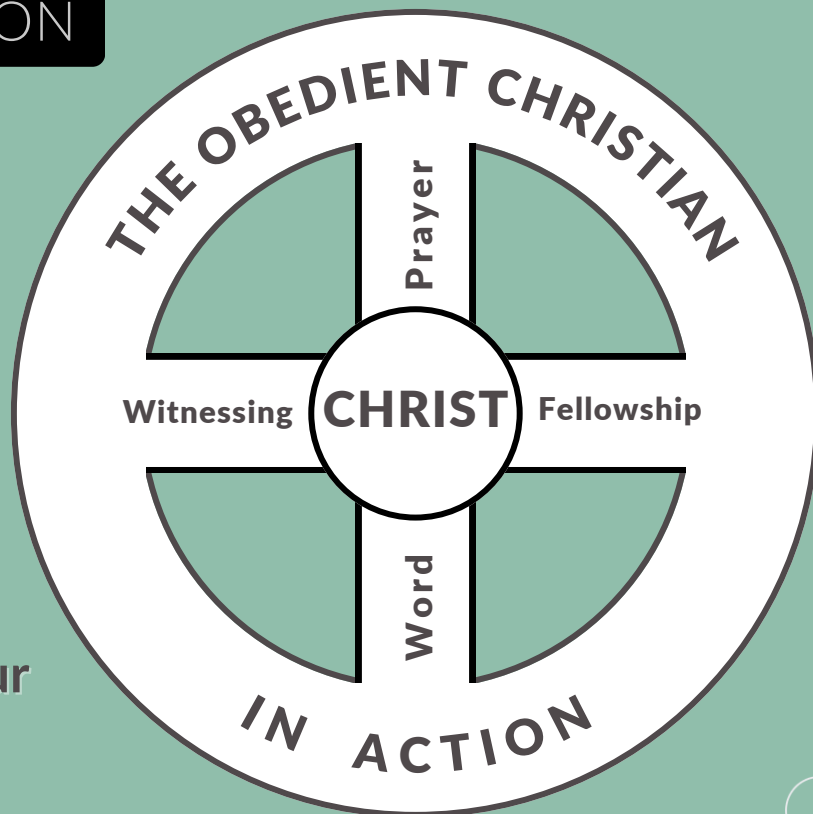
As a new believer, you have the image of Christ in you. You now have begun a wonderful journey of faith and spiritual growth towards maturity. God has given various resources to enable young believers to actively participate in their own growth from immaturity to Christ-likeness. The Apostle Peter wrote that 'His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness' (2 Peter 1:3).

Some of these spiritual resources are spiritual habits which help believers to grow in their walk with Jesus. A spiritual habit or practice, sometimes called 'discipline' is a practice found in Scripture that promotes spiritual growth. These practices are means of growth towards godliness. They are means and not the ends. Just because a person practices them does not mean that the practitioner is godly or knows God. Further, these practices are also of little value if the disciple is not passionate to know Jesus, has a desire to develop intimacy with Jesus or to become like Him.

Some of the disciplines relate to our inward spiritual growth (like God's Word, prayer, fasting) while others relate to our outward ministry like serving or evangelism. How these spiritual practices contribute to a Christian's spiritual growth is best illustrated by looking at The Wheel Illustration. Created by Navigators founder Dawson Trotman in the 1930s, it is a simple and effective way to visually explain how the spiritual practices contribute to a Christ-centred Spirit-filled life. The diagram challenges us to think deeply about how to be an obedient follower of Christ and each part represents a crucial component of a vibrant Christian life.

THE WHEEL ILLUSTRATION

The Wheel consists of three parts: the hub, the rim and the four spokes.



2 The Hub

The hub represents Christ in the life of the Christian. It is purposefully drawn over-sized to emphasize the importance of Christ in the Christian's life. We are to live the new life with Christ in the very centre. He must be the most important person in the disciple's life. The power to live the Christian life comes from Jesus Christ. He lives in you in the Person of the Holy Spirit, whose expressed purpose is to glorify Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 2:20 bring out the place of Christ in the Christian's life.

- 2.1 According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, what has happened to a person who believes in Christ?

2.2 In Galatians 2:20, what has happened to the old life of the Christian?

2.3 What prevents you from making Christ Lord?

3 The Rim

The rim represents the disciple responding to Christ's lordship through whole-hearted, day- by-day obedience. Much of this obedience is internal, such as in attitudes, habits, motives and values. Obedience is also seen in the way we relate to other people, face issues in life and keeping God's commands as we live the Jesus life.

Two verses that relate to this aspect of obedience is Romans 12:1 and John 14:21.

3.1 In Romans 12:1, the greatest response of someone who seeks to worship God and submit to Him is to

3.2 How does one show his love for Jesus? John 14:21

4 The Vertical Spokes

The spokes of a wheel transfer power from the Hub to the rim. The vertical spokes represent the spiritual disciplines that enable the disciple to walk in communion with God. The two vertical spokes are The Word of God and Prayer. Likewise, the two horizontal spokes concern our relationship with people, with believers and those who are not.

4.1 The Word of God

The Bible is God's Word. It reveals who God is and what He is like. As we know the Lord Jesus Christ from His Word, we can love, worship, serve and live for Him. When God speaks to us through His Word, we obey Him. The Word of God is spiritual food as well as the disciple's weapon for spiritual battle.

Joshua 1:8 and 2 Timothy 3:16 show how the Word of God is needed for our lives.

- 4.1.1 According to Joshua 1:8, what do we do with the Word of God? In your opinion, what actions are involved in the description 'always on your lips'?

NOTE *Meditation*

——— *'Meditating' means more than thinking. The word 'meditation' involves the process of turning over the Word in the mind and to think again and again over a verse. A related concept is to ruminate that is, "to chew cud", something that ruminant animals like cows do. Meditation is to fill your mind with God's Word.*

- 4.1.2 God gave inspiration to the Bible for various purposes in 2 Timothy 3:16. Put in your own words the various ways we can use and apply God's Word.

Teaching

Rebuking

Correcting

**Training in
Righteousness**

4.2 Prayer

Together with the Word, Prayer completes the vertical relationship with God. He speaks from His Word (as well as directly to us in person) and we respond in prayer. Prayer is the natural response to God as we hear Him speak through His Word. It is sharing our heart with the One who longs for our companionship and who cares about our concerns.

In John 15:7, what is necessary for prayer to be answered?

Life can get very complicated and stressful. How can prayer help?
Philippians 4:6-7

As we pray, what blessings and benefits are promised?

