

WOMEN'S CURRICULUM

# Cape Town Commitment

**12 GROUP STUDIES  
WITH HOMEWORK**

---

Phyllis Bennett

# The Cape Town Commitment

## A curriculum for women

### Part I: For the Lord we Love

### 10 Bible Study Lessons

#### How to Use This Study Guide:

1. These ten lessons cover the ten sections of Part I of *The Cape Town Commitment*, namely the Confession of Faith: 'For the Lord we Love'.
2. The studies have been designed primarily for women (with many biblical illustrations and pictures for/of women) but they could be adapted to a male or co-ed audience.
3. They are written in a five-day format to encourage spending time alone with God each day.
4. Each lesson contains three levels of homework, depending on how long you can spend with God daily. The three levels are identified as follows:



**Level One:** Just-A-Moment (Stop watch) 10-15 minutes.

**Level Two:** Core (To follow Just-A-Moment) 30 minutes.



**Level Three:** Digging Deeper (shovel) 40-45 minutes.

*These questions are unnumbered and optional.*

5. Each lesson, designed to be completed in one week, may be discussed with a small group. Where a chart or table is used, go for the big picture by asking 'What insight helped me most from this?'
6. The goal of these studies is to help you study the Bible for yourself, as the text underlying *The Cape Town Commitment*, and to know and love the Bible and its Divine Author more fully and deeply. This reflects The Lausanne Movement's desire to eradicate what could be termed 'Bible Poverty'. The *Commitment* should help us know and love God's Word more deeply and apply it to our lives more fully.

## Cape Town Commitment ~ For the Lord we Love


Lesson One ~ We Love Because God First Loved Us	3
Lesson Two ~ We Love the Living God	11
Lesson Three ~ We Love God the Father	21
Lesson Four ~ We Love God the Son	29
Lesson Five ~ We Love God the Holy Spirit	37
Lesson Six ~ We Love God's Word	43
Lesson Seven ~ We Love God's World	53
Lesson Eight ~ We Love the Gospel of God	61
Lesson Nine ~ We Love the People of God	69
Lesson Ten ~ We Love the Mission of God	75

## Lesson One ~ We Love Because God First Loved Us

*Warm-Up:* Describe an early experience of the love of God, when you first remember feeling overwhelmed with the simple truth that the God of the universe loves YOU! Whom did you tell and why?


*'The mission of God flows from the love of God. The mission of God's people flows from our love for God and for all that God loves. World evangelization is the outflow of God's love to us and through us. We affirm the primacy of God's grace, and we then respond to that grace by faith, demonstrated through the obedience of love. We love because God first loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.'* (CTC)


### Day One: Understanding our Mission as Flowing from the Love of God

 1A. **Read John 3:16, Galatians 5:6, 1 John 4:9-10, 19.** From these verses, what insights can you glean about the love of God? List as many as you can find.

1B. Review **John 3:16, Galatians 5:6, and 1 John 4:9-10, 19** by filling in the chart below. From these verses, record your understanding of the following aspects of the love of God. The first box is filled in for you.

Aspects of the love of God	Your understanding	Verse(s)
The origin of love	Love originates in God. We can only love because He loved us first.	1 John 4:19
The expression of God's love		
The breadth of God's love		
The cost of God's love		

 1C. **Read Ephesians 2:1-5.** It's one thing to love someone who is lovable. But by the world's standards, to love the unlovable is unthinkable! What further insights into God's love for us can you glean from these verses? Specifically, what descriptions do these verses give regarding our condition when God first chose to love us?

 1D. Describe a time recently when a family member or friend loved you when you were unlovable. How did his/her love make you feel?

1E. **Read John 8:1-11.** In what ways did Jesus express love to this woman in her unlovable state? What actions did He take to demonstrate His love? What words did He use?



1F. Think of someone you know who does not yet know Christ. In what ways is he/she loveable? In what ways is he/she somewhat unlovable?

What have you learned in today's lesson that gives you fresh motivation to love him/her?



1G. **Reread Cape Town Commitment Paragraph #1:** In your own words based on today's scripture passages, express how our evangelistic mission flows from the love of God.

## Day Two: Exploring the Biblical Foundations of the Love of God



2A. Read the following verses, looking for biblical 'firsts,' 'greats,' 'the new' or implied associations with the love of God. Fill in the chart below. Highlight the one that freshly touches your heart today.

Scripture	biblical 'firsts,' 'greats,' 'the new,' or implied associations
<b>Matthew 22:36-40</b>	
<b>John 13:34-35</b>	
<b>Galatians 5:22</b>	
<b>1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13</b>	



2B. What does Scripture's emphasis on the primacy of the love of God tell us about God and His priorities?



2C. Name a few of the world's top priorities. In what ways do these priorities pale when compared with the love of God?

Which of the world's priorities is most tempting for you to take on as your own priority? What is one step you can take to guard your heart against giving in to this temptation today?

2D. *'Christian love for one another is how the unseen God, who made Himself visible through His incarnate Son, goes on and makes Himself visible to the world.'* (CTC, John 13:34-35) **Read Acts 9:36-42.** Name the individuals and groups of people in this story. In what ways did each show love for other believers? How did their love express the truth of John 13:34-35 and this CTC statement? Fill in the following chart with your insights.

Individuals/Groups	How did they show love?	Love express truth of John 13:34-35?

How did God use their loving expressions to reach others with the gospel?

2E. Describe a time when you have seen the love that believers have for one another become a visible expression of God’s love to someone who does not yet know Christ.



*‘Love is the evidence that we are born again; the assurance that we know God; and the proof that God dwells within us.’ (CTC) **Read 1 John 3:14, 4:7-21.** List at least one statement from these verses that underscores each of these CTC statements.*

*‘Love is the evidence that we are born again’*

*‘the assurance that we know God’*

*‘and the proof that God dwells within us’*



2F. Thank God today for your love for other believers and the reassurance that it gives you that you are born again, that you know God and that God dwells in you. Thank Him specifically for three believers that you love and one quality in their lives that causes you to love them.

Why not tell one of them today about your love and the reassurance that it gives you that you know God and that He dwells in you?

### Day Three: Grasping the Breadth of the Permeating Love of God

*‘Such love is not weak or sentimental. The love of God is covenantally faithful, committed, self-giving, sacrificial, strong, and holy. Since God is love, love permeates God’s whole being and all His actions, His justice as well as His compassion.’ (CTC)*



3A. To fully grasp how God’s love is not weak or sentimental in each of the following passages, examine the ways that the love of God is coupled with other attributes mentioned in the CTC above. List the attributes and any fresh insights they give you into the love of God.

Attribute

Fresh Insight

**Deuteronomy 7:7-9**

**Psalm 103:6-18**

**Hosea 2:19-20, 11:1**

**Matthew 12:18-20**

**Galatians 2:20**



3B. Which attribute coupled with God’s love from Question 3A do you most need in your own life right now? Ask God to show you His permeating love in this way in one area of your life in the coming week.



**Read Psalm 107.** To further grasp the breadth of God’s unfailing love, discover the circumstantial conditions of ‘some’ or ‘others’ in each of the following paragraphs, listing the ways God expressed His unfailing love:

<b>Psalm 107</b>	<i>Circumstantial conditions</i>	<i>Ways God expressed His unfailing love</i>
<b>Psalm 107:4-9</b>		
<b>Psalm 107:10-16</b>		
<b>Psalm 107:17-22</b>		
<b>Psalm 107:23-32</b>		

*In a past trial, with which set of Psalm 107 circumstances could you have identified most closely? Record below the ways you have experienced God loving you in similar ways as He did the psalmist. Thank God right now for His unfailing love previously expressed to you.*

*Presently, with which set of Psalm 107 circumstances can you identify most closely? How does the psalmist’s grasp of God’s unfailing love in this circumstance give you fresh hope for Him expressing similar love to you today? How can God’s help in your past motivate you to trust Him in your present situation?*

3C. **Read Hebrews 8:8-13.** List the specifics of the 'new covenant' of love that God promised to make with Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Notice how it differs from the 'old covenant' made at Sinai (v.9).

In what ways does this covenant reinforce that the love of God is *covenantally faithful, committed and self-giving*?

Specifics of the new covenant

reinforce the named aspects of the CTC

Describe one way that you are personally grateful for the new covenant God has made with us as His children. Thank Him right now for loving you in this way.

3D. The love of God is also *strong and holy*. These aspects of God's love are often demonstrated in His willingness to discipline us as His children. **Read Hebrews 12:7-13.** What reasons are given for why we are to endure discipline? What eventual blessings does God promise to give to those who endure hardship as sons (daughters)? What specifics of the process of discipline are given?

Reasons to endure discipline or hardship

Eventual blessings for/results of enduring discipline

Process of discipline

Write a prayer to the Lord, thanking Him for the strong and holy aspects of His love expressed through discipline. Thank Him for a recent time He disciplined you in order to '*have you share in His holiness (Hebrews 12:10).*'



3E. **Review John 8:1-18.** What insights does Jesus' encounter with the sinful woman teach about how the love of God permeates His whole being, including His justice?


When recently have you seen our Father God demonstrate His justice to one of His children? Thank Him for allowing you a front row seat!




3F. **Read Luke 7:11-15.** What insights does this description of Jesus' encounter with the widow teach about how God's love permeates His whole being, including His compassion?

When recently have you seen our Father God demonstrate His compassion to one of His children? Thank Him for allowing you a front row seat!



 3G. In reviewing all aspects of the permeating love of God, thank Him for the one aspect you most need today, while thanking Him for the **breadth** of His love, a love that is neither weak **nor** sentimental.

## Day Four: Framing Our Convictions and Commitments in Terms of God’s Love

 4A. Conviction/Commitment #1: *‘to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.’* (CTC, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Matthew 22:37)  
**Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9.** In what ways were the Israelites to help their children make the command to love the Lord our God both a conviction and a commitment?


How might these actions have helped their children involve their whole heart, soul, mind and strength in learning to love God?



*What insights can you glean from the following verses about your heart, soul, mind and strength? Please use NIV translation.*

<i>Heart</i>	<i>Mind</i>
<b>Psalm 119:11</b>	<b>Psalm 139:23</b>
<b>Psalm 131:1</b>	<b>Isaiah 26:3</b>
<b>Proverbs 4:23</b>	<b>Isaiah 55:8-9</b>
<b>Jeremiah 17:9</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 2:16</b>
<i>Soul</i>	<i>Strength</i>
<b>Psalm 19:7</b>	<b>1 Samuel 30:6</b>
<b>Psalm 42:1-2</b>	<b>1 Chronicles 16:11</b>
<b>Psalm 131:2</b>	<b>Psalm 18:1-2</b>

*Which of the above two or three insights gives you a clearer picture as to how you can love the Lord more fully? Be specific. Allow the Spirit to minister to your heart as you reflect.*

 4B- Conviction/Commitment #2: *‘to love our neighbor (including the foreigner and the enemy) as ourselves.’* (CTC, Matthew 22:39, Leviticus 19:18).  
 In what ways do the following scriptures give you a clearer biblical understanding of your neighbor and how you might love him/her?

**Leviticus 19:18, 34**

**Luke 10:27-37**

Thank God right now for someone who has treated you recently as his/her 'neighbor.'

4C. Conviction/Commitment #3: *'to love one another **AS** God in Christ has loved us.'* (CTC, John 15:12). What comparisons do the following scriptures make between how Jesus loved us and how we ought to love one another?



**Philippians 2:5-8**

**Colossians 3:12-14**

**1 Peter 2:21-23**

Which comparison do you find most convicting? Why?

Thank God for His patience with you as He endeavors to transform you daily from one degree of glory to another (2 Corinthians 3:18).

4D. Conviction/Commitment #4: *'to love the world with the love of the One who gave His only Son that the world through Him might be saved.'* (CTC, John 3:16)



**Read Acts 16:16-34.** What **examples** of Christ-like love did Paul and Silas model for us in this story? List all the **Christ-like actions** they took to *'love the world that it might be saved.'*

Which one of their examples/Christ-like actions would you most like to emulate so that 'the world might be saved?' Pray and ask the Lord of the harvest to send you out as His Christ-like laborer into His harvest field.

## Day Five: Embracing God's Love as a Gift as well as a Command

5A. *'Such love is a gift of God poured out in our hearts, but it is also a command of God requiring the obedience of our wills.'* (CTC) How do each of the following verses reinforce that God's love is a gift and/or a command?



Scripture	Gift	Command
Nehemiah 1:5		
John 14:23		
Romans 5:5		
1 John 5:3		

5B. Which one of the above verses most helps you feel that God's love is a gift? and/or most helps you want to obey?



For you personally, why is it easier for you to obey when you know with certainty that you are loved?



*Such love means to be like Christ Himself: robust in endurance, yet gentle in humility, tough in resisting evil, yet tender in compassion for the suffering; courageous in suffering and faithful even unto death. (CTC)*  
To reinforce in your own mind and heart what such love looks like as we obey Him, match the statements on the left with the appropriate scripture from the right.

<i>to be like Christ Himself</i>	<i>Ephesians 4:2</i>
<i>robust in endurance</i>	<i>Isaiah 49:13</i>
<i>gentle in humility</i>	<i>Ephesians 6:13</i>
<i>tough in resisting evil</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 3:18</i>
<i>yet tender in compassion for the suffering</i>	<i>Revelation 2:10</i>
<i>courageous in suffering</i>	<i>Philippians 3:10</i>
<i>faithful even unto death</i>	<i>Colossians 1:11</i>

5C. In a present situation where you find it challenging to love, what one aspect of Christ-like love from the above list do you most long to put into action?



In this present situation, what is one step could you take this week to put this Christ-like love to work for His glory? Pray and ask the Spirit to do His good work of loving through you.

5D. Allow the following CTC prayer to be your prayer each day in the coming week. In your small group, read it corporately as your closing prayer of commitment to a lifestyle of biblical love.

*Such love means to be like Christ Himself: robust in endurance, yet gentle in humility, tough in resisting evil, yet tender in compassion for the suffering; courageous in suffering and faithful even unto death. We affirm that such comprehensive biblical love should be the defining identity and hallmark of disciples of Jesus. In response to the prayer and command of Jesus, we long that it should be so for us. Sadly we confess that too often it is not. So we re-commit ourselves afresh to make every effort to live, think, speak and behave in ways that express what it means to walk in love – love for God, for one another and for the world.*

## Lesson Two ~ We Love the Living God

*Warm-Up:* Describe a time when you received a one-of-a-kind gift from someone special to you. How did it make you feel?

OR Describe a friend who you consider to be a one-of-a-kind friend. What is it that makes them unique in your life?

*'Our God whom we love reveals Himself in the Bible as the one, eternal, living God who governs all things according to His sovereign will and for His saving purpose. In the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God alone is the Creator, Ruler, Judge and Savior of the world. So we love God—thanking Him for our place in creation, submitting to His sovereign providence, trusting in His justice, and praising Him for the salvation He has accomplished for us.'* (CTC)

### Day One: Understanding the Uniqueness of Our Living God

Deuteronomy 4:35 describes our living God as totally unique, a one-of-a-kind God. *'Besides Him there is no other.'* Today we will examine God's uniqueness, what He does and who He is that puts Him in a category all His own.



1A. **Read Deuteronomy 4:39, Psalm 33:6-9.** In what ways is the living God described in relationship to creation? What actions did the living God alone take at creation? What responses does the psalmist suggest we should have as a result?

	<b>Deuteronomy 4:39</b>	<b>Psalm 33:6-9</b>
Descriptions (Deut. only)		
Actions (Psalm 33 only)		
Responses		



1B. Glance out the window at what God has made. Focus on one aspect of His creation that comes into view. You may even want to walk outside to get a closer look. Which of the responses of the psalmist in 1A wells up inside of you as you gaze at what our living God has made? In prayer, join the psalmist in enjoying the uniqueness of Your Creator God.

1C. *'Our God is the living God who governs all things according to His sovereign will and for His saving purpose. In the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God alone is the Creator, Ruler, Judge and Savior of the world.'* (CTC) From a Bible dictionary, define sovereign and salvation.

Sovereign

Salvation

How do these definitions help you more fully understand the nature of our living God as described in the underlined sentence of this CTC statement?



1D. From each of the following passages, record a few of the most helpful phrases that assist you to understand the different aspects of our unique God highlighted in the CTC statement in 1C—for example Creator, Ruler, Judge and Savior.

**Psalm 33:10-15**

**Isaiah 40:22-24**

**Isaiah 45:22**

**Jeremiah 10:5-7,10-12**

Which one of the above phrases helps you more deeply love our living God for being unique, unlike any other? Why?

Take a few moments and worship God for being your one and only God because of what you've learned about Him today. End your time of worship by stating out loud *'So we love God—thanking Him for our place in creation, submitting to His sovereign providence, trusting in His justice, and praising Him for the salvation He has accomplished for us.'*

## Day Two: Loving Our Living God Above All Rivals

*'We love God above all rivals. We are commanded to love and worship the living God alone. But like Old Testament Israel we allow our love for God to be adulterated by going after the gods of this world, the gods of the people around us. We fall into syncretism, \* enticed by many gods such as greed, power and success, serving mammon rather than God.'* (CTC)

\* an attempt to reconcile opposing viewpoints



2A. **Read Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 5-8, 6:1-3.** What stipulations did God add related to His commands, as the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land? What benefits would they gain from the nations for their obedience? What personal benefits were promised if they chose to obey?

Personal benefits gained as a result of their obedience	Stipulations of commands	Benefits for obedience gained as they related to other nations



2B. All of these benefits are not necessarily promised to us personally today. If you had been an Israelite, which benefit would have been most attractive to you as a motivation to obey? Why?

2C. Why do you suppose the Israelites were warned in Deuteronomy 4:2 not to add to or subtract from these commands? How would their obedience to this stipulation have kept them from the sin of syncretism, which is can be defined as ‘a combination of different beliefs’ or ‘an attempt to reconcile opposing viewpoints.’



**Read Joshua 7.** What was the nature of Achan’s sin? The cost to Israel? The cost to Achan himself? The reason for the punishment?

Nature of his sin?	Cost to Israel?	Cost to Achan?	The reason for the punishment

*From filling in the chart above, explain your understanding of the saying, ‘There’s an Achan in the camp.’*

*What does this story teach us about God’s passion for whole-hearted devotion to Himself?*



2D. Is there an area in your life where you are compromising and/or tempted to compromise your intimacy with Christ or your desire to live whole-heartedly for Him? (Digging Deeper Bible study participants: ask yourself, ‘Is there an Achan in my camp?’)

Pray and ask the Lord for the courage to remove this area completely from your life right now. You might want to ask a trusted friend to pray for you as you endeavor to break an old habit, refuse to revert to an old 'god' or choose to hide a secret sin no longer.

### Day Three: Loving the Living God with a Passion for His Glory

3A. **Read Isaiah 45:23-24 and Philippians 2:9-11.** What similarities and differences do you see between these Old and New Testament descriptions of God's passions? List the actions of God and His motivations for each.

Actions of God	Similarities	Differences

3B. When you picture this event, what is your emotional response to God's activity in these verses?



**Read the following scriptures.** To gain a clearer appreciation for God's desire that we live with a passion for His glory, use the 5 W's and an H (who, what, where, when, why, how) to discover all you can about God's glory and how we are to relate to it.

['Just a Moment' participants: complete only for Psalm 115:1 and Isaiah 26:8.]



**Psalm 115:1**

**Jude 24-25**

**Isaiah 26:8**

**Hebrews 13:21**

**John 1:14**

**Revelation 1:6**

**Romans 8:18**

**Revelation 19:7**

*Which verse most strongly motivates you to live for the glory of God alone? Describe why you chose this verse.*

Write out this verse and memorize it. Place it somewhere you can review it frequently as a goal for your life.

3C. It is more difficult to live for God’s glory when we **are** facing challenging circumstances. Read about the choices of the following women, each facing a taxing moment in her life. What choice(s) did she make that revealed her heart’s desire to keep God as her central focus, so that she might live for His glory?



	What she chose	What she said
<b>Luke 1:23-25</b> (Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist)		
<b>Luke 1:34-38</b> (Mary, mother of Jesus)		
<b>Esther 4:12-17</b> (Queen Esther)		

3D. By contrast, what choices did each of following women make at similar taxing moments, that revealed alternative heart priorities?



	What she chose	What she said
<b>Genesis 16:1-5</b>		
<b>Job 2:7-10</b>		
<b>Acts 5:1-11</b>		

3E. Which example, either positive or negative, most deepens your motivation to live for the glory of God alone? On the next page, write a prayer to the Lord expressing your deepened commitment. Include the name of one of these women as a springboard for your prayer.





## Day Four: Loving the Living God with a Zealous/Jealous Love

*If God desires every knee to bow to Jesus and every tongue to confess Him, so should we. We should be 'jealous' (as Scripture sometimes puts it) for the honor of His name – troubled when it remains unknown, hurt when it is ignored, indignant when it is blasphemed, and all the time anxious and determined that it shall be given the honor and glory which are due to it. The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God) but rather zeal – burning, zeal – for the glory of Jesus Christ. Before this supreme goal of the Christian mission, all unworthy motives wither and die. (John Stott, CTC)*



4A. In light of this statement, what insights do you glean about the Lord's jealous love from the following passages?

**Nahum 1:2**

**Zephaniah 1:17-18**

**1 Corinthians 10:18-22**



4B. The Lord's jealous love, expressed in His desire for 'every knee to bow,' should lead us to a greater zeal for His glory. **Read Numbers 25:1-13.** What actions does the priest Phineas take to demonstrate his zeal for God's glory?

What affirmations of Phineas' actions did the Lord state to Moses?

4C. What promises did the Lord make as a means of honoring Phineas for his actions? Who would benefit from each?

Promises

Who would benefit



4D. Reflect on one way this story shocks or challenges you to desire to have greater zeal for the Lord and His glory. Confess any desire to please people above the Lord Himself.

## Day Five: Grieving Over Our World Where Our Living God is Not Glorified



5A. **Read 1 Kings 10:23-11:1-12.** In what ways did the Lord bless Solomon before his downfall?

What warnings did God give to Solomon that he chose not to heed? What were the consequences?

Warnings

Consequences



5B. **Read 1 Kings 12:20-33.** (For a summary of what happens between Solomon's reign and this story where Jeroboam becomes king, see Study Note #1).

To make sure he retained his kingship and did not forfeit it to Rehoboam, Jeroboam took some decisive actions. List each one.

Jeroboam's decisive actions

We **fall into syncretism**, enticed by many gods such as greed, power and success, serving mammon rather than God. (CTC)

It should be our greatest grief that in our world the living God is not glorified. The living God is denied in **aggressive atheism**. The one true God is related or distorted in the practice of world religions. Our Lord Jesus Christ is abused and misrepresented in some popular cultures. And the face of the God of biblical revelation is obscured by Christian nomination, syncretism and hypocrisy. (CTC)

5C. In light of these two sections of the CTC, which king do you feel **fell** into syncretism and which king was more **aggressive** in going after other gods, even though his aggressive actions were not atheistic (an atheist doesn't believe in any god).

Both kings fell from their whole-hearted devotion to Jehovah. How would you describe the differences between their downfalls?

5D. What examples can you cite of the Church (at large) 'falling into syncretism?' What examples can you give of our country today doing the same?



5E. What examples can you cite of 'aggressive atheism' in your own town and/or country today?



5F. Although we may despise someone who **aggressively** walks away from Christ toward the world's ways, we are all prone to **fall** into syncretism. Without giving names, cite examples of how you have witnessed other believers who have **fallen, perhaps at first, quite unintentionally**, into syncretism. By what paths did they meet their demise?



5G. Many paths lead to a syncretistic lifestyle. However, Solomon's life gives us grave warning not to 'hold fast' to friendships or relationships that lead us to serve the 'gods' of others, whether those gods be greed, power, success, money, clothes, popularity, etc. Ask the Lord to reveal to you any relationships in which you are being strongly influenced to serve someone else's god, and compromising your own passion for God's glory. (*See Study Note #2*)

In this relationship, pray and ask the Lord to reveal to you one step you could take this week to become the greater influence.

Spend five minutes thanking God for five people in your life who most help you pursue God and His glory. List them below. Perhaps you could thank one of them this week for their influence in your life.

As a small group, read the following commitment out loud as a means of reinforcing your desire, personally and together, to exalt God's name above all others. Then read Psalm 138:2 printed below.

*Loving God in the midst of a world that rejects or distorts Him calls for bold but humble witness to our God; robust but gracious defense of the truth of the gospel of Christ, God's Son; and prayerful trust in the convicting and convincing work of His Holy Spirit. We commit ourselves to such witness, for if we claim to love God we must share God's greatest priority, which is that His name and His Word should be, exalted above all things.*

*I will bow down toward Your holy temple and will praise Your name  
for Your love and Your faithfulness, for You have exalted  
above all things Your name and your word. Psalm 138:2*

## Lesson Two ~ We Love the Living God

### Study Notes

#### **Study Note #1: Day 5, Question 5B**

**12:15-19** Jeroboam and Rehoboam did what was good for themselves, not what was good for their people. Rehoboam was harsh and did not listen to the people's demands; Jeroboam established new places of worship to keep his people from traveling to Jerusalem, Rehoboam's capital. Both actions backfired. Rehoboam divided the nation, and Jeroboam turned the people from God. Good leaders put the best interests of the 'followers' above their own interests. Making decisions only for yourself will backfire.

**12:20** This marks the beginning of the division of the kingdom that lasted for centuries. Ten of Israel's 12 tribes followed Jeroboam and called their new nation Israel (the northern kingdom). The other two tribes remained loyal to Rehoboam and called their nation Judah (the southern kingdom). The kingdom did not split overnight. It was already dividing as early as the days of the judges because of tribal jealousies, especially between Ephraim, the most influential tribe of the north, and Judah, the chief tribe of the south.

Before the days of Saul and David, the religious center of Israel was located, for the most part, in the territory of Ephraim. When Solomon built the Temple, Jerusalem became the religious center of Israel. This eventually brought tribal rivalries to the breaking point. (For more information on tribal jealousies and how they affected Israel, see Judges 12:1ff; 2 Samuel 2:4ff; 19:41-43.) Life Application Study Bible Study Notes

#### **Study Note #2: Day 5, Question 5G**

If a woman is married to a non-believing husband, she does not have biblical freedom to divorce him simply because he is not worshipping her God, as the Apostle Paul explains to the Church in Corinth 'If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband.' (1 Corinthians 7:12-14).



## Lesson Three ~ We Love God the Father

*Warm-Up:* Describe a tender moment you had with your dad when you felt his deep love for you.

OR Describe a tender moment you observed between a father you respect and one of his children (i.e. your husband with one of your own kids, a neighbor or friend with one of his children, etc.)

*Through Jesus Christ, God’s Son, and through Him alone as the way, the truth and the life – we come to know and love God as Father. As the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children, so we cry the words Jesus prayed, ‘Abba, Father’, and we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, ‘Our Father’. Our love for Jesus, proved by obeying Him, is met by the Father’s love for us as the Father and the Son make their home in us, in mutual giving and receiving of love. This intimate relationship has deep biblical foundations. (CTC)*

### Day One: Knowing God the Father through His Son and the Spirit



1A. What insights do the following scriptures reveal as to how we can know God the Father through a relationship with His Son and the Spirit? With each scripture, complete the following phrase—‘I can know God the Father because . . .’—, first grounding your statement in the Word of God. In the second column, expand your biblical insight into a testimony of your own personal experience of how you have come to know the Father through the Son and the Spirit.

‘I can know God the Father because . . .’

Grounded in the Word

Grounded in my personal experience

**John 14:6**

. . . because

. . . because

**Romans 8:14-16**

. . . because

. . . because

1B. **Read John 14:8-9.** In what ways did Philip reveal that he did not fully understand the truths about His Heavenly Father revealed to us in John 14:6 and Romans 8:14-16?

1C. Thank the Father for giving you His Son and Spirit so you could come to know Him more fully as your Abba Daddy.



Ask Abba's forgiveness for any way in which you have been tempted, as you pray, to agree with Philip when he said to Jesus, 'Show us the Father and it will be enough for us,' because you haven't fully realized that you are able to get to know the Father through the Son and the Spirit.

1D. Write a prayer to your Abba Daddy, telling Him how much you love Him for choosing to reveal Himself to you through Jesus, His Son and through His Holy Spirit. Thank Him for one aspect of His nature that delights you because you know Jesus.



Thank your Heavenly Father for a second aspect of His nature that brings you sheer joy because you know the Spirit.

1E. **Read Matthew 6:9-13.** Bask in each phrase of the familiar prayer below that you, as God's daughter, can freely pray to your Heavenly Father. As you pray each phrase, record any fresh feelings or insights that surface for you, recognizing that Jesus, your older brother, has invited you to relate to your Abba Daddy in this way.

*Our Father in heaven*

*Hallowed be Your name*

*Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven*

*Give us this day our daily bread*

*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*

*For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power and glory forever. Amen.*

## Day Two: Loving God as the Father of His People

*We love God as the Father of His people. Old Testament Israel knew God as Father, as the one who brought them into existence, carried them and disciplined them, called for their obedience, longed for their love, and exercised compassionate forgiveness and patient enduring love. All these remain true for us as God's people in Christ in our relationship with our Father God. (CTC)*

2A. **Read Psalm 78**, a psalm that reviews Israel's history. Write out one verse from this psalm that matches each phrase from the CTC repeated below. Choose one verse for each phrase that means the most to you, as there may be several verses for each phrase.



*We love God as the Father of His people.*

*Old Testament Israel knew God as Father, as the one who brought them into existence,  
carried them*

*and disciplined them,*

*called for their obedience,*

*longed for their love,*

*and exercised compassionate forgiveness and patient enduring love.*

2B. If you had been an Israelite, what verse from this psalm and accompanying phrase from the CTC would have been the richest expression to your own heart of God's desire to be a Father to His people? Why?



2C. *All these remain true for us as God's people in Christ in our relationship with our Father God.* (CTC)  
In reviewing Psalm 78's matching verses with the CTC statement above, which verse that 'remains true for us as God's people' strikes the deepest cord in your own heart?

**Using this verse as a springboard**, write a prayer to your Father God describing where you presently are in your own relationship with Him. Be as honest as you can, using as many feeling words as possible. Perhaps the following phrases could be helpful to get you started. 'Abba Father, I'm grateful that, OR I'm angry that, OR I'm humbled that, I'm sorry that, I'm upset that, I'm longing that, I'm eager to, etc.'



**Read Jeremiah 32:17 – 33:2.** Write out one verse from this summary of Israel's history that matches each phrase from the CTC repeated below. Choose one verse for each phrase that means the most to you, as there may be several verses for each phrase.

*We love God as the Father of His people.*

*Old Testament Israel knew God as Father, as the one who brought them into existence,  
carried them*

*and disciplined them,*

*called for their obedience,*

*longed for their love,*

*and exercised compassionate forgiveness and patient enduring love.*



*All these remain true for us as God's people in Christ in our relationship with our Father God. (CTC) In reviewing Jeremiah's matching verses with the CTC statement above, which verse that 'remains true for us as God's people' strikes the deepest cord in your own heart? Use the Scriptures you found as a springboard for thanking your Heavenly Father for loving you this way.*

### Day Three: Loving God as the Father who Gave Us His Son

*We love God as the Father, who so loved the world that he gave his only Son for our salvation. How great the Father's love for us that we should be called the children of God. How immeasurable the love of the Father who did not spare his only Son, but gave him up for us all. This love of the Father in giving the Son was mirrored by the self-giving love of the Son. There was complete harmony of will in the work of atonement that the Father and the Son accomplished at the cross, through the eternal Spirit. The Father loved the world and gave his Son; 'the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me.' This unity of Father and Son, affirmed by Jesus himself, is echoed in Paul's most repeated greeting of 'grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins...according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (CTC)*



3A. This CTC statement speaks of the sacrifice the Father made in giving us His Son reciprocated by the sacrifice that Christ made in giving Himself on our behalf. Read the following verses. Identify which verses speak to which sacrifice.

Verses	Sacrifice of Father	Sacrifice of Son
<b>John 3:16</b>		
<b>Romans 8:32</b>		
<b>Galatians 1:3-5</b>		
<b>Hebrews 9:14</b>		
<b>1 John 3:1</b>		

3B. From reviewing the following scriptures, list specific aspects of the Son's sacrifice on your behalf. As you list them, whisper a prayer of thanks for what He gave up in order to have a personal relationship with you.

Verses	Christ's sacrifice on my behalf
<b>Philippians 2:5-8</b>	
<b>Hebrews 2:9-10, 17-18</b>	
<b>Hebrews 12:2-4</b>	

3C. When recently have you experienced someone sacrificing something on your behalf? What was your response? Did you take it for granted or were you truly grateful? How did you express/not express your gratitude? Explain.

3D. **Read Matthew 26:36-46.** What insights can you glean about Christ's honest response to the sacrifice He was about to make on your behalf?



Envision this scene from the your Heavenly Father's perspective. How difficult must it have been for Him to turn down His only Son's repeated request? Compare or contrast the Father's degree of difficulty in saying 'no' with a time recently when you have chosen to say 'yes' or 'no' to a request someone you love has made of you? A child? A dear friend? A relative? A work associate?

3E. Christ said 'yes' to the most difficult sacrifice He would ever have to make. The Father said 'no' to His only Son's most desperate heart cry. Read the following scriptures, listing all the benefits the Father and the Son said 'yes' to on **your** behalf, as a result Christ's sacrificial 'yes' and the Father's heart-wrenching 'no.' List as many as you can find.



What the Father and Son said 'yes' to on your behalf

**Ephesians 2:4-10**

**Hebrews 4:14-16**

3F. In what ways does question 3E deepen your understanding of the joy mentioned in Hebrews 12:2, 'who for the **joy** set before Him, endured the cross, despising its shame?' What was that joy for Christ truly all about?

3G. How can Christ's 'Hebrews 12:2 joy' and the Father's assumed joy as well, deepen your **own** joy regarding the benefits you received from the Father and the Son's mutual sacrifices (Question 3E)? Write a prayer to your Heavenly Father, thanking Him for **your deep joy** birthed from **His initial deep sorrow**.



Dear Heavenly Father,

Just think! Our Father God turned down a request of His only begotten Son so He could say 'yes' to the thousands of requests and benefits He could give to the rest of us He chose to adopt into His family (Ephesians 1:5) as a result of His only Son's sacrifice.

## Day Four: Loving the Father Whose Character We Reflect, Whose Care We Trust

*We love God as the Father whose character we reflect and whose care we trust. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus repeatedly points to our heavenly Father as the model or focus for our action. We are to be peacemakers, as sons of God. We are to do good deeds, so that our Father receives the praise. We are to love our enemies in reflection of God's Fatherly love. We are to practice our giving, praying and fasting for our Father's eyes only. We are to forgive others as our Father forgives us. We are to have no anxiety but trust in our Father's provision. With such behavior flowing from Christian character, we do the will of our Father in heaven, within the kinadom of God. (CTC)*

- 4A. *We are to be peacemakers, as sons of God.* **Read Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18 and James 3:17-18.** According to these scriptures, as a peacemaker, what character traits of your Heavenly Father are you to reflect? (See Study Note #1)



Which of these traits do you most need in a present situation in your own life right now? Pray and ask the Lord that you might be 'blessed' as you endeavor to work for peace.

- 4B. *We are to do good deeds, so that our Father receives the praise.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 5:13-16.** What character traits of your Heavenly Father are you to reflect as a doer of good deeds?



Which of these traits best describes a way you have recently been a doer of good deeds so your Heavenly Father might receive the praise? Thank God for the opportunity He has given you for His glory. Ask Him for a follow up opportunity to be salt and light this week.

- 4C. *We are to love our enemies in reflection of God's Fatherly love.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 5:38-48.** What principles are given for how to relate to our enemies?



Which principle do you find most helpful as you consider the difficult people in your life? Why?

- 4D. *We are to practice our giving, praying and fasting for our Father's eyes only.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 6:16-21, 24.** What principles of fasting and giving are we challenged to model?



Describe someone who has modeled one of these principles for you. What is it about their giving, praying or fasting that is attractive to you, causing you to want to follow their good example?

- 4E. *We are to forgive others as our Father forgives us.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 6:12-15, 18:21-22.** What challenges and/or warnings about forgiveness are listed in these scriptures?

Which challenge do you find most convicting?

Ask the Lord to give you 'grace upon grace' (John 1:16) as you consider forgiving those who have hurt or harmed you.



*We are to forgive others as our Father forgives us.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 18:22-35.** Use the 5W's and an H as study tools to help you glean fresh insights into forgiveness from this parable.

*Who?*

*What?*

*When?*

*Where?*

*Why?*

*How does forgiveness benefit us?*

- 4F. *We are to have no anxiety but trust in our Father's provision.* (CTC) **Read Matthew 6:25-34.** What fresh insights do you see about how to trust your Father's ability to provide for you?

Which insight helps you the most with a present anxiety where your Abba Daddy is calling you to trust Him instead?

## Day Five: Confessing our Neglect of the Fatherhood of God

*We confess that we have often neglected the truth of the Fatherhood of God and deprived ourselves of the riches of our relationship with Him. We commit ourselves afresh to come to the Father through Jesus the Son: to receive and respond to His Fatherly love; to live in obedience under His Fatherly discipline; to reflect His Fatherly character in all our behavior and attitudes; and to trust in His Fatherly provision in whatever circumstances He leads us. (CTC)*



5A. Today you will review each of the four days of this week’s lesson on the Fatherhood of God, looking for areas where you may need to confess how you have neglected His intimate Fatherhood with you. You will also look for areas where you can rejoice in how you have successfully embraced His Fatherhood.

In preparation for this time of review, confession and rejoicing, **read Hebrews 12:5-6**. Notice the two extreme responses we can have when God discipline us.

To which extreme do you tend to be most prone? Do you tend to be too hard on yourself or too easy on yourself? Explain. Our Heavenly Father wants us to do neither, but to respond to His discipline appropriately.



5B. As you now ‘review, confess and rejoice,’ ask the Lord to help you respond appropriately to His discipline. Review each day, highlighting in yellow (or underlining) questions that trigger your need to confess your neglect of the Fatherhood of God. Record any glaring neglect of His Fatherhood for each day below. If ‘confess’ applies, also place a check in the ‘confess’ column to the right. If ‘rejoice’ applies, place a check in the ‘rejoice’ column. You may have one or two checks for each day.

For each day, also underline in blue (or circle) the questions that trigger your need to rejoice in how you have responded to God’s Fatherhood. Record your most obvious reason for rejoicing under each day below.

Day One: Knowing God the Father through His Son and the Spirit

Neglect/Confess

Rejoice

Day Two: Loving God as the Father of His People

Neglect/Confess

Rejoice

Day Three: Loving God as the Father who Gave Us His Son

Neglect/Confess

Rejoice

Day Four: Loving the Father Whose Character we Reflect, Whose Care we Trust

Neglect/Confess

Rejoice

Confess	Rejoice

In a prayer journal, write a prayer to your Heavenly Father, rejoicing in His Fatherly love and care for you. Be specific, thanking Him for ways He has fathered you recently.

## Lesson Four ~ We Love God the Son

*Warm-Up:* What quality or characteristic do you see in yourself or in one of your siblings that mirrors your earthly father? How might others describe you or him/her as a 'chip off the old block?' If you are adopted, perhaps you could answer this question for a friend.

This week's lesson helps us focus on God's only Son, who shares the full identity of the Father.

*|God commanded Israel to love the LORD God with exclusive loyalty. Likewise for us, loving the Lord Jesus Christ means that we steadfastly affirm that he alone is Savior, Lord and God. The Bible teaches that Jesus performs the same sovereign actions as God alone. Christ is Creator of the universe, Ruler of history, Judge of all nations and Savior of all who turn to God. He shares the identity of God in the divine equality and unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Just as God called Israel to love him in covenantal faith, obedience and servant-witness, we affirm our love for Jesus Christ by trusting in him, obeying him, and making him known. (CTC)*

### Day One: Steadfastly Affirming that Christ Alone is Savior, Lord and God

1A. From the following scriptures, list phrases that describe Christ as Creator of the Universe.



**John 1:3**

**Colossians 1:15-17**

Personalize one of these phrases by thanking Christ for His role in creating what you see and even what you can't see around you.

1B. **Read Hebrews 1:1-2, 9:26, 1 Peter 1:20-21.** In what ways do these verses reinforce for you that Christ is the Ruler of history?

**Hebrews 1:1-3, 9:26**

**1 Peter 1:20**

Which verse brings you the most personal comfort when you consider how your life's story fits in with God's overall plan for human history? Why?

1C. Not only is Christ the Creator and Ruler of history, He is also the Judge of all mankind. **Read Romans 2:16, 3:26, 2 Timothy 4:1 and 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10.** What discoveries regarding Christ's role as Judge can you glean from these verses?



**Romans 2:16, 3:26**

**2 Timothy 4:1**

**2 Thessalonians 1:5-10**

Which verse stirs your heart the most when you think of someone you know who does not have a personal relationship with Christ?

Allow this verse to motivate you to pray for their salvation and your feet and hands to move toward them in some act of compassion or with a word of encouragement or challenge to them this week.

1D. **Read Luke 2: 25-32.** What discoveries did Simeon make about the Christ child as 'salvation?' List as many as you can find.



In what ways might these fresh findings have prompted Simeon to say, 'Now your servant can depart in peace?'

If you had been in Simeon's shoes, which discovery would have prepared you the most for your own earthly departure? Why?

## Day Two: Trusting in Christ Alone to Bless the Nations through the Power of His Life, Ministry and Death

*We trust in Christ. We believe the testimony of the Gospels that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the one appointed and sent by God to fulfill the unique mission of Old Testament Israel, that is to bring the blessing of God's salvation to all nations, as God promised to Abraham. (CTC)*

2A. *Jesus, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, God took our human flesh and lived among us, fully God and fully human. (CTC)*

In what ways do the following scriptures underline the truths related to Christ's birth in this CTC statement?

**Luke 1:26-35**

**John 1:14**

2B. *In his life Jesus walked in perfect faithfulness and obedience to God. He announced and taught the kingdom of God, and modeled the way his disciples must live under God's reign. (CTC)*



How do the following scriptures reinforce the truth of this CTC statement?

**Mark 1:15**

**Hebrews 5:8**

**1 Peter 2:21-25**

2C. *In his ministry and miracles, Jesus announced and demonstrated the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil powers. (CTC)*



**Read Luke 4:31-37.** In this scene, in what respects did Jesus announce and demonstrate the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil power?

2D. *In his death on the cross, Jesus took our sin upon himself in our place, bearing its full cost, penalty and shame, defeated death and the powers of evil, and accomplished the reconciliation and redemption of all creation. (CTC)*

**Read Ephesians 1:19-23.** List phrases of the CTC that line up with this Ephesians text.

Ephesians phrase

CTC phrase

2E. From reviewing the scriptures in questions 2A through 2D, which aspect of Christ (birth, life, ministry, death) most freshly motivates you today to share your faith with someone not yet in His Kingdom?





Read the following passages that refer to Christ’s death and the events surrounding it. Fill in the chart below, listing phrases that describe aspects of Christ’s physical, emotional and spiritual torture.

<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Physical torture</i>	<i>Emotional/Mental torture</i>	<i>Spiritual torture</i>
<b><i>Psalm 22:1-2, 6-18</i></b>			
<b><i>Isaiah 53:3-7</i></b>			
<b><i>Lamentations 1:12</i></b>			
<b><i>Matthew 26:57-75</i></b>			
<b><i>Mark 14:32-42</i></b>			
<b><i>Hebrews 12:2</i></b>			

Because of Christ’s experience of physical, emotional/mental and spiritual torture on the cross, He was able to become our merciful and faithful High Priest who can sympathize with our weakness (Hebrews 2:17-18). He can identify with us when we have been through physical, emotional and spiritually draining circumstances. List the loving commands He gives in the following verses that highlight His ability to see our need for rest and recovery.

***Leviticus 23:3***

***Psalm 23:1-3***

***Matthew 11:28-29***

***Hebrews 4:10***

What is your present state of physical, emotional and/or spiritual weariness?