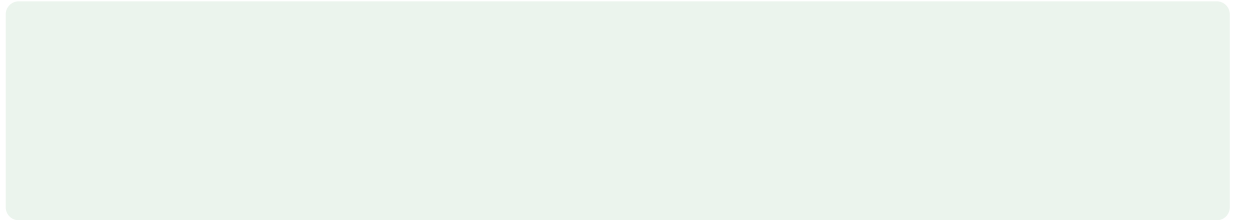
5 The Horizontal Spokes

The horizontal spokes concern our relationship with people. With other believers, we relate in fellowship. With those yet to believe, we seek to be a witness as we serve, love, and relate to them.

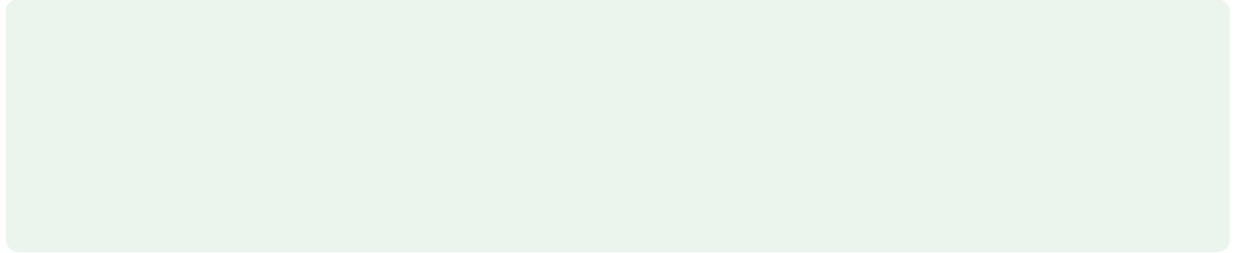
5.1 Fellowship

Matthew 18:20 describes the heart of fellowship. Write down as many characteristics as possible that you can observe from this short verse.

According to Hebrews 10:24-25, what kind of responses should we have towards others we are in fellowship with?



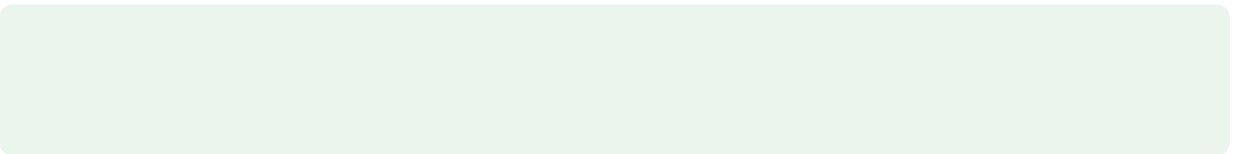
What might make you 'give up' being part of a fellowship group?



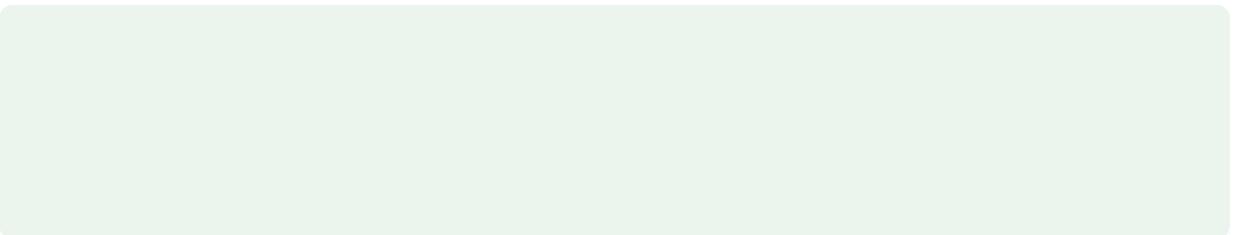
5.2 **Witnessing**

There are many ways to relate to those who do not know Christ. We can love them, serve them, and so on. One important way is witnessing. Witnessing can be verbally sharing the gospel with others. It should come from living a Spirit-filled life that shows forth Jesus, produces good deeds and impacts those around you through caring relationships.

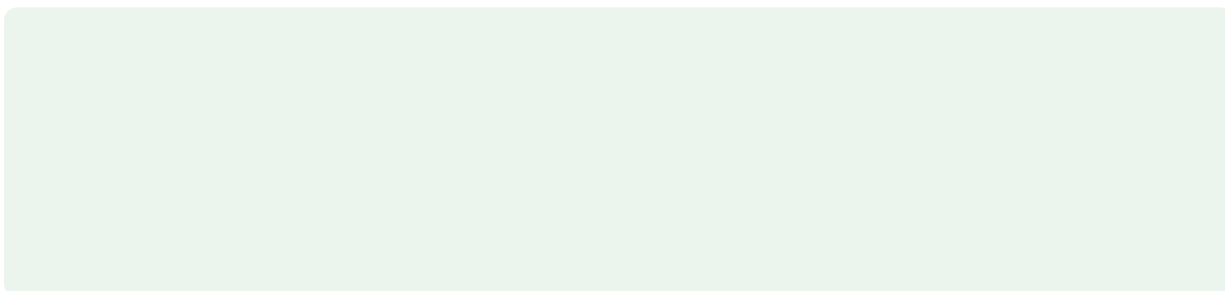
The disciples Jesus called were seasoned fisherman. Yet they had to be retrained to be made into effective fishers of men. What were they required to first do in Matthew 4:19?



Romans 1:16 points to Paul the Apostle overcoming the problem of shame which could hinder his witnessing for Christ. Why would people be ashamed of speaking of the gospel to others?



How would you share Christ with others such that you need not be ashamed?