Which of the above commands brings you the most comfort when you reflect on your Heavenly Father’s calling you to rest when you are weary? Thank Him for the desire He has to ‘restore your soul.’

## Day Three: Trusting in Christ Alone through His Resurrection, Ascension and Return

3A. *In his bodily resurrection, Jesus was vindicated and exalted by God, completed and demonstrated the full victory of the cross, and became the forerunner of redeemed humanity and restored creation. (CTC)*



What discoveries do the following passages provide on each aspect of the resurrection mentioned above? There should be one verse/set of verses for each. List them in the boxes.

Aspect of Bodily Resurrection	Vindication	Exaltation	Victory	Forerunner	Restored Creation
<b>Philippians 2:9-11</b>					
<b>Colossians 1:15-18</b> <b>Hebrews 2:8-12</b>					
<b>Revelation 12:9</b> <b>1 Timothy 3:16</b>					
<b>1 Corinthians 15:51-53</b> , <b>Isaiah 11:6</b>					
<b>1 Corinthians 15:54-57</b>					

From reading these passages, what truth freshly blessed your heart about how Christ's bodily resurrection influences your day-to-day life?

3B. *Since his ascension, Jesus is reigning as Lord over all history and creation. (CTC)*

**Read Luke 24:50-53 and Ephesians 1:19-23.** Read the historical account of the ascension in Luke first. Then from the Ephesians passage, what discoveries can you glean about Christ's reign since His ascension?

If your discoveries about Christ's reign were no longer a reality, what difference would it make in your life when you get out of bed tomorrow morning? Be specific.



3C. *At his return, Jesus will execute God's judgment, destroy Satan, evil and death, and establish the universal reign of God. (CTC)*

Read the following passages from Revelation describing each aspect of Christ's return as outlined in this CTC statement. Record a key phrase from each passage in the boxes below.

Scripture	God's Judgment	Destruction of Satan, evil and death	Establishment of Universal Reign
<b>Revelation 19:11</b>			
<b>Revelation 20:1-15</b>			
<b>Revelation 21:1-7</b>			

List three one-word personal responses to these exhilarating verses. Choose words that describe how you feel about your future hope in heaven.

Pray for one nonbeliever whose response would be very different from yours, if challenged to face the truth about their future without discovering salvation in Christ alone.

### Day Four: Obeying Christ's Call to Discipleship

*We obey Christ. Jesus calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him in the path of self-denial, servanthood and obedience. 'If you love me, keep my commandments,' he said. 'Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things I say?' We are called to live as Christ lived and to love as Christ loved. To profess Christ while ignoring his commands is dangerous folly. Jesus warns us that many who claim his name with spectacular and miraculous ministries will find themselves disowned by him as evildoers. We take heed to Christ's warning, for none of us is immune to such fearful danger. (CTC)*

4A. **Read Luke 6:46-49.** Jesus describes two types of individuals in these verses. List the characteristics of each.



Individual #1

Individual #2

Describe a time recently when your disobedience or the disobedience of someone you love has had a costly price tag.

4B. **Read 1 John 2:3-6 and Matthew 7:21-23.** What fresh discoveries do you glean about these same two individuals considered in Question 4A?

Individual #1

Individual #2

**Matthew 7:21-23**

**1 John 2:3-6**

From considering Christ's call to obedience, what is one command found in Scripture that you find consistently challenging to obey?

Ask the Lord for a desire to 'do what He says' as a means of acknowledging His Lordship in your life. .

4C. **Read Luke 9:23-24.** What insights are given here as to the nature of a disciple of Christ?



Explain why you feel Christ challenged us to take up our '**daily** cross?'



*'Take up your cross daily' is an interesting phrase. Using a Bible dictionary and/or one or more commentaries, research what Christ meant when He gave His disciples this command. List as many insights as you can find.*

## Day Five: Proclaiming Christ Alone as God’s Full and Final Revelation of Himself for Mankind’s Salvation

*We proclaim Christ. In Christ alone God has fully and finally revealed himself, and through Christ alone God has achieved salvation for the world. We therefore kneel as disciples at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth and say to him with Peter, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,’ and with Thomas, ‘My Lord and my God.’ Though we have not seen him, we love him. And we rejoice with hope as we long for the day of his return when we shall see him as he is. Until that day we join Peter and John in proclaiming that ‘there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.’ (CTC)*



5A. Begin to review Day One through Day Four, noting the breadth of who Christ is—Creator, Ruler of History, Judge of all the nations. Notice the full sweep of His life—His birth, life, miracles, death, resurrection ascension and return. As you review, pray, meditate and worship your way through these aspects of who Christ is as God’s only Son.

List any fresh heart-warming discoveries below:



5B. With this big-picture view of Christ in mind, consider how **you** should respond to so great a Savior. What responses did the following individuals have to Christ?

<b>John 20:26-28</b>	Thomas	
<b>Matthew 16:13-17</b>	Peter	
<b>Colossians 1:28-29</b>	Paul	
<b>Luke 24:13-35</b>	Two on the road to Emmaus	
<b>John 20:13-18</b>	Mary Magdalene	
<b>John 19:38-42</b>	Joseph of Arimathea Nicodemus	

With which response do you most resonate? Explain why.

5C. **Read 1 Peter 1:8-9.** List each response Peter advises us to have to Christ as well as the end product(s) of our response. Choose one of these responses and write a short prayer to Christ, telling Him of your desire to respond to Him in this way.

## Lesson Five ~ We Love God the Holy Spirit

*Warm-Up:* Describe one fairly recent experience in which you were very aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life.

*We love the Holy Spirit within the unity of the Trinity, along with God the Father and God the Son. He is the missionary Spirit sent by the missionary Father and the missionary Son, breathing life and power into God's missionary Church. We love and pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit because without the witness of the Spirit to Christ, our own witness is futile. Without the convicting work of the Spirit, our preaching is in vain. Without the gifts, guidance and power of the Spirit, our mission is mere human effort. And without the fruit of the Spirit, our unattractive lives cannot reflect the beauty of the gospel. (CTC)*

### Day One: Loving the Holy Spirit that Breathes Life and Power into God's Missionary Church

1A. A missionary is often defined as one who has been sent. From the following scriptures, what insights can you glean about the missionary Father, the missionary Son and the missionary Holy Spirit as sending agents? In particular, notice who sent whom and for what purpose(s).



Missionary Father	Missionary Son	Missionary Spirit	Missionary Church
-------------------	----------------	-------------------	-------------------

**John 5:24**

**John 6:38**

**John 8:26, 29**

**John 14:26**

**John 15:26, 27**

**John 16:7**

**John 16:8-14**

1B. Meditate on the following hymn. Underline fresh insights gleaned from this song about what it truly means to be sent by the Father, Spirit and Son with their missionary heart for the world.

So send I you to labor unrewarded;  
To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown;  
To bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing;  
So send I you to toil for Me alone.

So send I you to bind the bruised and broken;  
Over wandering souls to work, to weep, to wake;  
To bear the burdens of a world a-weary;  
So send I you to suffer for My sake.

So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred;  
To eyes made blind because they will not see;  
To spend, though it be blood to spend and spare not;  
So send I you to taste of Calvary.

'As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you.'

Lyrics: Margaret Clarkson. Composer: John Willard Peterson

Choose a line from this hymn to pray about your response to being sent on a mission by the Trinity for the glory of God. Write out your prayer below.

1C. *We love and pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit because without the witness of the Spirit to Christ, our own witness is futile.* (CTC)

**Read John 16:12-16.** List phrases from these verses that echo the truths of this CTC statement.

1D. *Without the convicting work of the Spirit, our preaching is in vain. When he comes he will convict the world of sin.* (CTC)

**Read John 16:7-11.** List phrases from these verses echo the truths of this CTC statement.



**Read Acts 2:36-38, 16:14-15.** What examples do you find in these stories that demonstrate someone being convicted by the Spirit of God?

- 1E. *Without the gifts, guidance and power of the Spirit, our mission is mere human effort. And without the fruit of the Spirit, our unattractive lives cannot reflect the beauty of the gospel. (CTC)*



**Read Romans 8:5, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Galatians 5:16-25.** List phrases that echo the truths of this CTC statement.

- 1F. What would the Church be like if it had all the gifts of the Spirit but none of the fruit of the Spirit (i.e. no love, no joy, no peace, etc.)?
- 1G. What would the Church be like if it had all the fruit of the Spirit but no gifts (i.e. no teaching, mercy, administration, leadership, etc.)?
- 1H. Take a few moments to thank the Holy Spirit for giving His gifts **and** His fruit to His Missionary Church.

## Day Two: Identifying the Holy Spirit's Activity in the Old Testament

*In the Old Testament we see the Spirit of God active in creation, in works of liberation and justice, and in filling and empowering people for every kind of service. Spirit-filled prophets looked forward to the coming King and Servant, whose Person and work would be endowed with God's Spirit. Prophets also looked to the coming age that would be marked by the outpouring of God's Spirit, bringing new life, fresh obedience, and prophetic gifting to all the people of God, young and old, men and women. (CTC)*

- 2A. *In the Old Testament we see the Spirit of God active in creation, in works of liberation and justice, and in filling and empowering people for every kind of service. (CTC)*



Read the following passages, noting how the Spirit of God was active in the Old Testament in one or more of the ways mentioned in this CTC statement.

**Genesis 1:26**

**Exodus 31:2-6**

**Isaiah 61:1**

**Micah 3:6**



In these same ways, the Spirit of God is still active through individual believers, churches and Christian organizations. Describe one believer, one church or one Christian organization that you appreciate for their service of Christ (i.e. in creation, liberation, justice or service). Choose someone you can thank for serving Christ in one of these ways in the coming week.



- 2B. *Spirit-filled prophets looked forward to the coming King and Servant, whose Person and work would be endowed with God's Spirit. Prophets also looked to the coming age that would be marked by the outpouring of God's Spirit, bringing new life, fresh obedience, and prophetic gifting to all the people of God, young and old, men and women. (CTC)*

Read the above statement. In what ways did the Spirit of God work through prophets in the following Old Testament passages in similar ways to those described?

**Joel 2:28-29**

**Isaiah 53:3-4**

**Isaiah 61:1-3**



*Using a Bible concordance, find three Old Testament passages that foretell some aspect of the Messiah's birth, life and/or death. Record your insights below:*

- 2C. How different life would have been for Old Testament believers without the ministry of the prophets. If you had been an Old Testament believer, how would your life have been lacking if there had been no prophets when you were alive?



2D. **Read Acts 2:17\4-18.** Have you ever witnessed the ministry of a modern day prophet? Explain. Allow 1 Corinthians 14:3 help you define the nature of the ministry of a prophet.

If someone has brought you encouragement, strengthening or comfort, thank God for their ministry in your life in a prayer below. Why not thank them as well, in an email, a note, or in person.

## Day Three: Identifying the Holy Spirit's Activity in the New Testament

*At Pentecost God poured out his Holy Spirit as promised by the prophets and by Jesus. The sanctifying Spirit produces his fruit in the lives of believers, and the first fruit is always love. The Spirit fills the Church with his gifts, which we 'eagerly desire' as the indispensable equipment for Christian service. The Spirit gives us power for mission and for the great variety of works of service. The Spirit enables us to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel, to discern the truth, to pray effectively and to prevail over the forces of darkness. The Spirit inspires and accompanies our worship. The Spirit strengthens and comforts disciples who are persecuted or on trial for their witness to Christ. (CTC)*

3A. Read the following passages. For each, choose a phrase from this CTC statement that most closely corresponds.

**Acts 2:1-4**

**Acts 2:22-24**

**Acts 16:25**

**1 Corinthians 12:4-13**

**Galatians 5:22-23**

**Ephesians 3:14-21**

3B. **Read Acts 16:16-34.** What demonstrations of the Spirit’s power can you find in this story? Allow the CTC statement to guide you in your discoveries.



Activity

Demonstration of the Spirit’s power

3C. When recently have you experienced one of these demonstrations of the Spirit’s power? Be as specific as possible by tying in your experience with one or more phrase of this CTC statement.



### Day Four: Engaging in Purposeful, Fruitful Evangelistic Mission by the Presence, Guidance and Power of the Holy Spirit

*Our engagement in mission, then, is pointless and fruitless without the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. All we do in the name of Christ must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament makes this clear in the life of the early Church and the teaching of the apostles. It is being demonstrated today in the fruitfulness and growth of Churches where Jesus’ followers act confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit, with dependence and expectation. (CTC)*

4A. Draw a line from the following city scenes to one or more of the phrases describing the Spirit’s powerful work from this CTC statement.



<b>Acts 13:1-3 (Antioch)</b> <b>Acts 16:6-10 (Macedonia)</b>	Suffering, enduring under persecution
<b>Acts 14:8-10 (Lystra, Derbe)</b> <b>Acts 16:19-40 (Philippi)</b>	Peace-making
<b>Acts 14:19-20 (Antioch, Iconium, Derbe)</b>	Casting out demonic spirits
<b>Acts 14:21-24 (Derbe, Lystra, Iconium)</b>	Presence, guidance of the Holy Spirit
<b>Acts 15:1-35 (Jerusalem)</b>	Ethical transformation/social engagement
<b>Acts 16:16-18 (Philippi)</b>	Evangelism
<b>Acts 19:23-41 (Ephesus)</b>	Bearing witness to the truth, Discipling
<b>Acts 17:10-12 (Berea)</b>	Healing the sick

4B. Reflect on a recent ministry opportunity when you sensed the Spirit’s power working through you. Perhaps you listened to the heart of a friend or family member, or taught a class, or shared Christ with someone in your workplace. Could any of these CTC descriptions of God’s Spirit be used to describe your situation? Explain.



4C. Ask God to allow you to be used by His Spirit in someone else's life.



## Day Five: Rejoicing in the Authentic Work of the Spirit, while Recognizing and Rejecting False Manifestations

*There is no true or whole gospel, and no authentic biblical mission, without the Person, work and power of the Holy Spirit. We pray for a greater awakening to this biblical truth, and for its experience to be reality in all parts of the worldwide body of Christ. However, we are aware of the many abuses that masquerade under the name of the Holy Spirit, the many ways in which all kinds of phenomena are practiced and praised which are not the gifts of the Holy Spirit as clearly taught in the New Testament. There is great need for more profound discernment, for clear warnings against delusion, for the exposure of fraudulent and self-serving manipulators who abuse spiritual power for their own ungodly enrichment. Above all there is a great need for sustained biblical teaching and preaching, soaked in humble prayer, that will equip ordinary believers to understand and rejoice in the true gospel and to recognize and reject false gospels. (CTC)*

5A. What abuses, delusions or false identifications with the Spirit's power can you discover in the following verses?



**Acts 8:9-25**

**Galatians 1:1-10, 4:8-20**

5B. Have you ever experienced false manifestations of the Spirit's power from someone who claimed to be a follower of Christ?

If your answer is 'yes,' what did you conclude from this experience? Thank God for what He taught you.

If your answer is 'no,' thank the Lord for protecting you from such abuses.

5C. What steps can you take to make sure you aren't drawn toward false manifestations of the Spirit?



5D. Allow the CTC statement below to lead you/your small group to prayer. Ask that every aspect of your ministry always be empowered by the Holy Spirit as described here:

*Our engagement in mission, then, is pointless and fruitless without the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. All we do in the name of Christ must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament makes this clear in the life of the early Church and the teaching of the apostles. It is being demonstrated today in the fruitfulness and growth of Churches where Jesus' followers act confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit, with dependence and expectation. (CTC)*

## Lesson Six ~ We Love God's Word

*Warm-Up:* Describe a recent experience when you had a profound or moving encounter with the Lord through the study of God's Word, either alone or with some other believers.

*We love God's Word in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, echoing the joyful delight of the Psalmist in the Torah, 'I love your commands more than gold... Oh how I love your law.' We receive the whole Bible as the Word of God, inspired by God's Spirit, spoken and written through human authors. We submit to it as supremely and uniquely authoritative, governing our belief and our behavior. We testify to the power of God's Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. We affirm that the Bible is the final written word of God, not surpassed by any further revelation, but we also rejoice that the Holy Spirit illumines the minds of God's people so that the Bible continues to speak God's truth in fresh ways to people in every culture. (CTC)*

### Day One: Loving God's Word, both the Old and New Testaments

1A. *We receive the whole Bible as the Word of God, inspired by God's Spirit, spoken and written through human authors. (CTC)*



In what ways do the following Scriptures reinforce the truth of this CTC statement?

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**2 Peter 1:20-21**

What is your personal response to God's hand obviously guiding and overseeing these historical realities? Write your response in the form of a short prayer, thanking God for preserving the contents of His Word down through the centuries for you. In your prayer, also thank Him for one intended outcome that Scripture has most recently accomplished in your own life (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

1B. *We submit to God's Word as supremely and uniquely authoritative, governing our belief and our behavior. (CTC)*

How do the following passages reinforce the authority, longevity and continuity of God's Word to govern our own lives? Highlight or underline the ones that freshly touch your heart.

**Matthew 5:17-18**

**Matthew 15:3**

**John 14:26**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**James 1:22-25**

- 1C. *We testify to the power of God’s Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation.* (CTC)  
 How do the following passages reinforce the power of God’s Word to accomplish His purpose of salvation for humankind?

**Isaiah 45:22-23**

**Matthew 4:4**

**Romans 10:13-17**

**1 John 5:3**

Imagine trying to offer salvation to a friend or family member without the help of God’s Word. Why not thank God afresh today, for the power of His Word that can empower you to introduce someone to Christ.

- 1D. *We affirm that the Bible is the final written word of God, not surpassed by any further revelation, but we also rejoice that the Holy Spirit illumines the minds of God’s people so that the Bible continues to speak God’s truth in fresh ways to people in every culture.* (CTC)



Use the following Scriptures to prove both aspects of the truth of the above statement.

Final Written Word

Speaks in fresh ways

**Psalm 119:105**

**2 Corinthians 3:10-11**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**2 Peter 1:20-21**

**Revelation 22:18-19**

- 1E. Have you ever encountered someone who tried to add to Scriptural revelation, claiming that their words held equal authority with the Word of God? How might you use these scriptures to refute their claims?

## Day Two: Loving the Person the Bible Reveals

*We love the Bible as a bride loves her husband’s letters, not for the paper they are, but for the person who speaks through them. The Bible gives us God’s own revelation of his identity, character, purposes and actions. It is the primary witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. In reading it, we encounter him through his Spirit with great joy. Our love for the Bible is an expression of our love for God.* (CTC)

- 2A. *We love the Bible as a bride loves her husband’s letters, not for the paper they are, but for the person who speaks through them.* (CTC)



In what ways did the following people of Scripture demonstrate a similar passionate pursuit of Christ when first taught His Word?

**Acts 8:26-40**

**Acts 17:11**

**1 Thessalonians 1:3-10**

- 2B. In your earliest encounter with Jesus through the Bible, how might you have described your response to Jesus Christ—as similar or different from that described in the CTC statement or one of these passages above? Explain.
- 2C. Take a moment to ask Christ to help you approach the rest of the day with Him as a bride reading a freshly-opened letter or newly-arrived email from your bridegroom.

To aid you in this, what one distraction might you need to remove in order to help you hang on every word of the Bible, realizing it *is* Christ's love letter to you?

- 2D. *The Bible gives us God's own revelation of his identity, character, purposes and actions. It is the primary witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. In reading it, we encounter him through his Spirit with great joy. Our love for the Bible is an expression of our love for God. (CTC)*



Read Revelation 2:1-5. For what accomplishments were the Ephesians commended?

For what were they rebuked?

From what we know of their identity, how might they have fallen short in reading God's Word as a revelation of Christ's true identity, character, purposes and actions?

- 2E. **Read Mark 5:24-34.** Take a fresh peak at Jesus in this passage, asking the Lord to help you to return with your whole heart to your first love. List every insight you can find into Christ's true identity, character, purposes and actions.

Identity

Character

Purpose

Actions

Ask the Lord for a heart that pursues Christ with the same tenacity as this bleeding woman.



## Day Three: Loving the Story the Bible Tells

*The Bible tells the universal story of creation, fall, redemption in history, and new creation. This overarching narrative provides our coherent biblical worldview and shapes our theology. At the center of this story are the climactic saving events of the cross and resurrection of Christ which constitute the heart of the gospel. It is this story (in the Old and New Testaments) that tells us who we are, what we are here for, and where we are going. This story of God’s mission defines our identity, drives our mission, and assures us the ending is in God’s hands. This story must shape the memory and hope of God’s people and govern the content of their evangelistic witness, as it is passed on from generation to generation. We must make the Bible known by all means possible, for its message is for all people on earth. We recommit ourselves, therefore, to the ongoing task of translating, disseminating and teaching the scriptures in every culture and language, including those that are predominantly oral or non-literary. (CTC)*

3A. *The Bible tells the universal story of creation, fall, redemption in history, and new creation. This overarching narrative provides our coherent biblical worldview and shapes our theology. (CTC)*



Meditate on the following Scriptures, which give an overview of creation, the fall, redemption and the new creation. How does each passage shape your worldview (how you view your world and your life) and your theology (how you view God and your relationship to Him)?

Verses	Worldview	Theology
<b>Creation</b> <b>Genesis 1:1, 27, 31, 2:1-2</b>		
<b>Fall</b> <b>1 Corinthians 15:21-22</b>		
<b>Redemption</b> <b>1 Peter 1:18-21</b>		
<b>New Creation</b> <b>Revelation 21:1-5</b>		

3B. Focus on one person you love who does not have these truths as the basis for their worldview and theology. Describe one way their life could be different if they did hold these truths.

Ask God for an opportunity to share with him/her about how one of the above truths has shaped your worldview and theology.

3C. *At the center of this story are the climactic saving events of the cross and resurrection of Christ which constitute the heart of the gospel. It is this story (in the Old and New Testaments) that tells us who we are, what we are here for, and where we are going. (CTC)*



What do the following verses reveal about the outcomes of the **climatic saving event of the cross of Christ**? In what ways does each passage challenge you to consider who you are, what you are here for and where you are going?