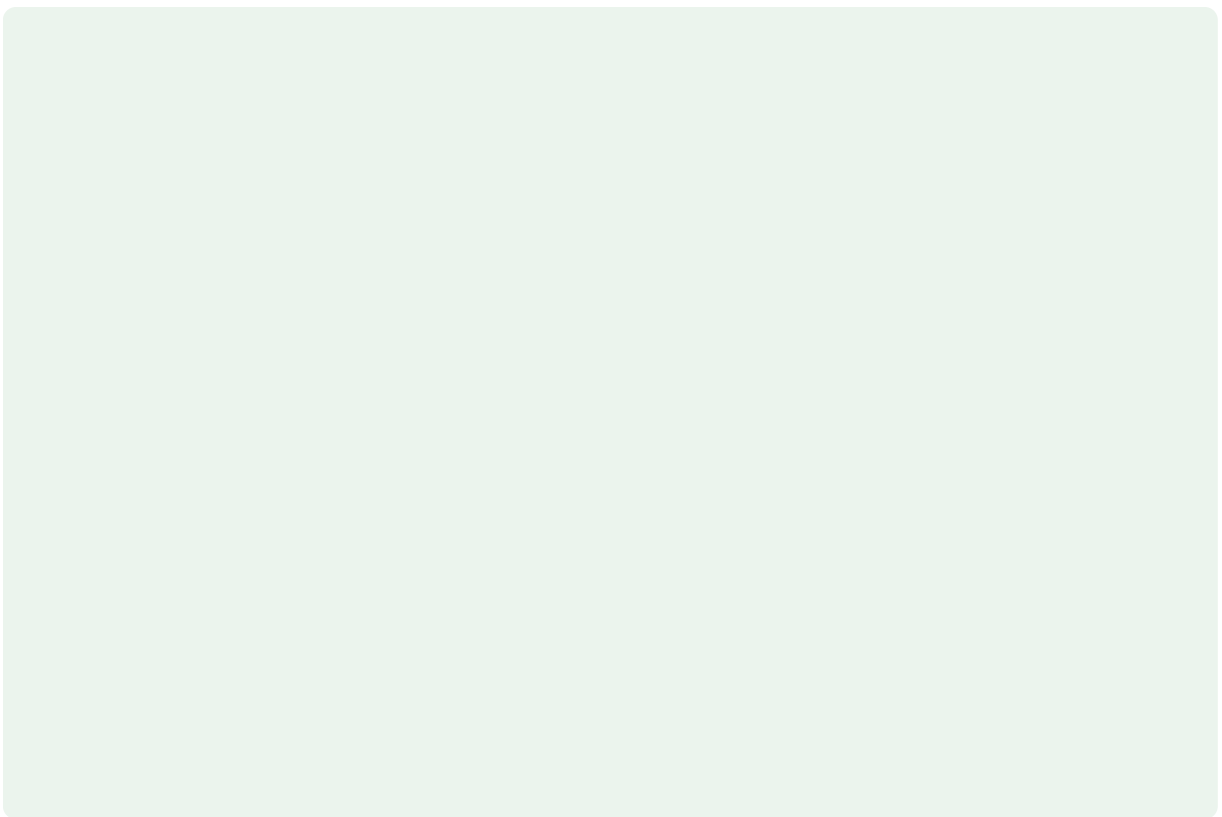
6 Practical pointers from the Wheel Illustration

- 6.1 When the rim hits a pothole or a rock, the shock is transmitted through the spokes to the hub. Thus, it is important for the spokes to be strong to be able to carry the shocks of life to our Lord Jesus Christ, our life centre. When the rim hits a pothole or a rock, the shock is transmitted through the spokes to the hub. If the spokes are not sturdy enough, it will threaten its connection to the hub and compromise the integrity of the wheel. So, it is important for the spokes to be strong enough to withstand shocks on the road. Likewise, it is important for a Christian's Word/Prayer life to be strong enough to ensure a stable connection to the Lord Jesus Christ, the hub of our lives, despite the knocks and shocks of life. A weak spoke of Word/Prayer hinders our reliance on Christ.
- 6.2 When the wheel rotates, the individual spokes are not distinguishable. What is distinguishable are the hub and the rim. People will see Christ in you and your obedience to Christ but not necessarily the various spiritual practices like Prayer or the Word.
- 6.3 All spokes must be balanced otherwise the wheel is unstable. Likewise, we are to practice the habits of Prayer, the intake of the Word, Witnessing and being in community, otherwise our Christian life gets wobbly.

6.4 Finally, the hub is the most important part. Without the hub, there is no wheel. People may do all the other parts but it will be a religious but Christless life.

7 Evaluate your 'Wheel Life'

In the space below, draw the shape of your Wheel Life as it exists in your life now, showing the relative conditions or sizes. The purpose of this exercise is to help you realise the areas of growth you need to focus on in your life as a disciple of Christ.



8 The Daily Devotional (or Quiet Time)

Once the Wheel is operating in your life, you are on your way towards maturity. It may take time for the Wheel in your life to grow stronger and bigger, reflecting much growth. One practical way to practice the Wheel in your daily life is through our daily devotions, sometimes called the Quiet Time (QT). The QT is a focused time of personal intimacy with God and in it, we weave several spiritual disciplines of the Wheel Life in one spiritual habit.

Seeking God in intimacy is a Biblical practice. Jesus Himself, as a man, demonstrated this practice of spending time with God. After His long day in Mark 1:16-34, before the start of His new busy day, it was recorded that *'Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.'* (Mark 1:35)

- 8.1 One great example of a God-seeker is Moses the man of God. In Exodus 33:11, what might friendship with God mean?

King David also wrote about seeking God's face in Psalm 27:8 (*'My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek'*). When we talk about seeking God's face during Quiet Time, it means we are seeking to know Him more intimately. We seek to understand His character, see His holiness and love more clearly, and hear His voice. Then we worship Him and want to obey Him.

- 8.2 Sometimes, our passion for seeking God is weakened by busyness or sin. We get discouraged by the dryness in our soul. What can Psalm 63:1 teach us about recognising spiritual dryness as a motivating factor instead of a disincentive?

- 8.3 In Philippians 3:8,10, what was Paul's 'secret' to help him consistently choose to seek Christ?

8.4 In John 17:3, what did Jesus reveal as the purpose of God giving us eternal life?

9 The Practice of the Quiet Time

The QT involves the spiritual disciplines of the Word and Prayer. Here is a simple way to start the journey of your devotional life. When it comes to prayer, we will use the acronym ACTS, (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication).

Step 1 | Prepare Your Heart

Open with a prayer for guidance as you listen to God. Use any sample prayer like the following, using thoughts from Psalm 143:8 and Psalm 119:18 or other similar verses:

You might pray, 'Lord, cleanse my heart so You can speak to me through the Scriptures. Make my mind alert to see wonderful things from your Word, my heart responsive to receive your love and my soul active to sense your presence during this time. Amen'

Step 2 | Listen to God

'Then Samuel said 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' (1 Sam 3:10)
Read from a passage of the Bible. It is ideal if the passages are from your daily reading plan (for example, to cover the Bible in a year).

Read through again for clarity, asking God to speak to you as you read. Sometimes certain words, phrases, or ideas 'jump' at you. If you are clear that God has spoken to you, underline the verse or record it somewhere. Keep reflecting as to what else God may be saying to you.

Step 3 | Talk to God about What You Heard or Learned

After God has spoken through His Word, then speak to Him in Prayer. One helpful method is to incorporate four areas of prayer that you can remember with the acronym ACTS.

Adoration

*This is the purest form of prayer as it is praise to God.
Tell God what you have discovered of Him in the passage today.
Tell Him you love and worship Him.*

Confession

*'Confession' comes from a root word meaning 'to agree together with.'
When we apply this to prayer, it means we agree with God's view
of what we've done. Ask Him to cleanse you of your sin and help
you turn from it moving forward.*

Thanksgiving

*Think of several specific things to thank Him for: your family, your work,
your church— even thank Him for being with you in hardship.*

Supplication

*This means to "ask for, earnestly and humbly." Ask on behalf of
others in need, then ask for yourself, your family, your work, etc.
Include people around the world, missionaries, friends, and those
who have yet to hear about Jesus.*

Start with 15-20 minutes. Give about 5 minutes for each of the 3 steps. Over time, you may not notice the time allotted has increased because you learn to enjoy God's presence and treasure the intimacy with Jesus. As you mature you will find that you desire more time with God.

NOTE Reality Check

——— *Not every QT ends with you feeling in total peace or that God spoke very clearly. That is common. The focus is not on yourself. You worshipped God and that is most important.*

10 My Appointment with God

My best period each day is at (time)

I plan to allow approximately minutes each day

My best place to meet God is

I will start with the Bible passage

11 Some Principles to Remember

To build up your devotional life keep the following principles in mind:

CONSISTENCY

Aim at consistency. The same time every day helps build a devotional habit.

GROW

You can grow in devotion. Ask God to give you a great desire for Him.

GOD'S PRESENCE

Practice the Presence of God throughout the day. The QT is not just an activity to be done before breakfast.

REGULARITY

Aim at regularity. By keeping your daily appointment, you know God better.

FOCUS ON CHRIST

Focus on the Person of Christ rather than the method of Quiet Time.

RECORD

It is helpful to record in a journal, notebook, or diary what God has spoken to you.



3

C H A P T E R

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

CHAPTER 3

GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

1 Introduction

‘The Bible is the most remarkable book ever written. The writing was done by about 40 men of several countries and many occupations. They wrote over a period of about 1500 years and in 3 languages— Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Yet the Bible is a well-organized unity with one great theme and central Figure— Jesus Christ. All of this would be impossible unless the Bible had one supreme Author— and it did— the Holy Spirit of God.’

Studies in Christian Living, Book 3 Chapter 2, The Navigators

Not only is the background so unique, but the Bible is also authoritative because it is inspired. The concept of inspiration is not something theologians forced on the Bible - it is a teaching of the Bible itself. Inspiration is ‘a supernatural influence exerted upon the sacred writers by the Spirit of God which caused the writings to be given divine trustworthiness’ according to renowned theologian, Benjamin B Warfield.

This doctrine is seen in two key passages of the Bible:

1.1 **2 Timothy 3:14-17**

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

In 2 Timothy 3:16, the term for inspiration is ‘God-breathed’—a literal translation of the Greek word *theopneustos*.

What is the impact of inspiration in 2 Timothy 3:14-15?

What is the extent of the inspiration of the Bible as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16? Substantial, partial or whole?

NOTE The theological term for the extent of inspiration of the Bible is 'plenary'. Look up a dictionary and write down what it defines 'plenary' (adjective) as.

Definition of 'plenary'

From the above verses, what are some purposes for God to inspire the Bible?

1.2 **2 Peter 1:20-21**

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

According to the Apostle Peter, how did prophecy (another word for God's Word to man) come into being if it did not originate with man?

'Carried along' by the Holy Spirit explains the process of inspiration from God's thoughts to the spoken and written words of the Bible.

Behind the storyline of Scripture is the story of how God, in his providence, gave his words to us. When God spoke, he ensured that it would be preserved through a process of writing, collecting, copying, translating, and printing. After thousands of years, the Scripture that began with the breath of God now comes to us in the Book that is worthy of our supreme trust.

Dirk Jongkind, 'How we got the Bible'
<https://www.desiringgod.org>

2 The Importance of the Word of God

The Word of God is fundamental in all the Christian life. The Bible is God's self-revelation. Some of the wonders of the Word are sung about in Psalm 19. Read it to get inspired about how wonderful the Word is. Here are some of its great treasures.

2.1 The Bible's Central Figure

In Luke 24:25-27 and John 5:39, who is the central figure in the Bible?

2.2 Salvation

What can the eternal word of God give in 1 Peter 1:23-25?

In 2 Timothy 3:15, what can the Scriptures do?

2.3 Spiritual Growth

1 Peter 2:2 The Bible is necessary for what level of maturity?

1 John 2:14b Beyond strength built up over time, what is the secret of victory in this stage of growth?

In Hebrews 5:12-14, how does one grow from immaturity to maturity?

2.4 **Discipleship**

In John 8:31-32, what do those who claim to believe in Jesus need to do to demonstrate they truly are disciples?

What will God's Word do for them?

2.5 **Character Change**

In 2 Tim 3:16, what are the ways the Bible changes our lives?

What did Jesus say God's Word (God's truth) can do for us in John 15:3 and John 17:17?