**1 Corinthians 1:18** Outcomes of the cross who **you** are, here for, going

**Colossians 2:13-15**

**1 Peter 2:24**

3D. What do the following verses reveal about the outcomes of the **climatic saving event of the resurrection of Christ**? In what ways does each passage challenge you to consider who you are, what you are here for and where you are going?



Outcomes of the Resurrection who **you** are, here for, going

**John 11:25-26**

**Ephesians 2:4-10**

**Philippians 3:10-11**

3E. *This story must shape the **memory** and **hope** of God's people and govern the content of their evangelistic witness.* (CTC)

Recollections about our past and inability to hope for our future often rob us of energy for evangelistic witness. We get weighed down by past hurts and unhealed memories. We allow fears for our future to keep us from reaching out to the lost, and offering them hope for a fresh start.

Review your own answers to Questions 3C and 3D. Ask the Lord to allow at least one of these truths to help heal an old memory or help you overcome a fear related to your future. Write a prayer to the Lord describing your desire to move forward for His glory from your present stuck place.


3F. *We must make the Bible known by all means possible, for its message is for all people on earth. We recommit ourselves, therefore, to the ongoing task of translating, disseminating and teaching the scriptures in every culture and language, including those that are predominantly oral or non-literary.* (CTC)

End your time in prayer today for someone you know who is involved in the task of translating, disseminating or teaching the Scriptures in another culture or language, perhaps someone ministering to those who are predominantly oral or nonliterary learners. To educate yourself regarding those ministering to oral or nonliterary learners, check out the following YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHVKN\\_zv94M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHVKN_zv94M)

## Day Four: Loving the Truth the Bible Teaches

*The whole Bible teaches us the whole counsel of God, the truth that God intends us to know. We submit to it as true and trustworthy in all it affirms, for it is the Word of the God who cannot lie and will not fail. It is clear and sufficient in revealing the way of salvation. It is the foundation for exploring and understanding all dimensions of God's truth. We live however, in a world full of lies and rejection of the truth. Many cultures display a dominant relativism that denies that any absolute truth exists or can be known. If we love the Bible, then we must rise to the defense of its truth claims. We must find fresh ways to articulate biblical authority in all cultures. We commit ourselves again to strive to defend the truth of God's revelation as part of our labor of love for God's Word. (CTC)*

Introduction: What a great challenge to take every opportunity to speak truth into our world full of lies that often rejects the truth. Allow the people of Scripture reviewed in today's lesson to give you fresh motivation to defend the truth of God's revelation as part of your labor of love for God's Word.

- 4A.  **Read Acts 2:22-41.** In Peter's sermon, one main issue he was determined to defend was **the fact** and **purpose** for the death and resurrection of Christ from the dead. Read these verses and list each reference to the death and resurrection of Jesus. What logical or emotional techniques did he use to defend his position?

Verse

Reference to death/resurrection of Christ

The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ had taken place just weeks prior to Peter's sermon. How do you feel people **could** have responded to the facts Peter preached, with the events so freshly lived out before them? How did they actually respond (vv. 41-44)?

- 4B. The disciples were not alone in needing to defend truth. Jesus modeled for them how to stand up courageously for what they believed. In the following stories, match the passage with the technique Jesus used to defend His position:

**Luke 20:1-8**

Proof of authority through a miracle

**Mark 3:1-6**

The good should never be the enemy of the best

**Mark 2:1-8**

Answer only the necessary/don't allow yourself to be cornered by someone with a pharisaical attitude

- 4C. When recently have you needed to defend truth? What kind of argument or technique did you use to defend your position?

4D. No matter how good we might be at debate, sometimes debates are lost for the sake of Christ, as we enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings like the first martyr Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:2). **Read Hebrews 11:35-40.** List the sacrifices some were asked to make as result of their faith.



Description of Person/Group

Sacrifice(s)

'These people of faith were all described as 'men/women of whom the world was not worthy' (Hebrews 11:38). As you reflect on a similar loss Christ has asked of you for the sake of your faith, thank Him that He considers you as one 'of whom the world is not worthy.'

### Day Five: Loving the Life the Bible Requires

'The Word is in your mouth and in your heart so that you may obey it.' Jesus and James call us to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. The Bible portrays a quality of life that should mark the believer and the community of believers. From Abraham, through Moses, the Psalmists, prophets and wisdom of Israel, and from Jesus and the apostles, we learn that such a biblical lifestyle includes justice, compassion, humility, integrity, truthfulness, sexual chastity, generosity, kindness, self-denial, hospitality, peacemaking, non-retaliation, doing good, forgiveness, joy, contentment and love - all combined in lives of worship, praise and faithfulness to God. (CTC)

5A. From the following passages, what fresh encouragements impress you the most regarding the need to obey 'the Word that is in your mouth and in your heart?'



**Deuteronomy 30:14**

**Matthew 7:24-27**

**Luke 6:46**

5B. *From Abraham, through Moses, the Psalmists, prophets and wisdom of Israel, and from Jesus and the apostles, we learn that such a biblical lifestyle includes justice, compassion, humility, integrity, truthfulness, sexual chastity, generosity, kindness, self-denial, hospitality, peacemaking, non-retaliation, doing good, forgiveness, joy, contentment and love.* (CTC)

**Read 2 Chronicles 26,** the sad but true story of a noble king with an inconsistent biblical lifestyle. Which of the above qualities did he possess during the early years of his reign? Which did he lack during his latter reigning years that led to his downfall?

Qualities in his Earlier Years

Qualities Lacking in his Latter Years

What lessons can we learn from his life about the need to finish well?



Choose four qualities listed in the CTC statement (Question 5B) you most need right now. For each, list an Old Testament and a New Testament believer who exemplifies it. Describe the scene where he/she most displays this quality.

Old Testament

New Testament

Quality #1

Quality #2

Quality #3

Quality #4

In your present circumstances, who motivates you the most toward godliness? Explain why.

Ask the Lord to allow you also to be an example of this particular quality of godliness to someone you are longing to influence.

5C. End your time with the Lord using the following confession. Allow it to launch you into your own time of prayer of personal confession and reflection.



*We confess that we easily claim to love the Bible without loving the life it teaches – the life of costly practical obedience to God through Christ. Yet 'nothing commends the gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency. We are charged to behave in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ and even to 'adorn' it, enhancing its beauty by holy lives.' For the sake of the gospel of Christ, therefore, we recommit ourselves to prove our love for God's Word by believing and obeying.*

## Lesson Seven ~ We Love God's World

*We share God's passion for his world, loving all that God has made, rejoicing in God's providence and justice throughout his creation, proclaiming the good news to all creation and all nations, and longing for the day when the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. (CTC)*

*Warm-Up:* Besides your love for Christ, what one passionate love do you share with your spouse, or one of your children or your best friend? Describe ways this common passion has helped to deepen your relationship.

### Day One: Loving the World of God's Creation

This love (for God's world) is not mere sentimental affection for nature (which the Bible nowhere commands), still less is it pantheistic worship of nature (which the Bible expressly forbids). Rather it is the logical outworking of our love for God by caring for what belongs to him. 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it.' The earth is the property of the God we claim to love and obey. We care for the earth, most simply, because it belongs to the one whom we call Lord. (CTC)

1A. In what ways do the following verses reinforce the truth of this CTC statement?



Exodus 20:3-4

Deuteronomy 10:14

Psalms 24:1-2

1B. Describe something precious to you that you have made with your own hands. If you haven't made something recently, reflect on something you made in childhood. What pains have you taken or did you take to care for it?



How did you or would you respond if someone you loved didn't have the same respect for your creation as you did/do?

How do your reflections about your own creation give you insight into how God must feel when we don't take good care of what He has made?

1C. **Read Psalm 19:1-4.** These verses describe the ways God's silent heavens and skies speak to us. Restate these verses as a prayer, thanking God for creating what you see outside as His precious means of communicating with you.



1D. **Read Romans 1:18-20.** In these verses Paul, perhaps even more clearly, restates the truth of Psalm 19:1-4, describing how God wants to reveal Himself to us through His creation. What invisible qualities of God can you see revealed in each aspect of God’s creation listed below? Two examples are given to get your started. Space is also provided for you to choose one or two of your own favorites in God’s creation. Be free with this, as there are no right or wrong descriptions.

Aspect of God’s Creation	Invisible Qualities of God
Mountains	God’s majesty, strength, endurance
Ocean	God’s power, His wrath, His faithfulness
Sun, stars	
Trees, flowers	
Butterflies	
Your choice	
Your choice	

Spend a few moments praising God for how He has poured forth to you His self-revelation through His amazing creation.

*The earth is created, sustained and redeemed by Christ. We cannot claim to love God while abusing what belongs to Christ by right of creation, redemption and inheritance. We care for the earth and responsibly use its abundant resources, not according to the rationale of the secular world, but for the Lord’s sake. If Jesus is Lord of all the earth, we cannot separate our relationship to Christ from how we act in relation to the earth. For to proclaim the gospel that says ‘Jesus is Lord’ is to proclaim the gospel that includes the earth, since Christ’s Lordship is over all creation. Creation care is thus a gospel issue within the Lordship of Christ. (CTC)*

1E. *The earth is created, sustained and redeemed by Christ. (CTC)*  
How do the following scriptures reinforce the truth of this particular CTC statement?



Colossians 1:15-20

Hebrews 1:2-3

1F. What Christ created, He also sustains and controls. **Psalm 104** describes God the Father’s control over creation. **Luke 8:22-25** demonstrates that Jesus Christ, as Master of the wind and the waves, also controls or rules over creation. However, in **Genesis 1:26** we’re told that God created us to share in His rule over creation. Underline below the words that make clear that God has called us to partner with Him in ruling over His creation.



*Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ Genesis 1:26*



- 1G. Make a list of a few aspects of God's creation entrusted to your care. Focus on one that presently needs your close attention. Set a calendar date right now, as to when you plan to attend to your little corner of the world commended to you by your Heavenly Father.

## Day Two: Loving the World of Nations and Cultures

- 2A. 'From one man, God made all nations of humanity, to live on the whole face of the earth.' (CTC)

**Read Acts 17:26-28.** What reasons are given for why God made every nation from 'one man?'



From these verses, what fresh insight(s) can you glean as to why God allowed ethnic diversity to develop?

- 2B. From the following passages, trace the historical progression that led to the diversity of the nations followed by the need for one nation through which all of the nations would be blessed.

**Genesis 6:5-8, 9:18-19**

**Genesis 11:1-8**

**Genesis 12:1-3**

- 2C. *Ethnic diversity is the gift of God in creation and will be preserved in the new creation, when it will be liberated from our fallen divisions and rivalry. Our love for all peoples reflects God's promise to bless all nations on earth and God's mission to create for himself a people drawn from every tribe, language, nation and people. We must love all that God has chosen to bless, which includes all cultures.* (CTC)



In the following scriptures, what phrases reinforce God's desire to preserve ethnic diversity in the new creation and hint at why **all** the ethnic groups need to be present in heaven worshipping our Savior?

**Revelation 7:9-10**

**Revelation 21:24-27**



2D. *Historically, Christian mission, though flawed by destructive failures, has been instrumental in protecting and preserving indigenous cultures and their languages. Godly love, however, also includes critical discernment, for all cultures show not only positive evidence of the image of God in human lives, but also the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin. We long to see the gospel embodied and embedded in all cultures, redeeming them from within so that they may display the glory of God and the radiant fullness of Christ. We look forward to the wealth, glory and splendor of all cultures being brought into the city of God – redeemed and purged of all sin, enriching the new creation. (CTC)*

Just as the full breadth of ethnic groups will need to be present in heaven to reflect fully the diversity of God’s glory and honor, so here on earth the diversity of the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin are embedded in the diversity of our world’s cultures. List five nations with which you are most familiar. Also list the most obvious sins embedded in each of these cultures today.

Country	Most Obvious Sin reflecting Satan’s Fingerprints	Misdirected Love
---------	--	------------------

2E. **Read 1 John 2:16.** Most sins can be characterized as one of the three 1 John 2:16 misdirected loves—the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh or the pride of life. For each of the above sins, with which misdirected love does it most closely correspond? Mark the third column with your answer.

Of these three sins, which one snags you most frequently?

Thank God right now that He has the power to transform you and keep you from sin.



2F. End your study by allowing the following CTC statement to lead you to intercession for the nations, confession for any inappropriate heart attitude you may have toward people of other cultures and/or a fresh commitment to respond to God’s call to the nations—to pray, to give or to go.

*Such love for all peoples demands that we reject the evils of racism and ethnocentrism, and treat every ethnic and cultural group with dignity and respect, on the grounds of their value to God in creation and redemption. Such love also demands that we seek to make the gospel known among every people and culture everywhere. No nation, Jew or Gentile, is exempt from the scope of the great commission. Evangelism is the outflow of hearts that are filled with the love of God for those who do not yet know him. We confess with shame that there are still very many peoples in the world who have never yet heard the message of God’s love in Jesus Christ. We renew the commitment that has inspired The Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel. (CTC)*

## Day Three: Loving the World's Poor and Suffering

3A. *The Bible tells us that the Lord is loving toward all he has made, upholds the cause of the oppressed, loves the foreigner, feeds the hungry, sustains the fatherless and widow. (CTC)*



From the following verses, record phrases below that reinforce the above CTC statement.

**Psalm 145:9, 13, 17**

**Psalm 147:7-9**

**Deuteronomy 10:17-18**

3B. *The Bible also shows that God wills to do these things through human beings committed to such action. God holds responsible especially those who are appointed to political or judicial leadership in society, but all God's people are commanded - by the law and prophets, Psalms and Wisdom, Jesus and Paul, James and John - to reflect the love and justice of God in practical love and justice for the needy. (CTC)*



Read the following scriptures to record specific reinforcements of particular phrases of this CTC statement. *If you are doing the Digging Deeper questions, study ALL the scriptures.* If you are completing Core questions, study only the non-italicized ones.

**Exodus 23:6-9**

**Deuteronomy 16:18-20**

**Psalm 72:4, 12-14**

**Luke 14:12-14**

**Romans 15:25-27**

**Galatians 2:10**

**1 Timothy 6:17-19**

**James 1:27, 2:14-17**

**1 John 3:16-19**

3C. What overall response do you have to your collective reading of these exhortations? Write out your response below, as honest and open communication with your Lord whose heart beats so strongly for the poor and marginalized. Allow the following CTC statement to help you formulate your prayer:



*Such love for the poor demands that we not only love mercy and deeds of compassion, but also that we do justice through exposing and opposing all that oppresses and exploits the poor. 'We must not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.' We confess with shame that on this matter we fail to share God's passion, fail to embody God's love, fail to reflect God's character and fail to do God's will. We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed. We recognize such struggle against evil as a dimension of spiritual warfare that can only be waged through the victory of the cross and resurrection, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and with constant prayer. (CTC)*



**Read Job 29:7-17** as a biographical sketch of a man who lived by the principles you have been studying. What descriptions of him do you find most winsome? What one description do you long could be said about you?

*Pray and ask the Lord for one opportunity in the coming week to live a Job-like life. Record your prayer below:*

## Day Four: Loving Our Neighbors as Ourselves

4A. *Jesus called his disciples to obey this commandment as the second greatest in the law, but then he radically deepened the demand (from the same chapter), 'love the foreigner as yourself' into 'love your enemies'.* (CTC)



Read the following scriptures that reinforce the truth of the above CTC statement. Record your findings.

**Leviticus 19:34**

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**Luke 10:27**



4B. *Such love for our neighbors demands that we respond to all people out of the heart of the gospel, in obedience to Christ's command and following Christ's example. This love for our neighbors embraces people of other faiths, and extends to those who hate us, slander and persecute us, and even kill us. Jesus taught us to respond to lies with truth, to those doing evil with acts of kindness, mercy and forgiveness, to violence and murder against his disciples with self-sacrifice, in order to draw people to him and to break the chain of evil. We emphatically reject the way of violence in the spread of the gospel, and renounce the temptation to retaliate with revenge against those who do us wrong. Such disobedience is incompatible with the example and teaching of Christ and the New Testament (CTC)*

The Bible's definition of our neighbor is broad. From the following scriptures, record below all who are included in this definition. Allow your recordings to provide biblical proof to the phrases of this CTC statement.

**Matthew 5:38-42**

**Luke 6:27-31**

**Luke 23:34**

**Romans 12:17-21**

**1 Peter 3:12-16**

Which of these biblical phrases most challenges you to broaden your own definition of 'your neighbor.' Highlight them above. Focus on the one that needs the most attention in your life. Explain why.

What is one practical way, in attitude or action, you could treat someone you know as your neighbor, perhaps someone you have previously rejected.



4C. *At the same time, our loving duty towards our suffering neighbors requires us to seek justice on their behalf through proper appeal to legal and state authorities who function as God's servants in punishing wrongdoers. (CTC)*

**Read Romans 13:4.** Reflect on your attitude toward legal and state authorities. How does this CTC statement help you appreciate their role in society?

If you know one someone in authority personally, what is one way you could thank them for their role in your life and the lives of those they govern?

## Day Five: Choosing Not to Love the World of Satan’s Rebellion

*'The world of God’s good creation has become the world of human and satanic rebellion against God. We are commanded not to love that world of sinful desire, greed, and human pride. We confess with sorrow that exactly those marks of worldliness so often disfigure our Christian presence and deny our gospel witness.[34]*

*We commit ourselves afresh not to flirt with the fallen world and its transient passions, but to love the whole world as God loves it. So we love the world in holy longing for the redemption and renewal of all creation and all cultures in Christ, the ingathering of God’s people from all nations to the ends of the earth, and the ending of all destruction, poverty, and enmity. (CTC)*

5A. **Read 1 John 2:15-17 and Psalm 101:3.** List the commands from these verses phrase by phrase. Highlight the ones you find most convicting. State why.



5B. Now review this CTC statement. In all honesty, in what ways have you found yourself flirting with the fallen world and its transient passions? Focus on one that is the most consistent temptation in your life.



What is one action you could take to move away from this flirtation? Be specific as possible.

Perhaps you may want to ask a friend or respected relative to pray with you that you might break this flirtatious habit.

End your time with the Lord today and/or your time with your small group by reading this final CTC statement alone or in unison.

*We commit ourselves afresh not to flirt with the fallen world and its transient passions, but to love the whole world as God loves it. So we love the world in holy longing for the redemption and renewal of all creation and all cultures in Christ, the ingathering of God’s people from all nations to the ends of the earth, and the ending of all destruction, poverty, and enmity. (CTC)*

## Lesson Eight ~ We Love the Gospel of God

*As disciples of Jesus, we are gospel people. The core of our identity is our passion for the biblical good news of the saving work of God through Jesus Christ. We are united by our experience of the grace of God in the gospel and by our motivation to make that gospel of grace known to the ends of the earth by every possible means. (CTC)*

**Warm-Up:** If someone asked you to complete the phrase, 'At the core of my identity I am . . . ' what would you say? This question is meant to help you share with your small group a core value, talent or ability, or an aspect of your family heritage that sets you apart or identifies who you are. (e.g. a risk-taker, a lover of beauty, a nature-lover, a woman of many talents but a master of few, a coast lover—put me by an ocean and I am happy, etc.) Have fun with this!

### Day One: Loving the Good News in a World of Bad News

*The gospel addresses the dire effects of human sin, failure and need. Human beings rebelled against God, rejected God's authority and disobeyed God's Word. In this sinful state, we are alienated from God, from one another and from the created order. Sin deserves God's condemnation. Those who refuse to repent and 'do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be punished with eternal destruction and shut out from the presence of God.'* (CTC)



**1A. Read Genesis 3:1-13.** This chapter often identified as 'The Fall,' tells the story of '*the dire effects of human sin, failure and need.*' As the CTC statement makes clear, it describes how Adam and Eve '*rebelled against God, rejected God's authority and disobeyed God's Word.*' List the steps Adam and Eve took that would link them with one or more of these three actions. Next to each step place a check mark in the appropriate column. There may be more than one check mark for each step.

Step	Rebelled against God	Rejected God's Authority	Disobeyed God's Word



**1B. Read Genesis 3:16-24.** *In this sinful state, we are alienated from God, from one another and from the created order.* (CTC) List phrases from these verses that reflect each aspect of humankind's sinful state.

Phrase from Genesis 3:16-24	Alienated from God	Alienated from One Another	Alienated from the Created Order

1C. Reflect on a time recently when you sinned. As a result of your sin, which of these three consequences (alienation from God, from others or from the created order) did you experience? Explain.



1D. These three earthly consequences are bad enough! However, the Bible makes clear, as reinforced in the CTC statement, that we don't just experience sin's consequences here on earth. We also experience eternal consequences, if no provision for our sin is pursued. According to the following scriptures, list phrases that describe the nature of these eternal consequences.

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9**

**Matthew 7:13**

**Revelation 20:14-15**

**Revelation 21:8, 27**

1E. How do you feel about someone you love experiencing these dismal eternal consequences?

Do you truly believe this is your relative or friend's final destiny unless they invite Christ to make provision for their sin? If your answer is no, defend your answer from the Bible, not using your own words but words only from God's Word.

If you answered 'no,' re-read **2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** and reconsider your answer. How does fully understanding the eternal condemnation of those without Christ heighten your passion for believing the good news of the gospel yourself **and** for sharing the good news of the gospel with others?

1F. To be fully reminded of the effects of sin and the power of evil for those without Christ, read the following paragraph out loud either alone and/or with your small group:



*The effects of sin and the power of evil have corrupted every dimension of human personhood (spiritual, physical, intellectual and relational). They have permeated cultural, economic, social, political and religious life through all cultures and all generations of history. They have caused incalculable misery to the human race and damage to God's creation. Against this bleak background, the biblical gospel is indeed very good news. (CTC)*

Close your time with the Lord by thanking Him that the gospel is indeed such very good news! Pray for three pre-Christians with whom you would like to share this good news in the coming months. Pray about one step you could take to deepen your relationship with one of them this coming week.

## Day Two: Loving the Story the Gospel Tells

2A. *The gospel announces as good news the historical events of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As the son of David, the promised Messiah King, Jesus is the one through whom alone God established his kingdom and acted for the salvation of the world, enabling all nations on earth to be blessed, as he promised Abraham.* (CTC)

Read the following scriptures to gain biblical insight into how the word 'gospel' is used in Scripture. What is the gospel, according to the Bible? Who has already proclaimed it?