How can a young person keep pure? Psalm 119:9, 11

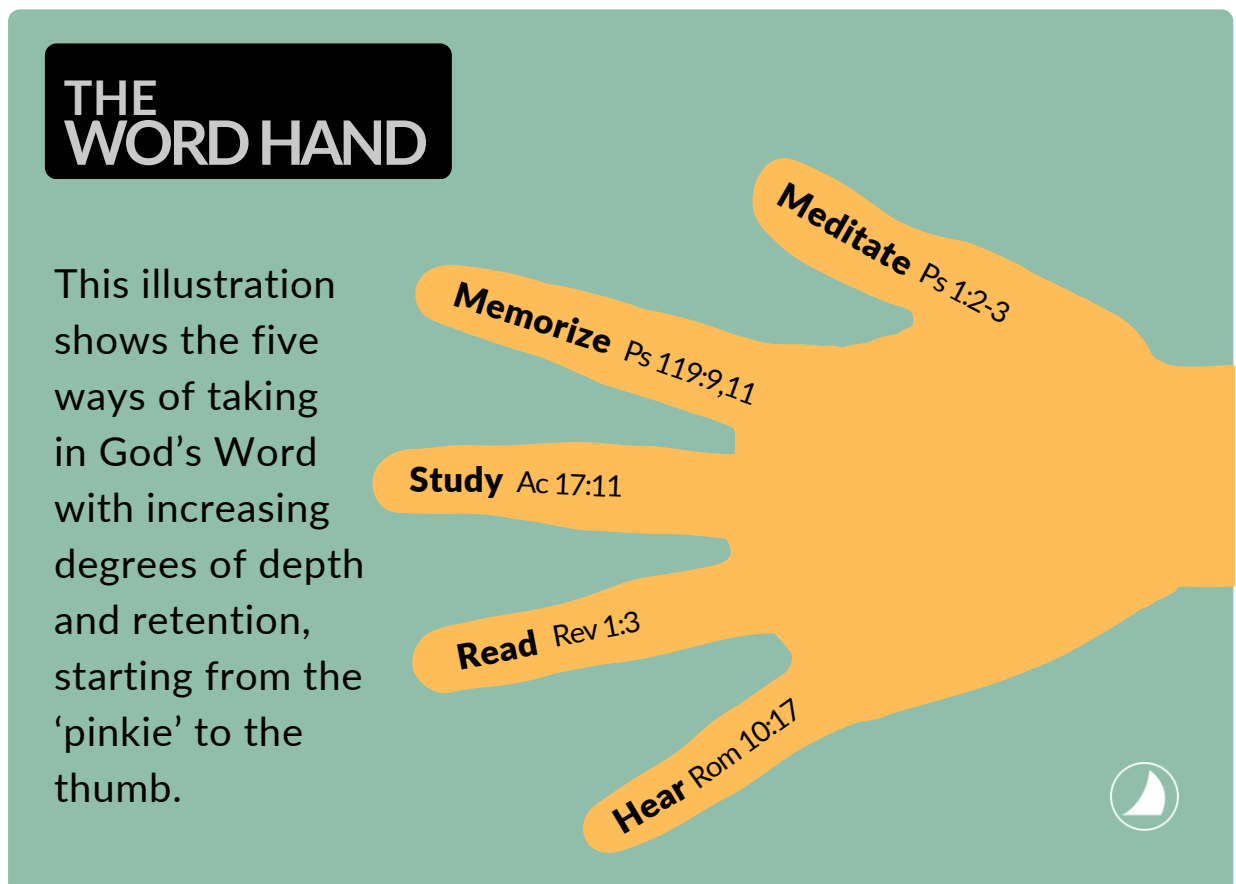
2.6 Ministry

What does the godly person require to be equipped for every good work? 2 Timothy 3:16-17

In 2 Timothy 2:15, what competency or skill does God's workman require?

3 The Word Hand

This is a very valuable illustration which helps any Christian to be immersed in God's Word and in the process, be enabled to have a good grip of the Word. The Word Hand shows five ways the Christian can take in God's Word.



Hearing Romans 10:17

Hearing refers to secondary input from sermons by preachers or reading books by Christian writers. Like the pinkie, it is the weakest because after 24 hours, we retain only five percent of what we hear. However, in ancient days, hearing was very effective as most people relied on this.

Reading Revelation 1:3

Reading gives us an overview of the Bible and can be part of a daily quiet time. This is represented by the ring finger. We generally retain 15 percent of what we read. Today, we can directly hear God's Word through digital means offered by You Version or The Bible Is, etc. Listening to audio Bibles is a great way to maximise commuting times.

Studying Acts 17:11

Studying the Bible requires personal investigation just like you are doing in this Bible Study booklet. The Bereans likewise checked the veracity of Paul's teaching against the Bible. Studying the Bible deepens our convictions. It requires greater time and effort but results in deeper knowledge of the Bible. Most people retain 35 percent of what they study. This way of intake is represented by the middle finger.

Memorizing Psalm 119:9-11

God's Word (the Sword of the Spirit--Ephesians 6:17), is given for us to overcome temptations. God's Word in our hearts and minds keeps us from straying into sin. The index finger, our strongest finger, represents memorization. We remember 100 percent of what we memorize if we consistently review it.

Meditation Psalm 1:2-3

Meditation is the reflective process that accompanies each of the other four methods of Scripture intake. Only the thumb can touch all the other four fingers. Therefore, meditation is assigned to the thumb. By meditating on God's Word as we hear, read, study, and memorize, we discover its transforming power at work in us.

4 Getting Started on Bible Reading

Your Bible study, as you are doing in this booklet, is an intensive way of intake of the Word. You will also need an extensive grasp of the Bible. This can be done by reading through the Bible in a regular way.

There are different Bible reading programs which can help you cover the 66 books (with a total of 1,189 chapters) of the Bible in one year. These plans are easily available online. One way is to cover two chapters of the Old Testament along with one chapter of the New Testament. This three-chapter regimen will help you get through the Bible in one year and the New Testament in nine months. At the same time, adjust your pace so that you do not rush through the Bible mechanically.

It is recommended that you read the Bible consecutively to get the flow of the themes. Bear in mind that the books of the Bible are not arranged in chronological order. To help you get a grasp of the books in terms of chronology and genre (type of book) the following pictorial summaries may help the reader have a sense of where each book fits in the scheme of things.

5 Pictorial Summary of the Old Testament

The Major Events:

The Old Testament has 39 books consisting of 17 books dealing with the origin and development of the nation of Israel. These cover:

Four Major Events: The Creation, The Fall, The Flood, The formation of the nations

Four Major Personalities: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

The period of slavery in Egypt, the rise of Moses and the Exodus

The Covenant and the Wilderness Wanderings; Entering and conquest of the Promised Land

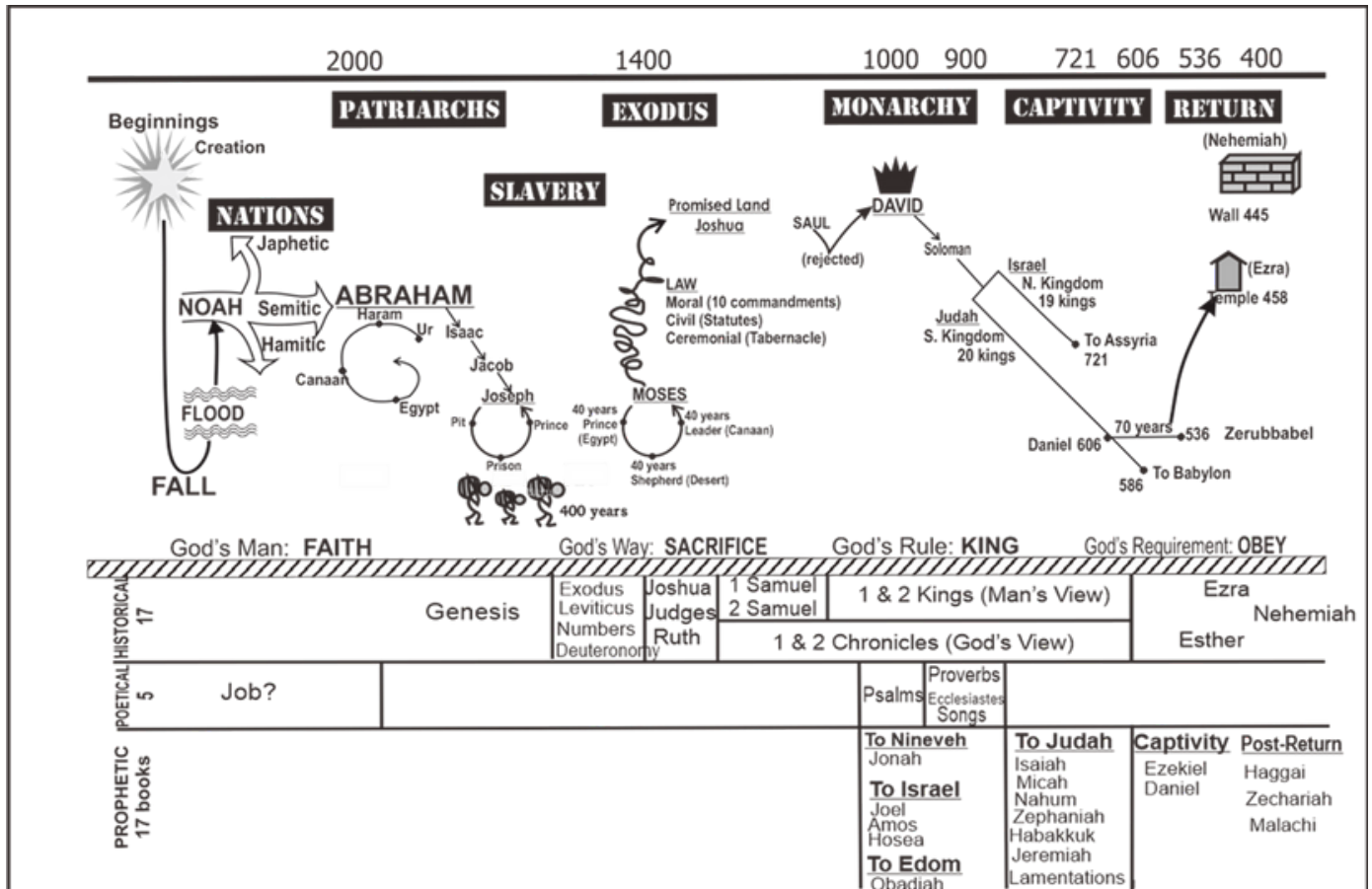
The period of the judges followed by the period of the kings

The divided kingdom and exile into Assyria and again later into Babylon for 70 years

The Return and rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem then the Temple

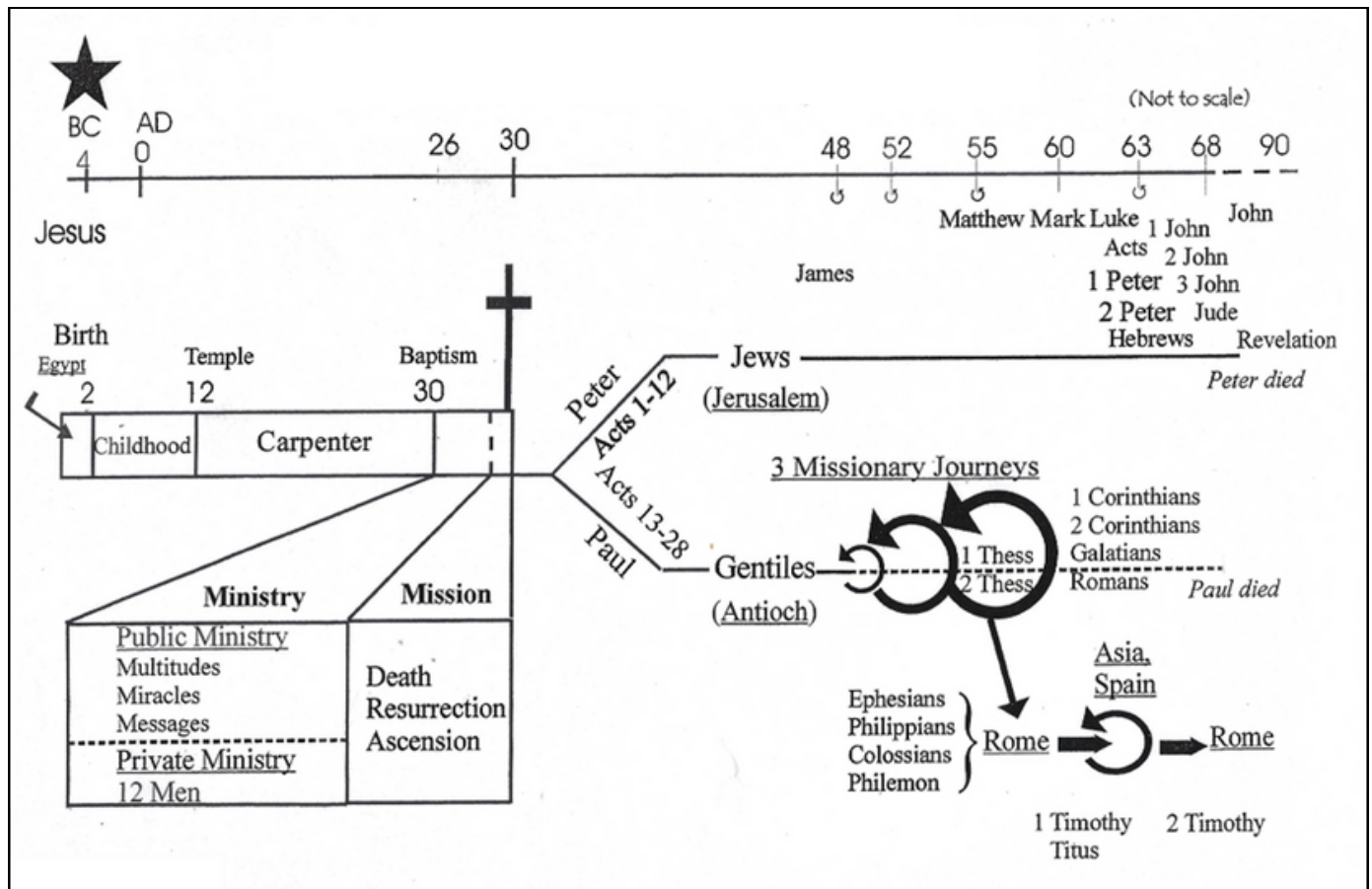
There are 5 poetical books consisting of Job (the dating of Job is uncertain, but it is seen as the oldest book of the Bible), and the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. There are also 17 prophetic books written by the prophets.