**Mark 1:1, 14-15**

**Romans 1:1-4**

2B. *Paul defines the gospel by stating that 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, according the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter and then to the Twelve.'* (CTC)

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-5.** This verse briefly outlines the gospel. List below each section of the gospel story using the exact words of the CTC statement (from 1 Corinthians 15:4) as if they were continuous chapters in the same book.

Chapter One

Chapter Two

Chapter Three

Chapter Four

If these four chapters define the gospel, what might be considered to be the preface of the gospel story? Explain your answer, referring to the portions of the Bible where the 'preface' can be found. Romans 1:2-3 may give you a hint.

Preface =

How might this outline of the gospel story help you when you are trying to share the story with someone who has never heard it before?

2C. *The gospel declares that, on the cross of Christ, God took upon himself, in the person of his Son and in our place, the judgment our sin deserves. In the same great saving act, completed, vindicated and declared through the resurrection, God won the decisive victory over Satan, death and all evil powers, liberated us from their power and fear, and ensured their eventual destruction. God accomplished the reconciliation of believers with himself and with one another across all boundaries and enmities.* (CTC)

Chapter one of the gospel story centers on the death of Christ. In light of the following scriptures, list all the accomplishments of the cross. Where possible, connect each verse to a phrase from this CTC statement:

Phrase of CTC Statement

**Ephesians 2:14-18**

**Colossians 1:20**



**Colossians 2:15****Hebrews 2:14-15****1 Peter 2:24**

2D. If you were trying to tell someone in your own words what Christ accomplished for them on the cross, how would you summarize your discoveries from Question 2C? Keep your explanation simple, while attempting to be thorough.

2E. Chapter Three of the gospel story focuses on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The CTC statement says that *'God also accomplished his purpose of the ultimate reconciliation of all creation, and in the bodily resurrection of Jesus has given us the first fruits of the new creation. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' How we love the gospel story!'* (CTC)



What insights do the following scriptures give into what was accomplished by the resurrection of Christ?

**Ephesians 1:18-23****Ephesians 2:4-6****Philippians 3:10-11**

2F. If you were trying to tell someone in your own words what Christ accomplished for them through His resurrection, how would you summarize your discoveries from Question 2E? Keep your explanation simple, while attempting to be thorough.

2G. *How we love the gospel story!* End your time with Jesus today singing the following hymn, thanking Him for the precious story that has changed your life and the lives of many others. Ask the Lord for fresh courage to share this magnificent story with someone you may meet this week.

Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard.  
Tell of the cross where they nailed Him,

Writhing in anguish and pain.  
Tell of the grave where they laid Him,  
Tell how He liveth again.

Love in that story so tender,  
Clearer than ever I see.  
Stay, let me weep while you whisper,  
Love paid the ransom for me.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Qu5ZA4jTnk> Sing along with the YouTube video

## Day Three: Loving the Assurance the Gospel Brings

3A. *Solely through trusting in Christ alone, we are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and are counted righteous in Christ before God. (CTC)*



**Read Philippians 3:4-11.** Many people hope they will be good enough to work their way to heaven rather than trusting in Christ alone. If there ever was a person who might have the credentials to do so, it was the Apostle Paul. List his credentials and how he presently feels about them.

How did he express His confidence 'in Christ alone?'

3B. *Being justified by faith we have peace with God and no longer face condemnation. We receive the forgiveness of our sins. We are born again into a living hope by sharing Christ's risen life. (CTC)*  
Use the following verses to defend this CTC statement:



**Romans 5:1-2**

**Romans 8:1-2**

**Ephesians 1:7-8**

**1 Peter 1:3**

Express thanks to God for one amazing implication of your relationship with Christ that would not have been true prior to asking Him into your heart as Savior and Lord. Be as specific as you can, tying your gratitude to a present life circumstance.

If you have not given your life to Christ yet, which of these truths appeals to you the most as a reason to entrust your life to Him?

Why not give your life to Him right now, so you can receive this wonderful benefit?

3C. *We are adopted as fellow heirs with Christ. We become citizens of God's covenant people, members of God's family and the place of God's dwelling. So by trusting in Christ, we have full assurance of salvation and eternal life, for our salvation ultimately depends, not on ourselves, but on the work of Christ and the promise of God. 'Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' How we love the gospel's promise. (CTC)*

What additional reassurances come to us when we believe and love the good news of the gospel? List these reassurances from the verses below, as confirmations of this CTC statement:

**Romans 8:31-39**

**Galatians 3:26-4:7**

**Ephesians 2:19-22**

**1 John 5:11-13**

Which one of these promises would you most like to share with someone who does not know Christ? Write out below what you would like to say to them.

Now pray for the opportunity to tell them about this startling reassurance which awaits them if they place their hope in Christ alone.

3D. Close your time of worship by singing from your heart the following song:



*In Christ alone, I place my trust  
And find my glory in the power of the cross.  
In every victory, let it be said of me.  
My source of strength, my source of hope is Christ alone.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfYZgxV3g4w> YouTtube of Brian Littrell

## Day Four: Loving the Transformation the Gospel Produces (Part 1)

4A. *The gospel is God's life-transforming power at work in the world. 'It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.'* (CTC)



**Read Romans 1:16.** In that the gospel is God's life-transforming power at work in the world, what has been its most powerful transforming accomplishment through history? Who has experienced the benefits of this power?

To fully appreciate this truth, what would be the implications if the gospel did not have this power? Paint a verbal picture below of our world without this power.

4B. *Faith alone is the means by which the blessings and assurance of the gospel are received. Saving faith however never remains alone, but necessarily shows itself in obedience. Christian obedience is 'faith expressing itself through love.'* *We are not saved by good works, but having been saved by grace alone we are 'created in Christ Jesus to do good works.'* *'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.'* (CTC)



So what is it? Faith alone? Faith plus good deeds? Using the following verses, pretend you are a lawyer preparing to defend your position in court. Read the passages, jotting down your insights. Then in the space provided, state your position, proving it from the verses:

**Galatians 5:6**

**Ephesians 2:10**

**James 2:17**

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

4C. Imagine telling a friend or neighbor about salvation, a friend who does countless good deeds and is trying to work his/her way to heaven. How could you use these scriptures to help them understand salvation? How could you help provide fresh motivation for his/her good deeds?



*When a lawyer presents his case in court, he often relies on evidence from similar cases to prove his point. **Read James 2:20-24.** In what ways could you use the experience of Abraham as evidence for your stated position in Question 4B?*

4D. In the space below, end your time with the Lord by talking to Him about your own life, thanking Him for how the gospel has transformed you, including your faith and your desire to do good deeds. As you pray, thank Him for one aspect of your ethical lifestyle and/or one character quality that Christ has transformed.

## Day Five: Loving the Transformation the Gospel Produces (Part 2)

5A. *Paul saw the ethical transformation that the gospel produces as the work of God's grace – grace which achieved our salvation at Christ's first coming, and grace that teaches us to live ethically in the light of his second coming. (CTC)*



**Read Titus 2:11-14.** One aspect of the transforming work of the gospel is a desire to live an ethical lifestyle and to teach others to do the same. In what ways do these verses challenge you to live an ethical lifestyle? List the specifics of this kind of lifestyle in light of Christ's first and second comings. To add a personal touch, write each statement as an 'I desire....' statement.

5B. . For Paul, 'obeying the gospel' meant both trusting in grace, and then being taught by grace. Paul's missional goal was to bring about 'the obedience of faith' among all nations. (CTC) Jesus and the apostle John both shared Paul's goal of teaching others obedience that comes from faith. Use the following scriptures to review this common thread:



**Romans 1:15, 15:18-19, 16:26**

**John 14:21**

**1 John 2:3**

What are the benefits of knowing that not one, but three biblical instructors taught the same truth?

5C. How might their missional goals help shape your own mission as you endeavor to disciple one or more believers within your sphere of influence? Be specific. How will you challenge each of your disciples to be people of not just faith but also of action?



Focus on one disciple. Write out your action plan for discipling him/her in both FAITH **and** ACTION.

# Lesson Nine ~ We Love the People of God

*Warm-Up:* In your experience as a member of God’s family, describe someone very different from you, in age and/or nationality, who has touched your life in some unusual way.

## Day One: Defining the People of God

*The people of God are those from all ages and all nations whom God in Christ has loved, chosen, called, saved and sanctified as a people for his own possession, to share in the glory of Christ as citizens of the new creation. As those, then, whom God has loved from eternity to eternity and throughout all our turbulent and rebellious history, we are commanded to love one another. For 'since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another,' and thereby 'be imitators of God...and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.' Love for one another in the family of God is not merely a desirable option but an inescapable command. Such love is the first evidence of obedience to the gospel, the necessary expression of our submission to Christ's Lordship, and a potent engine of world mission. (CTC)*

1A. From the following scriptures, find phrases that reinforce different aspects of the definition of the 'people of God' in this CTC statement. Record each phrase below, with its corresponding description from the CTC statement.



Phrase from scripture

'people of God' CTC phrase

**John 13:34-35**

**John 17:20-21**

**Ephesians 2:19**

**Ephesians 5:1-2**

**2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**

**1 Peter 2:9**

**Revelation 7:9**

1B. Personalize one of these phrases by completing the following: 'Thank you Lord that you define me as belonging to the people of God. Because of how You see me, I have the privilege of seeing myself as . . .





1C. Focus on one person in God’s family who is easy for you to love but who struggles with their self-worth. Reflect on how God describes them *in Christ—loved, chosen, called, saved and sanctified, his own possession, to share in the glory of Christ as citizens of the new creation!* (CTC)

Which of these phrases would you most love for them to understand about how God sees them? Write a short paragraph to him/her below describing who they are to you and to our Lord.

Perhaps the Lord may direct you to use this as the rough draft of an email or a short note to help them hear who they truly are in God’s sight.



The scriptures below will introduce you to some Old Testament saints who viewed themselves in certain ways. In what ways did they describe themselves? How does their view of themselves compare with God’s view of them?

Scriptures	View of Self	God’s View	What God promises to do
<b>Jeremiah 1:4-10</b>			
<b>Exodus 3:9-12, 4:10-17</b>			
<b>Numbers 13:26-14:24</b>			

From completing the above chart, what insights have you gleaned about choosing to hold a view of yourself different from how God views you?



1D. Close your time with the Lord asking Him to help you agree with Paul when he says that we are to have a ‘sane estimate of our capabilities’ (Romans 12:3 NASV) or to ‘think of ourselves with sober judgment’ (Romans 12:3 NIV) so that we can see ourselves as God sees us.

## Day Two: Understanding Love’s Call for Unity

*Jesus’ command that his disciples should love one another is linked to his prayer that they should be one. Both the command and the prayer are missional - ‘that the world may know you are my disciples’, and that ‘the world may know that you [the Father] sent me’. (CTC)*

2A. **Read John 17:20-23.** List each desire that Jesus had for His disciples and the anticipated results of each prayer He prayed for them.



Review this CTC statement as it compares with Christ’s prayer in John 17. Underline phrases from the CTC that reinforce Jesus’ words from this high priestly prayer.

2B. What do you understand the following statement to mean: ‘Both the command and the prayer are missional?’ Rewrite this statement in your own words.



What if Jesus had chosen to pray for us to have love for one another but without a missional end in view? What difference would it make in our relationships with nonbelievers?

As an act of obeying this command, have you ever purposely allowed your love for another believer to be seen by someone who does NOT know Christ? What was the outcome of your purposeful choice?

2C. Perhaps the most famous passage that models Christ’s command to be missional in our unified love for one another is Acts 2:42-47. List the actions of these believers. What was the end product?



Actions of believers

End Product

2D. Name one nonbeliever whom you long to see meet Christ. What is one specific way you could expose them to your love for others in God’s family? (i.e. have both in for dinner together, invite them to church, have a game night with both Christians and non-Christians). Why not set a goal to put feet to this vision in the coming month?





2E. In reviewing your reflections from Questions 2A-2D, how missional are you in your love for fellow believers? Try to objectify your answer, on a scale of 1-10. (1 – low in missional efforts/10 high)



1 2 3 4 5 6 6 7 8 9 10

How often do you make a purposeful choice to express your love for other believers in the presence of a non-Christian friend? What might be the result if you approached your evangelistic efforts with this missional intention? Write a prayer below, as an answer to this question.

2F. *A most powerfully convincing mark of the truth of the gospel is when Christian believers are united in love across the barriers of the world's inveterate divisions - barriers of race, color, gender, social class, economic privilege or political alignment. (CTC)*

Study the following passages, looking for examples of love that cross one or more of these barriers. How might a nonbeliever have responded if he/she had observed this diverse unity among believers? Explain the nature of the diverse unity, then the way you think a nonbeliever may respond.

**Acts 1:12-14**

**Acts 13:1-2** (hint: research the people mentioned in verse 1)

**2 Corinthians 8:1-6**

Which area of diversity is most challenging for you within God's family? Race, color, gender, social class, economic privilege, political alignment? Be honest about your areas prejudice, and note them here:

2G. *However, few things so destroy our testimony as when Christians mirror and amplify the very same divisions among themselves. (CTC)*

Study the following passages, looking for examples of where divisions were evident in God's family. How might a nonbeliever have responded if he/she had witnessed these tensions among believers? State the tension and then the response you may expect.

**Acts 13:1-5, 15:36-41**

**James 2:2-9**

**Philippians 4:2-3**

Recently, as you have related to God's family, have you experienced tension or diverse unity? Describe the situation and how it affected you.

End your time with the Lord by reading the following paragraph out loud. As you do, ask the Holy Spirit to increase your passion to bring unity in God's family locally, and to pray for unity of the Body of Christ worldwide.

*We urgently seek a new global partnership within the body of Christ across all continents, rooted in profound mutual love, mutual submission, and dramatic economic sharing without paternalism or unhealthy dependency. And we seek this not only as a demonstration of our unity in the gospel, but also for the sake of the name of Christ and the mission of God in all the world. (CTC)*

## Day Three: Embracing Love's Call for Honesty

3A. *Love speaks truth with grace.* (CTC) In what ways do the following scriptures reinforce this principle?



**Proverbs 27:6**

**John 1:14, 17**

**Ephesians 4:14-15**

3B. When recently have you seen someone model how to be full of both grace and truth? How did they embrace **love's** call for honesty?



*No one loved God's people more than the prophets of Israel and Jesus himself. Yet no one confronted them more honestly with the truth of their failure, idolatry and rebellion against their covenant Lord. And in doing so, they called God's people to repent, so that they could be forgiven and restored to the service of God's mission. (CTC)*

*Read the following warnings given by prophets of Israel and by Jesus Himself. Record one insight you glean from each that demonstrates God's desire to balance truth with grace and/or a call to repentance with a desire to forgive.*

**Jeremiah 33:8**

**Jeremiah 36:3**

**Ezekiel 18:31-32**

**John 1:14**

**John 8:4-11**

**Matthew 6:12, 14-15**



3C. *The same voice of prophetic love must be heard today, for the same reason. Our love for the Church of God aches with grief over the ugliness among us that so disfigures the face of our dear Lord Jesus Christ and hides his beauty from the world – the world that so desperately needs to be drawn to him. (CTC)*

Allow the following scriptures to draw your heart to the beauty of Christ that our world so desperately needs to see through us as His servants. Record your insights below:

**Psalm 27:4**

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

**1 Peter 3:4**

3D. Paul longed that the church in Corinth reflect the beauty of our Lord. Read the following concerns Paul expressed to the Corinthians. Reflect on one way each concern showed Paul's desire that the Corinthians not disfigure the face of our loving Lord.

Concern

Paul's desire to avoid disfiguring Christ

**1 Corinthians 5:1-6**

**1 Corinthians 6:1-8**

**1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 33-34**

Which of these three areas of disfigurement have you seen displayed in a church family where you have participated? What honest steps were taken or could have been taken to help purify Christ's church?

3E. Is there an area in your own church where you feel God calling you to embrace love's call to honesty? Journal about it below, asking the Lord for great insight into your responsibility to help promote a church family that is full of truth and grace, without any disfigurement of Christ's beauty.

## Day Four: Responding to Love's Call for Solidarity

*Loving one another includes especially caring for those who are persecuted and in prison for their faith and witness. If one part of the body suffers, all parts suffer with it. We are all, like John, 'companions in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus'. (CTC)*

4A. In what ways do the following scriptures provide biblical underpinnings for particular phrases from this CTC statement?



**Hebrews 13:1-3**

**1 Corinthians 12:26**

**Revelation 1:9**

Whom do you know who is being persecuted or in prison for their faith? Spend a few moments praying for their endurance, their courage, their love for fellow prisoners, their physical protection, their hope for a better future, their belief that God's mercies are new to them every morning!

4B. *We commit ourselves to share in the suffering of members of the body of Christ throughout the world, through information, prayer, advocacy, and other means of support. We see such sharing, however, not merely as an exercise of pity, but longing also to learn what the suffering Church can teach and give to those parts of Christ's body that are not suffering in the same way. (CTC)*



**Read Revelation 3:7-13** to learn about the church in Philadelphia. *'Let him who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'* What is God's Spirit saying to you about the suffering Church from your study of the Church in Philadelphia? Record what the Spirit is saying to you below:

Reread the CTC statement above (4B). Ask the Lord to help you focus on one of these ways to lend support to the worldwide suffering church.

Do a web search on the suffering church. Read one article and allow it to move your heart to prayer for those suffering for their faith. Bring the article to your small group.

4C. *We are warned that the Church that feels itself at ease in its wealth and self-sufficiency may, like Laodicea, be the Church that Jesus sees as the most blind to its own poverty, and from which he himself feels a stranger outside the door. (CTC)*

**Read Revelation 3:14-22.** *'Let him who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'* What is God's Spirit saying to you about the Church at ease? Record what the Spirit is saying to you below:

What is one way you have been tempted to allow ease in wealth or self-sufficiency to rob you of intimacy with Christ? Don't leave Him as a stranger outside the door of your heart. Invite Him in and ask Him to invade every aspect of your life, freeing you from any attitude of self-sufficiency.

Confess the area where you are most tempted to rely on yourself rather than on Christ. Ask Him to help you believe with every fiber of your being in every area of life the truth of John 15:5, 'Without me, you can do nothing!' Write your prayer of dependence below:

## Day Five: Reviewing Love's Call to the People of God



5A. Spend time today reviewing the insights you gleaned from Days One through Four. Record your most heart stirring summaries below:

5B. Love for God and for others is of primary important to God the Father, His Son and the Holy Spirit. How do the Lord's own words summarize the CTC statements in this lesson and challenge you regarding your own need to love

**Mathew 22: 36—40**

**John 13: 34 & 35.**



5C. End your time with the Lord today by reading the closing paragraph of the CTC statement: *We Love the People of God*. Underline phrases you find convicting. Pray through each phrase, confessing and asking the Lord to fully equip and empower you to be a lover of God's people, in your local church, your region **and** around the world.

*Jesus calls all his disciples together to be one family among the nations, a reconciled fellowship in which all sinful barriers are broken down through his reconciling grace. This Church is a community of grace, obedience and love in the communion of the Holy Spirit, in which the glorious attributes of God and gracious characteristics of Christ are reflected and God's multi-colored wisdom is displayed. As the most vivid present expression of the kingdom of God, the Church is the community of the reconciled who no longer live for themselves, but for the Savior who loved them and gave himself for them. (CTC)*

## Lesson Ten ~ We Love the Mission of God

*Warm-Up:* Describe one way you have been involved in world mission by praying, giving or going. Name one or two blessings you have experienced as a result of your involvement.

### Day One: Committing to World Mission as Central to Our Understanding of God



1A. *We are committed to world mission, because it is central to our understanding of God, the Bible, the Church, human history and the ultimate future. The whole Bible reveals the mission of God to bring all things in heaven and earth into unity under Christ, reconciling them through the blood of his cross. In fulfilling his mission, God will transform the creation broken by sin and evil into the new creation in which there is no more sin or curse. (CTC)*

What phrase from each passage supports the concept that world mission is central to our understanding of God?

Scriptures	Biblical Phrase	CTC phrase
<b>Genesis 12:1-3</b>		
<b>Ephesians 1:9-10</b>		
<b>Colossians 1:19-20</b>		
<b>Revelation 7:9</b>		

1B. Now in your own words, describe why the Bible says we should be committed to world mission.



*God will fulfill his promise to Abraham to bless all nations on the earth, through the gospel of Jesus, the Messiah, the seed of Abraham. (CTC)*

*Read the following scriptures, citing ways in which each scripture reviews how God fulfilled His promise to bless all the nations through Abraham's seed.*

**Genesis 12:1-3**

**Genesis 18:18-19**

**Genesis 21:2-5**

**Romans 4:18**

**Galatians 3:6-9**

**Hebrews 11:8-19**

**James 2:21-23**

Now in your own words, state how God's promise fulfilled to Abraham reinforces why we should be committed to world mission.

1C. *God will transform the fractured world of nations that are scattered under the judgment of God into the new humanity that will be redeemed by the blood of Christ from every tribe, nation, people and language, and will be gathered to worship our God and Savior. God will destroy the reign of death, corruption and violence when Christ returns to establish his eternal reign of life, justice and peace. Then God, Immanuel, will dwell with us, and the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever. (CTC)*

Read the following scriptures to increase your biblical understanding of God's desire to transform the fractured world of nations into a new humanity of nations gathered to worship our God in heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ. Notice the historical progression from one event to the next and how God has been weaving together the nations despite their fractured history. Record your insights below:

**Genesis 7:1-6, Hebrews 11:7**

**Genesis 11:1-9**

**Genesis 12:1-3**

**Colossians 1:19-20**

**Revelation 7:9**

Now in your own words, restate how God's big picture plan for all the nations underscores why we should be committed to world mission.

1D. End your time with God today expressing in prayer how your present understanding of God's heart for all the nations (as a result of completing Day One) is affecting your own heart response to the importance of the nations in your own life. Be honest yet open and teachable!