Pictorial Summary of the Old Testament



By Wong Kim Tok

Pictorial Summary of the New Testament (or New Covenant)



By Wong Kim Tok

There are 27 books in the New Testament. These 'books' consist of 4 biographies of Jesus called 'Gospels', the growth of the early church (Acts) and the significant expansion of the church through the missionary movements beyond Israel to the then known world. The letters of the Apostle Paul and other Apostles make up a significant portion of the New Testament. The New Testament ends with the book of Revelation written to help the churches to persevere in the face of persecution. Some parts of it speak to the end of days, the second coming of Christ and His rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

6 Application

6.1 Review the questions and answers in this chapter. Which of the 'fingers' (ways of Word intake) in the Word Hand are strong and which are weaker? What do you plan to do to strengthen the weaker 'fingers'?

6.2 If you were to start your Daily Bible Reading Program, this will be the plan:

Daily Bible Reading Program

Number of chapters I plan to read

<i>Old Testatment</i>	<i>New Testatment</i>
<input style="width: 100px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>

I will be starting to read from (book)

I will start on (date):



CHAPTER

4

GROWING IN PRAYER

GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

CHAPTER 4

GROWING IN PRAYER

What is Prayer?

Prayer is simply talking to God. It is a spiritual communication between man and God. This means prayer, like talking or conversation with someone, is not a monologue. We talk and we also listen. Prayer may be silent or verbalized, occasional or constant, informally spoken or formally uttered, spontaneous or following set prayers. Posture may help the praying person, but it adds little to the efficacy of prayer. Missing in these descriptions of prayer is the context: that of a loving communion like that of a child with the father, of a friend with a friend. Prayer is a relationship with God. Seen from this perspective, prayer will not be a drudgery.

1 God Wants Us to Pray

Prayer is a great privilege given to man. Imagine being able to call upon the living God! It is one of the spiritual graces He gives to help us grow in our walk with Him. Write down what encourages you to pray from the following commands and promises.

1.1 Psalm 50:15

1.2 Psalm 62:8

1.3 Ephesians 6:18

1.4 Philippians 4:6-7

1.5 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

2 God Answers Prayer

God is a prayer-answering God. He delights to help us in our time of need. What do the following verses teach about God's attitude and responses to our prayers?

Psalm 65:2

Jeremiah 33:3

Matthew 7:7-8

Matthew 7:9-11

Ephesians 3:20-21

3 The Basis of Prayer

While we know that God is a prayer-answering God, we must understand that we approach God in prayer based on several fundamental truths without which prayer is meaningless.

3.1 John 16:24

3.2 Matthew 21:22

3.3 1 John 5:14-15

3.4 In Luke 22:42, what attitude is necessary in prayer regardless of the answer from God?

3.5 Sometimes, you may have fulfilled all the above, but your prayer still seems to be unanswered. What should you do? Here are some alternative perspectives:

God may have answered in a form or shape which you did not recognize. It may be very different but always better than your original request. How does Ephesians 3:20 help you to modify your view of God's answers to prayer?

God may say 'Yes' but also 'Wait'. The issue is timing of the answer. God in His wisdom is delaying it for our good. Sometimes the delay is for His purposes to be accomplished. What happened in Daniel 10:12-14 to illustrate this truth?

What response did Jesus advocate when prayer was not answered?
Luke 18:1

4 Hindrances to Answered Prayer

When we pray, we sometimes do not receive answers from God. These prayers are not answered because of several reasons:

Psalm 66:18

James 4:3

Mark 11:25

5 What to Pray For

5.1 A Pattern of Prayer

The disciples once asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus then taught them using what is called 'The Lord's Prayer'. This is a misnomer because it was for the disciples and should be more correctly called 'The Disciples' Prayer'. This prayer is used widely as a liturgical prayer, uttered as a prayer itself during worship services. A more important value of this prayer than just repeating it, is to see it as embodying principles of prayer—what and how.

From Matthew 6: 9-13, discover these principles and patterns:

5.1.1 There are only 53 words in the prayer itself (Luke's version in Luke 11:2-4 has even fewer words—only 34). What can you conclude about length of prayer from such brevity?

5.1.2 In prayer, who takes priority, God and his purposes or my needs?

5.1.3 What important themes are addressed in this section? It begins with our relationship to God as our Father. What else is addressed?

'Hallowed be your Name':

God's kingship:

God's purposes and my submission:

5.1.4 From Matthew 6:11-13, List the specific petitions that are being asked of God.

Material needs:

Social needs in relationship with others:

Spiritual needs of protection:

5.2 **Who else and what to Pray for (Intercession Prayers)?**

From the following verses, write down who and what we should pray for.

	Who	What
Romans 10:1		
1 Timothy 2:1-4		
Matthew 9:37-38		
Ephesians 6:19-20		
Matthew 5:44		

5.3 What to pray for yourself (i.e., Petitions)?

You can pray for yourself on any need you might have. The petitions from Matthew 6:11-13 (see Question 5.1.4) are examples. Here are some other specific ones:

Psalm 51:2,10

Psalm 119:34

Hebrews 4:16

James 1:5

The Prayer Hand is an easy way to put together what we have covered in this chapter on prayer.



Praise Psalm 146:1-2

The thumb represents praise, adoration and worship from my heart to God. We start with the thumb just as how, in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus started with God's holy character. Similarly, just as the thumb touches all the other four fingers, praise should permeate my entire prayer life and all my life.

Thanksgiving Ephesians 5:20

The index finger represents thanksgiving. Sometimes the Bible uses praise and thanksgiving synonymously. There is a distinction in that praise is ascribed to **who** God is while thanksgiving is my response to **what** God has done.

Intercession Ephesians 6:18-19

The middle finger represents intercession which is praying to God to meet the needs of others. Just as the middle finger is the longest finger, it is a reminder that the needs of others are many and we should bring their needs to God.

Petition 1 Samuel 1:27

The ring finger represents petition which is asking God for my personal needs.

Confession 1 John 1:9

The little finger represents confession—I agree with God about my sin. This positioning of confession does not mean that confession is least important. Rather, it reminds us that in the confession, our focus is on God's holiness rather than our sins.

6 We can also use the Prayer Hand to remind us of who to pray for.

THUMB

People close to you (family, friends).

**INDEX
FINGER**

People who point the way (leaders/pastors).

**MIDDLE
FINGER**

People in authority (government and civil officials).

**RING
FINGER**

People in need.

**LITTLE
FINGER**

You and your needs.

7 Application

What is one thing you learned about prayer? How can you put it to practice?



5

C H A P T E R

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

CHAPTER 5

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

Introduction

This study introduces the Christian to the third person of Our Triune God –the Holy Spirit. We generally hear more about the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father than of the Holy Spirit. Yet His role is so crucial that to be ignorant of Him and what He does is to rob ourselves of life and power. May the truths about the Holy Spirit change your life as you discover more of who He is and His role in the lives of Christians.