## Day Two: Participating in God’s Mission

*God calls his people to share his mission. The Church from all nations stands in continuity through the Messiah Jesus with God’s people in the Old Testament. With them we have been called through Abraham and commissioned to be a blessing and a light to the nations. With them, we are to be shaped and taught through the law and the prophets to be a community of holiness, compassion and justice in a world of sin and suffering. We have been redeemed through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bear witness to what God has done in Christ. The Church exists to worship and glorify God for all eternity and to participate in the transforming mission of God within history. Our mission is wholly derived from God’s mission, addresses the whole of God’s creation, and is grounded at its center in the redeeming victory of the cross. This is the people to whom we belong, whose faith we confess and whose mission we share. (CTC)*

2A. Each gospel writer makes clear that God calls His people to share His mission. Record below the exact words each gospel writer used in reiterating Christ’s command to go to the nations:



**Matthew 28:19**

**Mark 16:15**

**Luke 24:43-50 (see also Acts 1:8, recorded by Luke)**

**John 17:15-23, John 20:21**

**Acts 1:8 (Luke’s rendition of the Great Commission)**

Why do you suppose every gospel writer felt it important to record Christ’s call to go to the nations?

How important has this Great Commission been in your own walk with Christ? How might you want it to increase in importance in your walk with Christ as a result of what you are learning?

2B. **Read 1 Peter 2:4-11.** Since Peter is speaking in this letter to Jews who have believed in Jesus, he uses Old Testament imagery to describe them. In that the CTC statement above calls us to join with the Old Testament saints to advance the gospel, list below each name Peter uses to describe his readers as well as imagery He uses to describe Christ. Also list the implications of each of these names, noting Peter’s missional identification. Give the verse for each of your discoveries.



Verse	Imagery of God’s People	Missional Implications	Image of Christ



Which image touches your heart afresh today? Into what present situation in your own life is this image most deeply speaking? Journal below how this fresh image of yourself may help change how you approach your present turmoil or triumph.

**2C. Read Romans 10:10-15.** List the phrases it uses to describe aspects of the good news, noting how its Old Testament imagery helps bring alive our New Testament identities as believers. In addition, list the rhetorical questions it raises in order for someone to hear the good news. Record your findings below:

Verse	Phrases Describing Aspects of the Good News	Verse	Questions Raised

2D. How beautiful are your feet? Into whom are you presently investing your energy, both in prayer and action, in order to bring them the good news of the gospel?



Pray and ask the Lord to help you continue to join with the Old and New Testaments saints alike, to bring the good news of the gospel to those who still haven't heard. For how can they hear unless there is a preacher? Perhaps you are to be God's mouthpiece!

2E. Whom do you know who has crossed a cultural barrier to take the good news of the gospel to another nation? Pray for their beautiful feet today, that they will be bold yet compassionate, holy yet gracious, persuasive yet loving as they endeavor to help others come to know Christ.



## Day Three: Embracing the Integral Nature of Our Mission



3A. *The source of all our mission is what God has done in Christ for the redemption of the whole world, as revealed in the Bible. Our evangelistic task is to make that good news known to all nations. The context of all our mission is the world in which we live, the world of sin, suffering, injustice, and creational disorder, into which God sends us to love and serve for Christ's sake. All our mission must therefore reflect the integration of evangelism and committed engagement in the world, both being ordered and driven by the whole biblical revelation of the gospel of God. 'Evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God... The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world... We affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and humankind, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ... The salvation we proclaim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.'* (CTC)

Today we will consider the biblical mandates for proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. Tomorrow we will observe biblical illustrations of Jesus and the disciples integrating the two as if they were two colors of thread beautifully interwoven into the same fabric. Let's begin by investigating the essentials of our proclamation message.

What are the essentials of the good news message that we are to proclaim?

**Mark 10:43-45**

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

**Acts 2:32-39**

**2 Corinthians 4:5**

**Acts 8:35**

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**1 Corinthians 1:23**

3B. Below, jot down key insights of God's commands regarding engagement in the world.



**Isaiah 1:17**

**James 2:14-18**

**Genesis 1:26-27**

**Matthew 28:19-20**

**Leviticus 19:18**

**2 Corinthians 5:20**

**Luke 6:35**



3C. Why is it important to understand that proclamation **and** demonstration of the gospel both are strong biblical callings to all Christians?

3D. Ask the Lord today for an openness to integrate **both** in your life and ministry, not just one to the exclusion of the other. Give one example of how you have seen them successfully integrated recently.

## Day Four: Understanding Mission As Both Proclamation and Demonstration of the Gospel



4A. *'Integral mission is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world, we betray the Word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the Word of God, we have nothing to bring to the world.'* (CTC)

To reinforce that integral mission involves proclamation as well as demonstration of the gospel, read the following biblical illustrations where both were considered high priorities. In the appropriate column, list phrases from these passages that describe each aspect of our mission:

Proclamation

Demonstration of the Gospel

**Acts 6:1-7**

**Acts 10:36-38**

**Isaiah 61:1-6**



4B. Our natural tendency is to focus on one priority while ignoring the other or focus on one while minimizing the other. Describe a church or Christian organization where you feel both priorities are equally addressed or both are well integrated into their ministry philosophy.

What do you think is the secret to their successful implementation of both priorities?

4C. **Read Mark 1.** List each scene, noting verses where Jesus is involved in each of these two priorities. Notice how masterfully He integrates both into His ministry lifestyle. Record your observations in the chart below:

Scene/Verse(s)	Examples of the Christ's Priority on Proclamation	Examples of Christ's Priority on the Demonstration of the Gospel

4D. **Read Acts 3.** In what ways did Peter and John demonstrate a high priority on both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel? Fill in the chart below.

Verse	Examples of the Peter and John's Priority on Proclamation	Examples of Peter and John's Priority on the Demonstration of the Gospel

4E. From observing both Jesus and Peter and John, what insights have you gleaned about living an integrated ministry lifestyle of both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel?

4F. Which comes more naturally to you? Proclamation or demonstration of the gospel? Give an example from your own ministry.



4G.. **Read I Peter 4:11.** This passage is often used to differentiate between speaking and serving gifts. Sometimes those with speaking gifts are more drawn to proclamation while those with serving gifts are more drawn to demonstration of the gospel. Team ministry is often a great solution! Each member can use his/her gifts to empower both proclamation **and** demonstration of the gospel to take place together.

Describe a time when you have been involved in a ministry where you were free to use your gifts while someone else stood beside you with a set of gifts that emphasized a complementary priority. How satisfying was your experience?

Thank the Lord today for the joy of team ministry where both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel can take place side by side.

## Day Five: Committing to Make Known God's Revelation and Reflect His Character

*We commit ourselves to the integral and dynamic exercise of all dimensions of mission to which God calls his Church. God commands us to make known to all nations the truth of God's revelation and the gospel of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ, calling all people to repentance, faith, baptism and obedient discipleship.*

*God commands us to reflect his own character through compassionate care for the needy, and to demonstrate the values and the power of the kingdom of God in striving for justice and peace and in caring for God's creation.*

*In response to God's boundless love for us in Christ, and out of our overflowing love for him, we rededicate ourselves, with the help of the Holy Spirit, fully to obey all that God commands, with self denying humility, joy and courage. We renew this covenant with the Lord - the Lord we love because he first loved us. (CTC)*



5A Understanding the need for missions involvement is the first short of committing to it. To grasp better how truly to commit to any priority, read the following scriptures, recording below insights you glean about commitment.

**Psalm 37:5**

**Acts 20:32**

**Proverbs 16:3**

**2 Corinthians 5:9**

**Acts 14:23, 26**

In one sentence, summarize what you have learned about commitment.

5B. It's much easier to commit to something we feel passionate about. Describe one of your passions. Why do you feel passionate about it?

5C. One way to grow in passion is to share the passion of someone we love. If our spouse, child or best friend is passionate about something, we can tend to grow in our love for their passion. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are passionate about missions. The more deeply we fall in love with the Trinity, the more we will share their passion for the world for which Christ died. Reread the introduction to this lesson to reinforce this concept.



What is one step you can take to grow in your passion for missions, remembering that it is close to your Heavenly Father's heart, the reason Christ sacrificed Himself for you and His world and the motive for why the Holy Spirit has chosen to fill you as well as all those chosen from every tribe and tongue and nation?

Commit yourself to a tangible expression of your newly-developing missional heart by setting a simple goal for one of the following:

**Pray** (e.g. for one missionary per day, etc.)

**Give** (e.g. give to a missionary monthly, volunteer your time at a local mission, etc. OR

**Go** (e.g. short-term summer missions project, to visit a missionary on the field, etc.)

Allow the Lord to lead you as you set your goal. Ask Christ to increase your passion for what is truly so important to Him. As your love for Christ grows, so will your heart for His passion! Allow the following song entitled *God of Justice* by Tim Hughes to help motivate you as you set your goal.

God of justice, Savior to all,  
Came to rescue the weak and the poor  
Chose to serve and not be served.

To act justly everyday  
Loving mercy in every way  
Walking humbly before You God

Jesus, You have called us  
Freely we've received,  
Now freely we will give

You have shown us what You require  
Freely we've received  
Now freely we will give.

We must go live to feed the hungry  
Stand beside the broken  
We must go  
Stepping forward keep us just from singing  
Move us into action, we must go

Fill us up and send us out,  
Fill us up and send us out,  
Fill us up and send us out, Lord.



# The Cape Town Commitment

## Part II: For the World We Serve

### A curriculum for deeper reflection

### 12 Bible Study Lessons

#### How to Use This Study Guide

1. These twelve lessons may be used alongside *The Cape Town Commitment Churches' Curriculum* (Hendrickson Publishers), for deeper biblical reflection.
2. They are written in a five-day format to encourage Bible study participants to spend time alone with God each day.
3. Each lesson contains two levels of homework, depending on how long the participant has to spend. The two levels are as follows:



Level One: Just-A-Moment (Stopwatch. 10-15 minutes)

Level Two: Core (unmarked questions plus Just-A-Moment. 30 minutes)

4. Each lesson, designed to be completed in one week, may be discussed with a small group. Where a chart or table is used, go for the big picture by asking 'What insight helped me most from this?'
  5. The goal of these studies is to help you study the Bible for yourself, as the text underlying *The Cape Town Commitment*, and to know and love the Bible and its Divine Author more fully and deeply. This reflects The Lausanne Movement's desire to eradicate what could be termed 'Bible Poverty'. The *Commitment* should help us know and love God's Word more deeply and apply it to our lives more fully
  6. There are two ways this study guide can be used:
    - a. With *The Cape Town Commitment Adult Curriculum*, as preparation for sessions 2-12. Each lesson will help you grasp the *Commitment's* biblical underpinnings.
- OR
- b. On its own, starting with *The Cape Town Commitment Preamble* as an introductory study. You will find preparatory homework here for each of the following sessions.

The Cape Town Commitment  
Part II: For the World We Serve  
A curriculum for deeper reflection  
12 Bible Study Lessons

Lesson Two ~ Telling the Truth of Christ in a World Pluralism and Tolerance	7
Lesson Three ~ Bearing Witness to God's Word in the Workplace	13
Lesson Four ~ Building the Peace of Christ in God's Ethnically Diverse World	19
Lesson Five ~ Taking the Peace of Christ to God's Suffering World	25
Lesson Six ~ Loving the Gospel of Christ Among People of Other Faiths	31
Lesson Seven ~ Discerning the Will of the Spirit for Evangelization of the World's Cities	37
Lesson Eight ~ Discerning the Will of the Father for the Evangelization of Children	43
Lesson Nine ~ Calling the Church of the Living God Back to Humility, Integrity and Simplicity	49
Lesson Ten ~ Calling the Church of the God Who First Loved Us Back to Humility, Integrity and Simplicity	55
Lesson Eleven ~ Partnering with the People of God for Unity in the Church and in Mission	61
Lesson Twelve ~ Living An Integrated Faith	67



## SESSION 1

### THE THIRD LAUSANNE CONGRESS AND THE CAPE TOWN COMMITMENT

*And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless.*  
*Philippians 1:9-10*

#### Opening Reflection

Who are the people who have shown you great love at points in your life? How did their love make a difference in your life? What difference would you like God's love to make on you through this study?

#### The Problem

*The Lausanne Covenant defines evangelization as 'the whole Church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.' But when Christians look more like the dominant culture than like Christ, how is the gospel credible? In a world of multiple faiths and competing 'truths,' how is the gospel believable? And with so many people groups, children, and spheres of society without believers bearing witness to Jesus, how is the gospel heard?*

#### Video Clip - Cape Town 2010 Short Documentary (14:00)

Cape Town Congress, October 17-24, 2010.

<http://www.lausanne.org/en/multimedia/videos.html>

#### SIDEBAR

##### Summary

The Cape Town Congress was the largest evangelical Christian council in history. 4,200 leaders representing 198 nations came to worship and pray, listen and learn, discuss and decide. They were joined by hundreds of thousands more in 700 satellite locations. From the Congress emerged *The Cape Town Commitment*, a magisterial document consisting of a Confession of Faith followed by A Call to Action. *The Cape Town Commitment* expresses the priorities facing our world that the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church must address. 'Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches' (Revelation 2:11).

#### Talking it over

1. What role has the Church played in helping you come to faith as a Christian?
2. How well has the Church functioned in helping you grow as a follower of Jesus?

### **Taking it to heart**

#### **Read The CTC Foreword (pp4-5)**

*The Cape Town Commitment will act as a roadmap...over the next ten years.*

- As a Christian, what are you aiming for ten years from now? What roadmap are you using?

#### **Read The CTC Preamble: Opening Paragraph and The Realities of Change (pp6-7)**

*The Lausanne Movement remains committed to the task of bearing worldwide witness to Jesus Christ and all his teachings.*

- What do you believe is your primary purpose as a Christian? How well does your life express your core beliefs?

### **SIDEBAR**

#### **The Scope of Our Love**

God's love is the foundation of the Christian life. We never outgrow or outdo God's love. We can simply *receive* it. When we make a lifelong practice of receiving God's love (which we experience as grace) we are more and more filled with God's very character, which *is* love. Love is the DNA of the authentic Christian (1 John 4:7-8). Our love for God is just giving back what we first receive. The Lausanne Covenant reminds us that love for God includes love for the whole gospel – in word and deed. Our love embraces the whole Church – around the globe and through all time. And our love goes out to the whole world – no one is left out for being too far away, too young, too insignificant, or too bad.

Are you ready to be filled with the love of God? This needy world hopes you are!

### **Examining our faith**

#### **Read The CTC Preamble: Unchanged Realities and the Passion of Our Love (pp7-8)**

Three great truths provide biblical support for ordinary Christians to be extraordinarily prepared to bear witness for Christ wherever, whenever, and however they can.

#### **A. Human beings are lost.**

- Is this the perception of the dominant culture? What do you believe is the underlying need or 'predicament' of every human?

#### **B. The gospel is good news.**

- Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. As an ambassador, what good news do you have for others?

### C. The Church's mission goes on.

- What is your understanding of the Church's mission?
- Do you experience 'joyful urgency,' and if so, where?

#### Living our faith

1. Over the coming week, think about a country, place or people that you've dreamed of visiting. Where is it? Who are they? What is your interest?
  - Share this dream with others in your group.
  - Write down your dream in the form of a prayer. Hang onto what you've written, at least until you complete this study.
2. Discover in detail what God is doing in the country, place or people group you have in mind. Go to [www.operationworld.org](http://www.operationworld.org) to learn more and pray more effectively.
3. Familiarize yourself with the resources and connections of The Lausanne Movement.
  - Hear comments from Chris Wright, the principal author of *The Cape Town Commitment* <http://www.lausanne.org/en/multimedia/videos/ctc-videos.html>
  - Trace the significant turning points in church history from Pentecost to 1910 <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11320> and <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11321>

#### Praying our faith

Christians believe that God is love, and that our rightful response is to love God and others in return. We may want to love, but stories in scripture and church history recount multiple failures of God's people. Even our own hearts accuse us of failing to love properly. Rather than relying upon determination and behavioral modification to produce a robust love for God and others, let us turn back to God, who *is* love. We must first *receive* God's gracious love that we may give back what is given. To pray, then, is how we learn to walk in love.

#### SIDEBAR

##### Discernment

The prayer of discernment opens us up to listen to and recognize the voice and patterns of God's direction in our lives. Through discerning prayer we take time to listen to God without hurrying to make a decision. We ask God for help, counsel and guidance as we seek to bring both head and heart into alignment with God's will. Through discerning prayer we learn to attend to the desires God has placed deeply within us. We listen for the nudgings of the Spirit as we wait for God rather than simply deciding. Through the practice of discerning prayer, our lives attach more and more to God's love and to his will alone.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adapted sentences from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005) p99.

1. Come into the presence of the Holy One focusing your attention on his love and goodness. Thank God that you have a Guide who is on your side and wants to help you.<sup>2</sup>

2. Pray to recognize and relinquish anything that takes priority over God's will. This kind of prayer is the 'nevertheless' prayer Jesus prayed in Gethsemane. *Not my will but yours be done*. It is sometimes called the 'prayer of relinquishment.' Ask God to move in your will so you want to choose that which promotes his glory and spreads his love. If you can't pray this prayer, then pray for a desire to pray this prayer.<sup>3</sup>

3. Invite the Holy Spirit to give counsel and guidance to you as you engage in this study, guiding you into the will and ways of God. Pray that the Spirit would:

- assure you of God's love, goodness and trustworthy nature (Romans 8:16)
- convict you of sin, revealing the false self and all its agendas and attachments (John 16:8)
- lead you into truth, opening you to the cleansing power of repentance and freedom Jesus brings (John 16:13)
- bring glory to God (John 16:14) through everything that happens to you
- nurture the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Calhoun, 101.

<sup>3</sup> Calhoun, 101.

<sup>4</sup> Calhoun, 100.

## Lesson Two ~ Telling the Truth of Christ in a World of Pluralism and Tolerance

*Warm-up:* Watch the video on Presenting Truth in Europe by Dr. Michael Herbst

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11390> What emotional reactions did you experience as Dr. Michael Herbst was speaking? Name one, and explain why you felt it so strongly.

### Day One: Bearing Witness to the Truth of Christ in a Pluralistic, Globalized World

Read CTC pp33-35.

1A. Using a dictionary if needed, define each pair of words in II A.1 *Truth and the Person of Christ*. State why you feel each of these contrasting terms is necessary to aid our **full** understanding of Jesus as truth.

Personal as well as Propositional

Universal as well as Contextual

Ultimate as well as Present

1B. ***As disciples of Christ we are called to be people of truth. We must live the truth. We must proclaim the truth.*** (CTC) Below state in what ways you see Paul and Timothy living the truth and/or proclaiming the truth.



Name of Individual	Ways He Lived the Truth	Proclaimed the Truth
<b>Philippians 2:19-23</b> Timothy		
<b>1 Timothy 4:11-16</b>		

<b>1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:6-9</b> Paul
<b>Acts 20:25-27</b>

1C. ***We urge church leaders, pastors and evangelists to preach and teach the fullness of the biblical gospel as Paul did, in all its cosmic scope and truth. We must present the gospel not merely as offering individual salvation, or as a better solution to needs than other gods can provide, but as God’s plan for the whole universe in Christ. People sometimes come to Christ to meet a personal need, but they stay with Christ when they find him to be the truth.*** (CTC)



Why do you feel we are sometimes hesitant to preach and teach the fullness of the biblical gospel as Paul did?

How does the above CTC statement broaden your perspective as to why we need a sense of urgency about teaching the full gospel of Christ?

1D. Read IIA 2. *Truth and the Challenge of Pluralism*

***Most [faiths] will seek to respect competing truth claims of other faiths and live alongside them. However postmodern, relativist pluralism is different. Its ideology allows for no absolute or universal truth. (This position is logically self-destroying for it affirms as a single absolute truth that there is no single absolute truth.) Such pluralism asserts ‘tolerance’ as an ultimate value, but it can take oppressive forms in countries where secularism or aggressive atheism govern the public arena.*** (CTC)

How would you argue against a philosophy of total tolerance? In practical terms, what are the logical conclusions of such a philosophy?

- 1E. Has your conviction deepened, during this study, that we need to take every opportunity to bear witness to Christ, in our pluralist world, with tolerance as the ultimate value?



## Day Two: Steadfastly Affirming that Christ Alone is Savior, Lord and God

***God commanded Israel to love the LORD God with exclusive loyalty. Likewise for us, loving the Lord Jesus Christ means that we steadfastly affirm that he alone is Savior, Lord and God. The Bible teaches that Jesus performs the same sovereign actions as God alone. Christ is Creator of the universe, Ruler of history, Judge of all nations and Savior of all who turn to God. He shares the identity of God in the divine equality and unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Just as God called Israel to love him in covenantal faith, obedience and servant-witness, we affirm our love for Jesus Christ by trusting in him, obeying him, and making him known. (CTC)***

- 2A. From the following scriptures, list phrases that describe Christ as Creator of the Universe.

**John 1:3**

**Colossians 1:15-17**

Personalize one of these phrases by thanking Christ for his role in creating what you see and even what you can't see around you, realizing he has made it for your enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17).

- 2B. Read the following scriptures. In what ways do these verses reinforce for you that Christ is the Ruler of history?

**Hebrews 1:1-2, 9:26**

**1 Peter 1:20**

Which verse brings you the most personal comfort when you consider how your life's story fits in with God's overall plan for human history? Why?

- 2C. Christ the Creator and Ruler of history is also the Judge of all humankind. What discoveries regarding Christ's role as Judge can you glean from the following verses?

**Romans 2:16**

**2 Timothy 4:1**

**2 Thessalonians 1:5-10**

Which verse stirs your heart the most when you think of someone you know who does not have a personal relationship with Christ, their unforeseen Judge?

Allow this verse to motivate you to pray for their salvation. Allow it to move your feet and hands toward them in some act of compassion or with a word of encouragement this week.

- 2D. **Read Luke 2:25-32.** What discoveries did Simeon make about the Christ child as 'salvation?' List each phrase, noting how each one would have motivated Simeon to say, 'You can now dismiss your servant in peace.'

If you had been in Simeon's shoes, which discovery would have prepared you the most for your own earthly departure? Why?