1 He is God

The Holy Spirit has the characteristics of God. What are some of them from this brief selection?

Genesis 1:1-2

Psalms 139:7

Hebrews 9:14

In Luke 1:35, what is another name for the Holy Spirit?

In 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, who is said to fully understand God?

2 The Work of the Holy Spirit

2.1 In Our Salvation

Note down the specific roles of the Holy Spirit in the following verses.

John 16:8

Titus 3:5

1 Corinthians
12:13

1 Corinthians
6:19

Romans 8:16

2.2 In Our Daily Lives



Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in us whereby our inner being is progressively changed, freeing us more and more from sinful traits and developing within us over time the virtues of Christlike character.

Jerry Bridges

2.2.1 In 1 Cor 2:12-14, what are the roles of the Holy Spirit ...

(a) regarding the believer's understanding of truths?

(b) regarding the speaking and preaching by the apostles?

2.2.2 What assurance do we have if the Spirit lives in us? Romans 8:14-16

2.2.3 How does the Holy Spirit go about teaching us? John 16:13-14

2.2.4 In Romans 8:26, in what area of life does the Spirit help us? How does He do that?

2.2.5 In Galatians 5:22-23, the Holy Spirit's impact on a Christian is identifiable.

(a) What is the product of the Holy Spirit's work in a Christian's life called?

(b) What are the qualities of this fruit?

2.3 In Our Service for God

2.3.1 What did the disciples experience when the Holy Spirit came upon them? What will they be enabled to do? Acts 1:8

2.3.2 In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, what does the Holy Spirit add to the words of the gospel uttered by Christians?

2.3.3 From 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,

Does every believer have a spiritual gift (capacity or ability)?

Who determines which gifts are given to a believer?

What is the purpose of these gifts?

2.3.4 What guidance did the Holy Spirit give to the disciples in their service of the Gospel?

In Acts 13:2,4?

In Acts 16:6-7?

In 1 Corinthians
2:4?

3 Our Response to the Holy Spirit

3.1 In Ephesians 5:18-21

What is the Christian commanded to do concerning the Holy Spirit?

What accompanies the filling of the Holy Spirit in verses 19-21?

In verse 18, what negative analogy with its attendant behaviour is used to contrast the filling of the Holy Spirit?

From this analogy, what do you think 'filling' is about?

3.2 What are some other results of being filled by the Holy Spirit from:

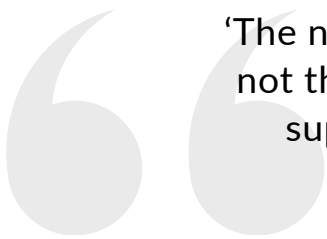
Acts 4:31?

Acts 11:24?

Acts 13:52?

3.3 According to Galatians 5:16, and 5:24, what are we commanded to do and not do?

3.4 What else are we asked to do regarding the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:25?



‘The normal life for every believer is the "Spirit filled life." It is not the result of some erratic second blessing as some would suppose but rather the result of meeting the conditions of faith and obedience to the plain simple teaching of the Word of God.’

Al Troester, Wholesome Words blog

4 Warnings

What are some warnings about our response to the Holy Spirit:

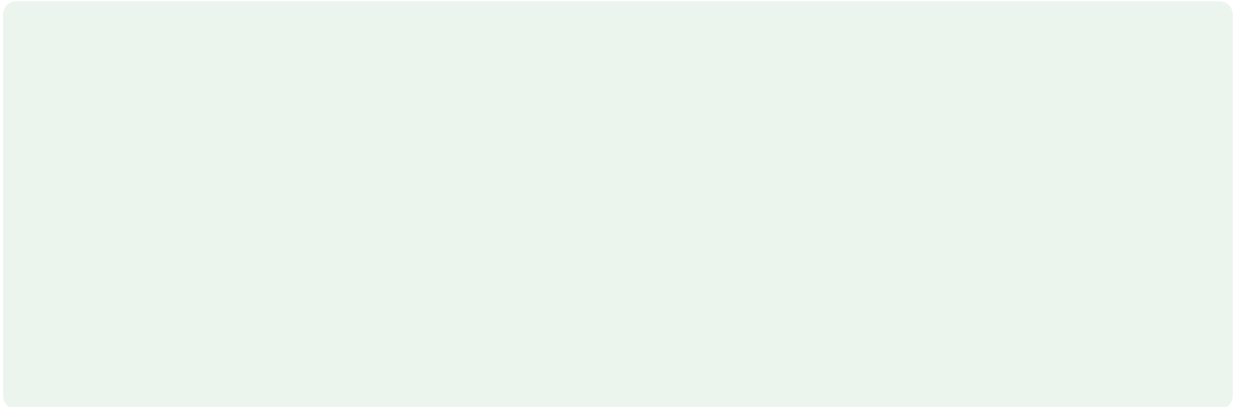
In Acts 7:51?

In Ephesians 4:30?

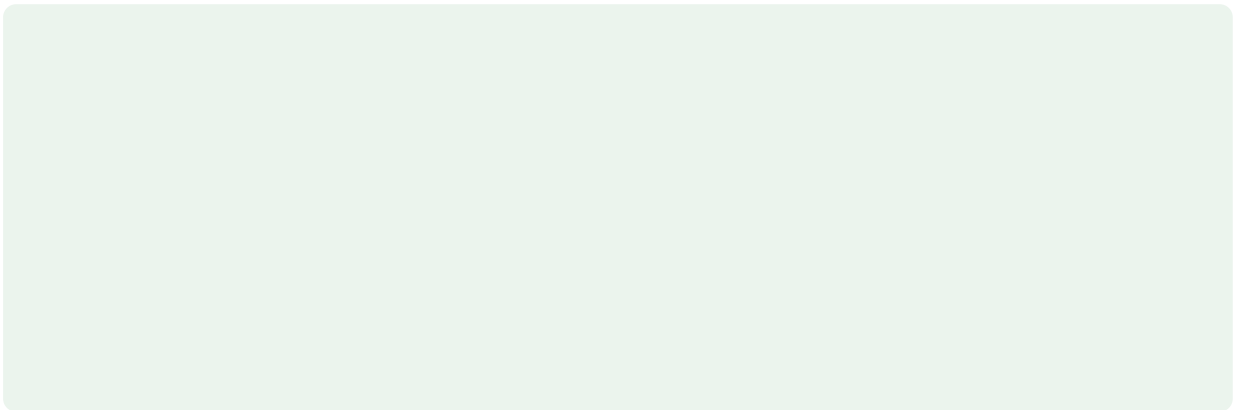
In 1 Thessalonians 5:19?

5 Application

Which truth or Bible verse most challenges you from this chapter?



What is one thing you can respond, do, or change as a result of this great truth?





THE
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SINGAPORE