### Day Three: Trusting in Christ Alone to Bless the Nations through the Power of His Life, Ministry, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Return

***We trust in Christ. We believe the testimony of the Gospels that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the one appointed and sent by God to fulfill the unique mission of Old Testament Israel, that is to bring the blessing of God's salvation to all nations, as God promised to Abraham. (CTC)***

- 3A. ***Jesus, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, God took our human flesh and lived among us, fully God and fully human. (CTC)***

In what ways do the following scriptures underline the truths related to Christ's birth in the above CTC statement?

**John 1:14**

**Luke 1:26-36**

- 3B. ***In his life Jesus walked in perfect faithfulness and obedience to God. He announced and taught the kingdom of God, and modeled the way his disciples must live under God's reign. (CTC)***

In what ways do the following scriptures reinforce the truth regarding Christ's obedience?

**Mark 1:15**

**Hebrews 5:8**

**1 Peter 2:21-25**

- 3C. ***In his ministry and miracles, Jesus announced and demonstrated the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil powers. (CTC)***

**Read Luke 4:31-41.** In what ways did Jesus announce and demonstrate the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil power?

- 3D. ***In his death on the cross, Jesus took our sin upon himself in our place, bearing its full cost, penalty and shame, defeated death and the powers of evil, and accomplished the reconciliation and redemption of all creation. (CTC)***

List each phrase of the CTC that lines up with a phrase from **Ephesians 1:19-23**

**3E. *In his bodily resurrection, Jesus was vindicated and exalted by God, completed and demonstrated the full victory of the cross, and became the forerunner of redeemed humanity and restored creation. (CTC)***

What discoveries do the following passages reveal regarding each aspect of the resurrection mentioned in this CTC statement? There should be one verse/set of verses for each aspect. Below, list the phrase(s) that match(es) each aspect.

Aspect of Bodily Resurrection	Vindication	Exaltation	Victory	Forerunner	Restored Creation
Philippians 2:9-11					
Colossians 1:15-18 Hebrews 2:8-12					
Revelation 12:9 1 Timothy 3:16					
1 Corinthians 15:51-53 Isaiah 11:6					
1 Corinthians 15:54-57					

**3F. *Since his ascension, Jesus is reigning as Lord over all history and creation. (CTC)***



**Read Luke 24:50-53 and Ephesians 1:19-23.** Luke gives us an historical account of the ascension. What discoveries can you glean regarding Christ’s reign since his ascension?

If these discoveries were no longer a reality, what difference would it make in your outlook on life as you get out of bed tomorrow morning? Be specific.



**3G. *At his return, Jesus will execute God’s judgment, destroy Satan, evil and death, and establish the universal reign of God. (CTC)***

Read the following Revelation passages describing each aspect of Christ’s return as highlighted in the CTC statement above. Record a key phrase from each passage in the boxes below.



Scripture	God's Judgment	Destruction of Satan, Evil and Death	Establishment of Universal Reign
<b>Revelation 19:11</b>			
<b>Revelation 20:1-14</b>			
<b>Revelation 21:1-7</b>			

Now list three one-word responses which describe how you feel about your future hope in heaven.

Pray for one nonbeliever today whose response would be very different if they read these same scriptures and were challenged to face the truth about their own future.

3H. From reviewing the scriptures in questions 3A-3G, which aspect of Christ (birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension or return) most freshly motivates you today to share your faith with someone not yet in his Kingdom? Write a prayer to Christ below, thanking him for living through this aspect of his existence so you have so great a story to tell!

### Day Four: Obeying Christ's Call to Discipleship

***We obey Christ. Jesus calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him in the path of self-denial, servanthood and obedience. 'If you love me, keep my commandments,' he said. 'Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things I say?' We are called to live as Christ lived and to love as Christ loved. To profess Christ while ignoring his commands is dangerous folly. Jesus warns us that many who claim his name with spectacular and miraculous ministries will find themselves disowned by him as evildoers. We take heed to Christ's warning, for none of us is immune to such fearful danger. (CTC)***

4A. **Read Luke 6:46-49.** In the chart below, list the characteristics of each individual Jesus describes, then the insights about each of them gleaned from **I John 2:3-6** and **Matthew 7:21-23.**

	<b>Luke 6:46-49</b>	<b>I John 3:3-6</b>	<b>Matthew 7:21-23</b>
Individual #1			
Individual #2			



4B. What is one command found in Christ's call to obedience that you find consistently challenging to obey?



Describe a time recently when your disobedience, or the disobedience of someone you love, has had a costly price tag.

Ask the Lord for a desire to ‘do what he says’ to acknowledge his Lordship in your life.

4C. **Read Luke 9:23-24.** What insights are given here as to the nature of a disciple of Christ?

Explain why you feel Christ challenged us to take up our ‘**daily** cross?’

Where in your life today is Christ asking you to ‘die to self’ to live for him? Be specific.

## Day Five: Proclaiming Christ Alone as God’s Full and Final Revelation of Himself for Mankind’s Salvation

***We proclaim Christ. In Christ alone God has fully and finally revealed himself, and through Christ alone God has achieved salvation for the world. We therefore kneel as disciples at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth and say to him with Peter, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,’ and with Thomas, ‘My Lord and my God.’ Though we have not seen him, we love him. And we rejoice with hope as we long for the day of his return when we shall see him as he is. Until that day we join Peter and John in proclaiming that ‘there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.’ (CTC)***

5A. Begin today by reviewing Days Two through Four, reviewing the full breadth of who Christ is— Creator, Ruler of History, Judge of all the nations—and the full sweep of his life from birth through the second coming. As you review, pray, meditate and worship your way through these aspects of Christ as God’s only Son. List one fresh heart-warming discovery below:

5B. With this big picture view of Christ in mind, now consider how **you** should respond to so great a Savior. What responses did the following individuals have to Christ?



<b>John 20:26-28</b>	Thomas	
<b>Matthew 16:13-17</b>	Peter	
<b>John 20:13-18</b>	Mary Magdalene	
<b>John 19:38-42</b>	Joseph of Arimathea Nicodemus	

With which response do you most resonate? Explain why.

5C. Now write a prayer below or in a journal regarding your conviction to take every opportunity to speak strongly the truth about Christ in our culture of pluralism, with tolerance as the ultimate value.



## Lesson Three ~ Bearing Witness to God’s Word in the Workplace

Warm-up: Watch Mark Greene’s ‘People at Work’ video. How do you respond to Mark’s challenge regarding the following church strategies and statistics?

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11359>

**Strategy #1:** to recruit the people of God to use some of their leisure time to join the missionary initiatives of church-paid workers.

**Strategy #2:** to equip the people of God for mission in all of their life.

Churches are only equipping Christians for church mission, for 2-10 hours of their volunteer time. Therefore 98% of Christians have been neither envisioned nor equipped for mission in 95% of their lives. They have only been equipped for mission in neighborhood Bible studies or for church ministries.

### Day One: Bearing Witness in the Workplace through Globalized Media, Arts in Mission, Emerging Technologies, and Public Arenas

Read CTC pp33-39.

**The Bible shows us God’s truth about human work as part of God’s good purpose in creation. The Bible brings the whole of our working lives within the sphere of ministry, as we serve God in different callings. By contrast, the falsehood of a ‘sacred-secular divide’ has permeated the Church’s thinking and action. This divide tells us that religious activity belongs to God, whereas other activity does not. Most Christians spend most of their time in work which they may think has little spiritual value (so-called secular work). But God is Lord of all of life. ‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,’ said Paul, to slaves in the pagan workplace. (CTC)**

1A. How do the following scriptures underscore the principle that the Bible brings the whole of our working lives within the sphere of ministry, dispelling the falsehood of a ‘sacred-secular divide’?



<p><b>Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15, 18, 20</b></p> <p><b>Genesis 2:1-3</b></p> <p><b>Psalm 90:17</b></p>	<p><b>Proverbs 22:29</b></p> <p><b>John 17:4</b></p> <p><b>Colossians 3:23-24</b></p> <p><b>1 Corinthians 15:58</b></p>
---	---

Which scripture helps you the most in your own attitude toward your work in the workplace, community or in your home? Why?

1B. **Truth and the Globalized Media** (pp36-37). In what ways have you seen churches, Christian organizations and/or individual believers identifying or addressing the following major needs?

- a. Media Awareness
- b. Media Presence
- c. Media Ministries

Thank Christ right now for one way you see truth penetrating media today. If you know someone influencing others through media, thank them as well.

1C. **Truth and the Arts in Mission** (pp37-38) **We possess the gift of creativity because we bear the image of God. (CTC)** In what ways do the following scriptures confirm the above CTC statement?



**Genesis 1:26**

**Exodus 31:1-6**

Describe something made by you, or someone you love, and how it reflects the image of God.

1D. **Truth and Emerging Technologies** (p38). **In this Biotech Century, what is one way you have been confronted with the need to promote authenticity so that technology is not used to 'manipulate, distort or destroy' but rather to 'preserve and better fulfill our humanness' as created in the image of God?**  
Share examples of these two extremes you have observed recently.

1E. **Truth and the Public Arenas of Government, Business and Academia** (pp38-39)

Read **Acts 17:16-34**. Describe how Paul used his opportunity to shape values and influence public debate.

Whom do you know who is actively engaged in one of these arenas? Describe one way s/he uses their particular arena **'to shape societal values and influence public debate.'**

Thank God for any public arena he has opened for you, or for a friend. Ask him to help you and/or your friend use it for his glory.

1F. Just For Fun! Match the Bible character with his/her position in a public arena.

Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:11-2:5)  
Esther (Esther 2:15-17, 4:10-5:2)  
Daniel (Daniel 2:45-48)  
Joseph (Genesis 42:6)  
Deborah (Judges 4:4-5)

Senior Government Official  
Scholar/Government Adviser and Administrator  
Judge  
Assistant to the Governor (cupbearer to the king)  
Queen

## Day Two: Loving God's Word, both the Old and New Testaments

2A. **We receive the whole Bible as the Word of God, inspired by God's Spirit, spoken and written through human authors. (CTC)**



In what ways do the following Scriptures reinforce the truth of the CTC statement above?

**2 Timothy 3: 16-17**

**2 Peter 1:20-21**

What is your personal response to God's hand guiding and overseeing these historical realities for your personal benefit? In prayer, thank him for one intended outcome that Scripture has most recently accomplished in your life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17). You may want to focus on one way this outcome has affected your life in your place of work.

**2B. *We submit to God’s Word as supremely and uniquely authoritative, governing our belief and our behavior. (CTC)***



How do the following passages reinforce the authority, longevity, continuity and influence of God’s Word to govern our lives? Highlight or underline the ones that freshly touch your heart.

**Matthew 5:17-18**

**John 14:26**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**James 1:22-25**

**2C. *We testify to the power of God’s Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. (CTC)***



How do the following passages reinforce the power of God’s Word to accomplish his purpose of salvation for humankind?

**Romans 10:13-17**

**Matthew 4:4**

Imagine trying to offer salvation to a friend, family member or co-worker without the help of God’s Word. Thank God afresh for the power of his Word that can empower you to introduce someone to Christ.

**2D. *We affirm that the Bible is the final written word of God, not surpassed by any further revelation, but we also rejoice that the Holy Spirit illumines the minds of God’s people so that the Bible continues to speak God’s truth in fresh ways to people in every culture. (CTC)***

Use the following scriptures to prove one or both aspects of the truth of the above CTC statement.

Final Written Word

Speaks in fresh ways

**Psalm 119:105**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**2 Peter 1:20-21**

**Revelation 22:18-19**

2E. How has God’s Word spoken in a fresh way to you recently?

## Day Three: Loving the Person the Bible Reveals

***We love the Bible as a bride loves her husband’s letters, not for the paper they are, but for the person who speaks through them. The Bible gives us God’s own revelation of his identity, character, purposes and actions. It is the primary witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. In reading it, we encounter him through his Spirit with great joy. Our love for the Bible is an expression of our love for God. (CTC)***

**3A. *We love the Bible as a bride loves her husband's letters, not for the paper they are, but for the person who speaks through them. (CTC)***



As described in the CTC statement above, in what ways did the following people of Scripture demonstrate a similar passionate pursuit of Christ when first taught his Word?

**Acts 16:14-15**

**Acts 17:11**

**1 Thessalonians 1:3-10**

3B. In your earliest encounter with Jesus through the Bible, how might someone have described your response to Christ, as similar to or different from the description of the CTC statement or one of these passages above? Explain.



3C. Take a moment to ask Christ to help you approach the rest of your time with him today as a bride reading a freshly ripped-open letter or newly-arrived email from your bridegroom.

To aid you in this experience with Christ as your bridegroom, what one distraction might you need to remove immediately, to help you hang on every word of the Bible, recognizing that it *is* Christ's love letter to you?

3D. **Read Mark 5:24-34.** Take a fresh look at Jesus in this passage, asking the Lord to help you to return with your whole heart to your first love. List every insight you can find in this passage into Christ's true identity, character, purposes and actions.

Identity	Character	Purpose	Actions

What of these four aspects of Christ do you long for others, particularly at your place of work, to see in you, thereby recognizing you as *'one who has been with Jesus'* (Acts 4:13)?

## Day Four: Loving the Story the Bible Tells and the Truth the Bible Teaches



**4A. *The Bible tells the universal story of creation, fall, redemption in history, and new creation. This overarching narrative provides our coherent biblical worldview and shapes our theology. (CTC)***

Meditate on the following scriptures, which give a quick overview of creation, the fall, redemption and the new creation. How does each passage shape your worldview (how you view your world and your life) and your theology (how you view God and your relationship to him)?

Verses	Worldview	Theology
<b>Creation</b> <b>Genesis 1:1, 27, 31,</b> <b>2:1-2</b>		
<b>Fall</b> <b>1 Corinthians 15:21-22</b>		
<b>Redemption</b> <b>1 Peter 1:18-21</b>		
<b>New Creation</b> <b>Revelation 21:1-5</b>		



4B. Focus on one person you know and love, perhaps from your workplace, who does not have the above truths as the basis for their worldview and theology. Describe one way their life could be different if their worldview and their theology matched the above.

Ask God for an opportunity to share with him/her about how one of the above truths has shaped your worldview and theology.

4C. ***At the center of this story are the climactic saving events of the cross and resurrection of Christ which constitute the heart of the gospel. It is this story (in the Old and New Testaments) that tells us who we are, what we are here for, and where we are going. (CTC)***

What do the following verses reveal about the outcomes of either the climactic saving events of the cross or the resurrection of Christ? In what ways does each passage challenge you to consider who you are, why you are here and where you are going?

Scripture	Outcome of Cross	Outcome of Resurrection	who <b>you</b> are, why here, going
<b>Ephesians 2:4-10</b>			
<b>Philippians 3:10-11</b>			
<b>Colossians 2:13-15</b>			
<b>1 Peter 2:24</b>			

4D.. **Read Acts 2:22-41.** In Peter’s sermon, one main issue he was determined to defend was **the fact** and **purpose** of the death and resurrection of Christ. What logical or emotional techniques did he use to defend his position? Try to find one or two of each.

Verse(s)                  Reference to death/resurrection of Christ      Logical/Emotional

The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ had just happened weeks prior to Peter’s sermon. How do you think people **could** have responded to what Peter preached here, particularly realizing that the events had been so freshly lived out before them? How did they actually respond (vv. 41-44)?



4E. The disciples were not alone in needing to defend truth. Jesus modeled for them how to stand up courageously for what they believed. In the following stories, match the passage with the technique Jesus used to defend his position:

**Luke 20:1-8**

Proof of his authority through performing a miracle

**Mark 3:1-6**

The good should never be the enemy of the best

**Mark 2:1-8**

Answer only the necessary/don't allow yourself to be cornered by someone with a pharisaical attitude

4F. When recently have you needed to defend truth? What kind of argument or technique did you use to defend your position?



## Day Five: Loving the Life the Bible Requires

***The Word is in your mouth and in your heart so that you may obey it.' Jesus and James call us to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. The Bible portrays a quality of life that should mark the believer and the community of believers. From Abraham, through Moses, the Psalmists, prophets and wisdom of Israel, and from Jesus and the apostles, we learn that such a biblical lifestyle includes justice, compassion, humility, integrity, truthfulness, sexual chastity, generosity, kindness, self-denial, hospitality, peacemaking, non-retaliation, doing good, forgiveness, joy, contentment and love - all combined in lives of worship, praise and faithfulness to God. (CTC)***

5A. From the following passages, what fresh encouragements impress you the most regarding the need to obey 'the Word that is in your mouth and in your heart?'



**Deuteronomy 30:14**

**Matthew 7:24-27**

**Luke 6:46**

5B. How do the following scriptures help you in obeying God's Word? Memorize the one you find most helpful. Write it on a 3 x 5 card and place it somewhere you can read it frequently.



**Psalm 119:11, 17**

**Romans 12:12**

5C. End your time with the Lord today with the following confession. Allow it to launch you into your own personal confession and reflection, particularly regarding any area where your life - lived out before nonbelievers in the workplace, your community or family - does not match what the Bible requires. Ask God to empower you to **love** the life the Bible requires by joyfully living it out in the workplace and every public arena.

***We confess that we easily claim to love the Bible without loving the life it teaches – the life of costly practical obedience to God through Christ. Yet 'nothing commends the gospel more eloquently than a transformed life, and nothing brings it into disrepute so much as personal inconsistency. We are charged to behave in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ and even to 'adorn' it, enhancing its beauty by 'holy lives.' For the sake of the gospel of Christ, therefore, we recommit ourselves to prove our love for God's Word by believing and obeying. (CTC)***



## Lesson Four ~ Building the Peace of Christ in God’s Ethnically Diverse World

***We share God’s passion for his world, loving all that God has made, rejoicing in God’s providence and justice throughout his creation, proclaiming the good news to all creation and all nations, and longing for the day when the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. (CTC)***

*Warm-up:* View the video of the young Israeli male and young Palestinian female, <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11418> What fresh insights or feelings surfaced for you about your own views on ethnic diversity? Summarize in one self-defining sentence.

### Day One: Understanding the Peace that Christ Made

1A. ***Reconciliation to God is inseparable from reconciliation to one another. Christ, who is our peace, made peace through the cross, and preached peace to the divided world of Jew and Gentile. The unity of the people of God is both a fact ('he made the two one'), and a mandate ('make every effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'). God’s plan for the integration of the whole creation in Christ is modeled in the ethnic reconciliation of God’s new humanity. Such is the power of the gospel as promised to Abraham. (CTC)***



In what ways do the following scriptures lend biblical support to the CTC statement above?

<b>Ephesians 1:10, 2:11-18</b>	<b>Ephesians 4:3</b>
<b>Ephesians 3:6</b>	<b>Galatians 3:6-8</b>

1B. ***We affirm that whereas the Jewish people were not strangers to the covenants and promises of God, in the way that Paul describes the Gentiles, they still stand in need of reconciliation to God through the Messiah Jesus. There is no difference, said Paul, between Jew and Gentile in sin; neither is there any difference in salvation. Only in and through the cross can both have access to God the Father through the one Spirit. (CTC)***

How might you use the following scriptures to help convince a non-believing Jew that s/he needed to be reconciled to God through the Messiah Jesus? How might you use the same scriptures to help convince a non-believing Gentile of their similar need?

	Jew	Gentile
<b>Ephesians 2:11-22</b>		
<b>Romans 3:23</b>		
<b>Romans 10:12-13</b>		

- 1C. **A) We continue, therefore, strongly to affirm the need for the whole Church to share the good news of Jesus as Messiah, Lord and Savior with Jewish people. And in the spirit of Romans 14-15, we urge Gentile believers to accept, encourage and pray for Messianic Jewish believers, in their witness among their own people. (CTC)**

Before beginning this lesson, what was your attitude toward sharing the good news of Jesus with Jewish people? And/or toward Messianic Jewish believers sharing their witness among their own people? Explain. Also comment on whether your view is changing from working on this study.

Pray today for one Jewish person you know that does not know Christ as Messiah.

- 1D. **Reconciliation to God and to one another is also the foundation and motivation for seeking the justice that God requires, without which, God says, there can be no peace. True and lasting reconciliation requires acknowledgment of past and present sin, repentance before God, confession to the injured one, and the seeking and receiving of forgiveness. It also includes commitment by the Church to seeking justice or reparation, where appropriate, for those who have been harmed by violence and oppression. (CTC)**



Describe one way that observing or hearing about injustice toward Jewish people, either past or present, has personally affected you.

What is one aspect of injustice toward the Jewish people in our world today that you would like to pray against? Be specific, relating your request to a present day form of injustice against Jews that offends you.

- 1E. **B) We long to see the worldwide Church of Christ, those who have been reconciled to God, living out our reconciliation with one another and committed to the task and struggle of biblical peace-making in the name of Christ. (CTC)**

Compose a prayer below, committing yourself to biblical peacemaking with Jewish people, either through sharing your faith and/or seeking justice in the name of Christ on behalf of those of Jewish heritage. If you are Jewish, compose a prayer on behalf of your own people.

## Day Two: Loving Our Neighbor as Ourselves as an Expression of Christ's Peace

- 2A. **Jesus called his disciples to obey this commandment (to love neighbor as self) as the second greatest in the law, but then he radically deepened the demand (from the same chapter), 'love the foreigner as yourself' into 'love your enemies'. (CTC)**



Record below how the following scriptures reinforce the CTC statement above.

**Leviticus 19:34**

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**Luke 10:27**

2B. ***Such love for our neighbors demands that we respond to all people out of the heart of the gospel, in obedience to Christ's command and following Christ's example. This love for our neighbors embraces people of other faiths, and extends to those who hate us, slander and persecute us, and even kill us. Jesus taught us to respond to lies with truth, to those doing evil with acts of kindness, mercy and forgiveness, to violence and murder against his disciples with self-sacrifice, in order to draw people to him and to break the chain of evil. We emphatically reject the way of violence in the spread of the gospel, and renounce the temptation to retaliate with revenge against those who do us wrong. Such disobedience is incompatible with the example and teaching of Christ and the New Testament CTC.***



The Bible's definition of our neighbor is quite broad. From the following scriptures, record below all who are included in this definition. Allow your recordings to provide biblical proof for the phrases of the CTC statement above.

**Matthew 5:38-44**

**Luke 6:27-32**

**Luke 23:34**

**Romans 12:17-21**

2C. Which of these biblical phrases most challenges you to broaden your own definition of 'your neighbor.' Highlight them above. Focus on the one that needs the most attention in your life. Explain why.



What is one practical way, in attitude or action, you could treat someone you know as your neighbor, perhaps someone you have previously rejected or one who has even hurt you.

2D. ***At the same time, our loving duty towards our suffering neighbors requires us to seek justice on their behalf through proper appeal to legal and state authorities who function as God's servants in punishing wrongdoers. (CTC)***

**Read Romans 13:1-4.** Reflect below on your own attitude toward legal and state authorities. How does the CTC statement above help you appreciate their role in society?

2E. If you know one such authority figure personally, what is one way you could thank him/her for his/her role in your life and the lives of those s/he governs?

## Day Three: Embracing Christ's Peace for A World of Nations and Cultures

3A. Today we will consider 'our neighbors' as all those of other nations and cultures. ***From one man, God made all nations of humanity, to live on the whole face of the earth.'* (CTC)**



**Read Acts 17:26-28.** What reasons are given for why God made every nation from 'one man?'

From these verses, what fresh insight(s) can you glean as to why God allowed ethnic diversity to develop?

3B. From the following passages, record the historical progression that led to the diversity of the nations followed by the need for one nation through which all of the nations would be blessed.

**Genesis 6:5-8, 9:18-19**

**Genesis 11:1-9**

**Genesis 12:1-3**

3C.. *Ethnic diversity is the gift of God in creation and will be preserved in the new creation, when it will be liberated from our fallen divisions and rivalry. Our love for all peoples reflects God’s promise to bless all nations on earth and God’s mission to create for himself a people drawn from every tribe, language, nation and people. We must love all that God has chosen to bless, which includes all cultures. (CTC)*



In the following scriptures, what phrases reinforce God’s desire to preserve ethnic diversity in the new creation and hint at why **all** ethnic groups need to be present in heaven worshipping Christ?

**Revelation 7:9-10**

**Revelation 21:24-27**

3D.. *Historically, Christian mission, though flawed by destructive failures, has been instrumental in protecting and preserving indigenous cultures and their languages. Godly love, however, also includes critical discernment, for all cultures show not only positive evidence of the image of God in human lives, but also the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin. We long to see the gospel embodied and embedded in all cultures, redeeming them from within so that they may display the glory of God and the radiant fullness of Christ. We look forward to the wealth, glory and splendor of all cultures being brought into the city of God – redeemed and purged of all sin, enriching the new creation. (CTC)*

Just as the full breadth of ethnic groups will need to be to present in heaven to reflect fully the diversity of God’s glory and honor, so here on earth the diversity of the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin are embedded in the multiplicity of our world’s cultures. List three nations with which you are most familiar. Also list the most obvious sins embedded in each of these cultures.

Country	Most Obvious Sin reflecting Satan’s Fingerprints	Misdirected Love
---------	--	------------------

3E. **Read 1 John 2:16.** Most sins can be characterized as one of three misdirected loves—the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh or the pride of life. For each of the above sins, with which misdirected love does each sin most closely identify? Mark the third column with your answer.

3F. Of these three sins, which one snags you most frequently?

Thank God right now that he has the power to transform you and keep you from sin.

3G. End your study today by allowing the following CTC statement to lead you to (i) intercession for the nations, (ii) confession for any inappropriate heart attitude you may have toward people of other cultures and/or (iii) a fresh commitment to respond to God’s call to the nations—to pray, give or to go.



***Such love for all peoples demands that we reject the evils of racism and ethnocentrism, and treat every ethnic and cultural group with dignity and respect, on the grounds of their value to God in creation and redemption. Such love also demands that we seek to make the gospel known among every people and culture everywhere. No nation, Jew or Gentile, is exempt from the scope of the great commission. Evangelism is the outflow of hearts that are filled with the love of God for those who do not yet know him. We confess with shame that there are still very many peoples in the world who have never yet heard the message of God’s love in Jesus Christ. We renew the commitment that has inspired The Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel. (CTC)***

## Day Four: Urging Christ’s Peace in a World of Ethnic Conflict; Repenting of Ethnic Violence, Injustice and Oppression

***Ethnic diversity is the gift and plan of God in creation. It has been spoiled by human sin and pride, resulting in confusion, strife, violence and war among nations. However, ethnic diversity will be preserved in the new creation, when people from every nation, tribe, people and language will gather as the redeemed people of God. We confess that we often fail to take ethnic identity seriously and to value it as the Bible does, in creation and redemption. We fail to respect the ethnic identity of others and ignore the deep wounds that such long-term disrespect causes. (CTC)***

4A. In Day Three we considered that ethnic diversity is the gift and plan of God in creation that will be preserved in the new creation. Begin today by listing three ways that you have personally observed and/or participated in disrespect of the ethnic identity of others. Be specific.



4B. In prayer, confess to your Heavenly Father any sin or pride that has helped nurture your disrespect for the ethnic identity of others.

4C. Prayerfully reflect on admonitions related to pride from the following passages. List the specifics you discover.

<b>Proverbs 8:13</b>	<b>Proverbs 16:18</b>
<b>Proverbs 11:2</b>	<b>Proverbs 29:23</b>
<b>Proverbs 13:10</b>	<b>1 Peter 5:5-9</b>



4D. Prayerfully read the following CTC statements. Highlight the phrases that are most convicting to you. If you meet as a small group, read these out loud as a group, sharing why you highlighted the phrases you did.



***We urge church pastors and leaders to teach biblical truth on ethnic diversity. We must positively affirm sin and teach believers that all our ethnic identities are subordinate to our redeemed identity as the new humanity in Christ through the cross.***

***We acknowledge with grief and shame the complicity of Christians in some of the most destructive contexts of ethnic violence and oppression, and the lamentable silence of large parts of the Church when such conflicts take place. Such contexts include the history and legacy of racism and black slavery; the holocaust against Jews; apartheid; ‘ethnic cleansing’; inter-Christian sectarian violence; decimation of indigenous populations; inter-religious, political and ethnic violence; Palestinian suffering; caste oppression; and tribal genocide. Christians who, by their action or inaction, add to the brokenness of the world, seriously undermine our witness to the gospel of peace.***

***Therefore: For the sake of the gospel, we lament, and call for repentance where Christians have participated in ethnic violence, injustice or oppression. We also call for repentance for the many times Christians have been complicit in such evils by silence, apathy or presumed neutrality, or by providing defective theological justification for these.***

***If the gospel is not deeply rooted in the context, challenging and transforming underlying worldviews and systems of injustice, then, when the evil day comes, Christian allegiance is discarded like an unwanted cloak and people revert to unregenerate loyalties and actions. Evangelizing without discipling, or revival without radical obedience to the commands of Christ, are not just deficient; they are dangerous. We long for the day when the Church will be the world’s most visibly shining model of ethnic reconciliation and its most active advocate for conflict resolution.***

## Day Five: Embracing and Adapting a Lifestyle of Reconciliation and Peace

- 5A. **Such aspiration [as stated at the end of Day Four], rooted in the gospel, calls us to:**  
*Embrace the fullness of the reconciling power of the gospel and teach it accordingly. This includes a full biblical understanding of the atonement: that Jesus not only bore our sin on the cross to reconcile us to God, but destroyed our enmity, to reconcile us to one another.*

In what ways do the following verses reinforce our need to embrace the fullness of the reconciling power of the gospel?

<b>2 Corinthians 5:18-19</b>	<b>Ephesians 2:13-22</b>
------------------------------	--------------------------



- 5B. **Such aspiration [as stated at the end of Day Four], rooted in the gospel, calls us to:**  
**Adopt the lifestyle of reconciliation. In practical terms this is demonstrated when Christians:**  
*forgive persecutors, while having courage to challenge injustice on behalf of others*  
*forgive persecutors, while having courage to challenge injustice on behalf of others*  
*give aid and offer hospitality to neighbors 'on the other side' of a conflict, taking initiatives to cross barriers to seek reconciliation*  
*continue to witness to Christ in violent contexts; and are willing to suffer, and even to die, rather than take part in acts of destruction and revenge*  
*engage in the long-term healing of wounds after conflict, making the Church a safe place of refuge and healing for all, including former enemies.*

In each of the following accounts, identify at least one way the characters adopted a lifestyle of reconciliation and peace. Which phrase from the CTC statement above most closely resembles their reconciliation lifestyle?

Biblical character	CTC statement
<b>Genesis 50:14-21 (Joseph)</b>	
<b>Jonah 3-4 (God as reconciler as compared to Jonah)</b>	
<b>Acts 6:7-7:2, 7:54-60 (Stephen)</b>	



- 5C. When you consider present relationships where you are feeling tension, which biblical character challenges you the most regarding a lifestyle of reconciliation and peace? Why?

- 5D. **Such aspiration (as stated at the end of Day Four), rooted in the gospel, calls us to:**  
**Be a beacon and bearer of hope. We bear witness to God who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. It is solely in the name of Christ, and in the victory of his cross and resurrection, that we have authority to confront the demonic powers of evil that aggravate human conflict, and have power to minister his reconciling love and peace.**

What is one step you could take this week to become a beacon and bearer of hope, particularly to someone of a different ethnic background? Ask Christ who suffered the abuse of the cross, to equip you with his resurrection power so you can minister his reconciling love and peace to that person.

## Lesson Five ~ Taking the Peace of Christ to God's Suffering World

Warm-up: View Pranitha Timothy's presentation on modern slavery. What emotional reactions did you experience? What new insights into modern slavery did you glean?

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11415>

### Day One: Embracing A Lifestyle of Peace for Christ's Suffering Creation

***This love (for God's world) is not mere sentimental affection for nature (which the Bible nowhere commands), still less is it pantheistic worship of nature (which the Bible expressly forbids). Rather it is the logical outworking of our love for God by caring for what belongs to him. 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it.' The earth is the property of the God we claim to love and obey. We care for the earth, most simply, because it belongs to the one whom we call Lord. (CTC)***

1A. In what ways do the following verses reinforce the truth of the CTC statement above?



**Exodus 20:3-4**

**Deuteronomy 10:14**

**Psalm 24:1-2**

1B. **Read Psalm 19:1-4.** These verses describe the ways God's silent heavens and skies speak to us. Restate these verses as a prayer, thanking God for creating what you see outside your window right now as his precious means of communicating with you.

1C. ***The earth is created, sustained and redeemed by Christ. We cannot claim to love God while abusing what belongs to Christ by right of creation, redemption and inheritance. We care for the earth and responsibly use its abundant resources, not according to the rationale of the secular world, but for the Lord's sake. If Jesus is Lord of all the earth, we cannot separate our relationship to Christ from how we act in relation to the earth. For to proclaim the gospel that says 'Jesus is Lord' is to proclaim the gospel that includes the earth, since Christ's Lordship is over all creation. Creation care is thus a gospel issue within the Lordship of Christ. (CTC)***

How do the following scriptures reinforce the truth of the CTC statement above?



**Genesis 1:26, 2:15**

**Colossians 1:15-20**

**Hebrews 1:2-3**

1D. What Christ created, he also sustains and controls. **Psalm 104** describes God the Father's control over creation. **Luke 8:22-25** demonstrates that Jesus Christ, as Master of the wind and the waves, also controls or rules over creation. However, in **Genesis 1:26** we're told that God created us to share in his rule over creation. Underline below the words that make clear that God has called us to partner with him in ruling over his creation.

***Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'* Genesis 1:26**

How does God's desire to have you rule over his creation change your view of any property you own or any aspect of your physical environment and how you choose to relate to it?



- 1E. List a few aspects of God's creation entrusted to your personal care. Focus on one that presently needs your close attention. Set a calendar date right now, as to when you plan to attend to your little corner of the world entrusted to you by your Heavenly Father.

## Day Two: Defining Christ's Peace for the World's Poor and Suffering

- 2A. God loves not only his world, but also the people of his world.

***The Bible tells us that the Lord is loving toward all he has made, upholds the cause of the oppressed, loves the foreigner, feeds the hungry, sustains the fatherless and widow. (CTC)***

From the following verses, record phrases below that reinforce the above CTC statement.



**Psalm 145:9, 13, 17**

**Psalm 147:7-9**

**Deuteronomy 10:17-18**

- 2B. ***The Bible also shows that God wills to do these things through human beings committed to such action. God holds responsible especially those who are appointed to political or judicial leadership in society, but all God's people are commanded - by the law and prophets, Psalms and Wisdom, Jesus and Paul, James and John - to reflect the love and justice of God in practical love and justice for the needy. (CTC)***

Record below specific reinforcements of particular phrases of the CTC statement above.

**Exodus 23:6-9**

**Deuteronomy 16:18-20**

**Psalm 72:4, 12-14**

**Jeremiah 21:12**

**Luke 14:12-14**

**Romans 15:25-27**

**1 Timothy 6:17-19**

**James 1:27, 2:14-17**

**1 John 3:16-19**

- 2C. What overall response do you have to your collective reading of these exhortations? Write out your response below, as honest open communication with your Heavenly Father whose heart beats so strongly for the poor and marginalized. Allow the following CTC statement to begin to help you formulate your own prayer, written in the space provided after the statement.



***Such love for the poor demands that we not only love mercy and deeds of compassion, but also that we do justice through exposing and opposing all that oppresses and exploits the poor. 'We must not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist.' We confess with shame that on this matter we fail to share God's passion, fail to embody God's love, fail to reflect God's character and fail to do God's will. We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed. We recognize such struggle against evil as a dimension of spiritual warfare that can only be waged through the victory of the cross and resurrection, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and with constant prayer.***

2D. Read **Job 29:7-17** as a biographical sketch of a man who lived by the principles you have been studying. What descriptions of him do you find most winsome?



What one description do you long could be said about you? Why?

Pray and ask the Lord for one opportunity in the coming week to live a Job-like life. Record your prayer below:

### Day Three: Activating Christ's Peace for the Suffering Poor

3A. Growing out of our biblical conviction regarding Christ's desire for peace for the world's poor and suffering. ***We long for more effective Christian action on poverty. We embrace the witness of the whole Bible, as it shows us God's desire both for systemic economic justice and for personal compassion, respect and generosity towards the poor and needy. We rejoice that this extensive biblical teaching has become more integrated into our mission strategy and practice, as it was for the early Church and the Apostle Paul.***



What biblical principles of caring for the suffering poor do the following scriptures reveal? What phrase(s) from the CTC statement above does each principle echo?

Scripture	Biblical Principle	CTC Statement
<b>Leviticus 19:9-10</b>		
<b>Leviticus 27:8</b>		
<b>Acts 4:32-37</b>		
<b>Galatians 2:9-10</b>		
<b>Romans 15:23-29</b>		

3B. Read **2 Corinthians 8:1-5**. List phrases that highlight the unusual generosity of the Macedonian believers.

3C. Read **2 Corinthians 8:6-15**. How did Paul draw on the example of the Macedonians in challenging the Corinthian believers also to 'excel in this grace of giving?' How did he draw also on the example of Christ? In addition, how did he draw on their own former example to urge them to give again? List the phrases that give proof of each challenge.



Macedonian example

Christ's example

Corinthians' own example

3D. Which of these above three examples most challenges you to want to 'excel in the grace of giving?' Explain.

3E. **Accordingly, let us: Recognize the great opportunity that the Millennium Development Goals have presented for the local and global Church. We call on churches to advocate for them before governments, and to participate in efforts to achieve them, such as the Micah Challenge.**

For a brief summary of the Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, visit the following website:  
[http://www.beta.undp.org/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/MDG\\_Report\\_2011.html](http://www.beta.undp.org/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/MDG_Report_2011.html)

For a brief YouTube summary of the Micah Challenge, visit the following website:  
<http://www.micahchallenge.org.au/voices-justice>

List three feeling words that accurately reveal your own heart response to these two reports.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

Expand on one of these words as a prayer to your Heavenly Father regarding your own heart (hands and feet too) response to the world's poverty.

3E. **Accordingly, let us have courage to declare that the world cannot address, let alone solve, the problem of poverty without also challenging excessive wealth and greed. The gospel challenges the idolatry of rampant consumerism. We are called, as those who serve God and not mammon, to recognize that greed perpetuates poverty, and to renounce it. At the same time, we rejoice that the gospel includes the rich in its call to repentance, and invites them to join the fellowship of those transformed by forgiving grace.**  
 What exhortations did Jesus and Paul give regarding the pitfalls of greed?

(Jesus) **Matthew 6:24, Luke 12:15**

(Paul) **Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5**

Which exhortation is most convicting to you? What is one way you can apply this exhortation to your own life, particularly as it relates to your attitude and actions toward the poor?

## Day Four: Activating Christ's Peace for Those Suffering from Slavery and/or Human Trafficking.

4A. Growing out of our biblical conviction regarding Christ's desire for peace for the world's poor and suffering . . . **We long for more effective Christian action on: Slavery and human trafficking. There are more people all around the world in slavery today (an estimated 27 million) than 200 years ago when Wilberforce fought to abolish the transatlantic slave trade. In India alone there are an estimated 15 million bonded children. The caste system oppresses low caste groups and excludes Dalits. But sadly the Christian Church itself is infected in many places with the same forms of discrimination. The concerted voice of the global Church must be raised in protest against what is in effect one of the world's oldest systems of slavery. But if such global advocacy is to have any authenticity, the Church must reject all inequality and discrimination within itself.**



**Migration on an unprecedented scale in today's world, for a variety of reasons, has led to human trafficking on every continent, the widespread enslavement of women and children in the sex trade, and the abuse of children through enforced labor or military conscription.**

**A) Let us rise up as the Church worldwide to fight the evil of human trafficking, and to speak and act prophetically to 'set the prisoners free'. This must include addressing the social, economic and political factors that feed the trade. The world's slaves call out to the global Church of Christ, 'Free our children. Free our women. Be our voice. Show us the new society that Jesus promised.'** (CTC)

List phrases from the CTC statement above that fit for you in one of the following categories.

New to me	Shocking to me	Convicting to me	Here's what I feel called to do about it.

4B. With a prayerful heart, watch one or both of the following YouTube videos on human trafficking:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRrWpmlaW6U>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGAaWjsAOCA&feature=fvst>

After watching, write out your prayerful response to what you observed. Be honest about your feelings, your desire to help, etc.

4C. If you're sensing God's call to take action against human trafficking and modern slavery, here are some practical steps you could take to get involved locally or globally, together or individually:

1. Report suspicious activity to the Human Trafficking Hotline 888-3737-8888
2. Support international & local organization with a mission to stop modern-day slavery. [ijm.org](http://ijm.org) (International Justice Mission) [www.notforsalecampaign.org](http://www.notforsalecampaign.org)
3. **Educate yourself** [Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade--and How We Can Fight It](#) by [David B. Batstone](#) (Oct 12, 2010) [The Slave Next Door : Human Trafficking & Slavery in America today](#) / Kevin Bales & Ron Soodalter, [Be the Change: Your Guide to Freeing Slaves and Changing the World \(invert\)](#) by [Zach Hunter](#) (Feb 20, 2007)
4. Do not support purchase products produced by slavery: Chocolate, cotton, clothing, electronics, & gem stones are particularly susceptible to slave labor.
5. Purchase products produced by trafficking survivors. [www.freedomsstones.ws](http://www.freedomsstones.ws), <http://www.notforalestore.org/>
6. Educate your children on the dangers of internet dating

## Day Five: Activating Christ's Peace to Those Suffering from Disabilities and HIV

5A. **People with disabilities form one of the largest minority groups in the world, estimated to exceed 600 million. The majority of these live in the least developed countries, and are among the poorest of the poor. Although physical or mental impairment is a part of their daily experience, most are also disabled by social attitudes, injustice and lack of access to resources. Serving people with disabilities does not stop with medical care or social provision; it involves fighting alongside them, those who care for them and their families, for inclusion and equality, both in society and in the Church. God calls us to mutual friendship, respect, love, and justice.** (CTC)



**HIV and AIDS constitute a major crisis in many nations. Millions are infected with HIV, including many in our churches, and millions of children are orphaned by AIDS. God is calling us to show his deep love and compassion to all those infected and affected and to make every effort to save lives. We believe that the teachings and example of Jesus, as well as the transforming power of his cross and resurrection, are central to the holistic gospel response to HIV and AIDS that our world so urgently needs. (CTC)**

As modeled by Jesus and exhorted by Paul, what challenges do the following scriptures give that can lead us to fresh committed eyes as we relate to people with disabilities and those with HIV/AIDS?

<b>2 Corinthians 5:16</b>	<b>Mark 5:24-34</b>
<b>John 9:1-3</b>	<b>Matthew 15:30-31</b>

5B. Name three people with disabilities you know personally and one person with HIV. What has been your attitude toward them in the past? How do the above scriptures give you fresh eyes for them?



5C. **When Your Small Group Meets:** Following a robust discussion of the above verses as they relate to the handicapped and HIV/AIDS, read the following ‘we’ statements as a liturgical commitment to treat the people with disabilities and those with HIV and or AIDS as they deserve to be treated. Allow your reading to lead to a time of corporate confession and prayer for people with disabilities and those with HIV/AIDS, particularly focusing on those you know personally.

People with Disabilities

- A) **Let us rise up as Christians worldwide to reject cultural stereotypes, for as the Apostle Paul commented, ‘we no longer regard anyone from a human point of view.’ Made in the image of God, we all have gifts God can use in his service. We commit both to minister to people with disabilities, and to receive the ministry they have to give.**
- B) **We encourage church and mission leaders to think not only of mission among those with a disability, but to recognize, affirm and facilitate the missional calling of believers with disabilities themselves as part of the Body of Christ.**
- C) **We are grieved that so many people with disabilities are told that their impairment is due to personal sin, lack of faith or unwillingness to be healed. We deny that the Bible teaches this as a universal truth.[66] Such false teaching is pastorally insensitive and spiritually disabling; it adds the burden of guilt and frustrated hopes to the other barriers that people with disabilities face.**
- D) **We commit ourselves to make our churches places of inclusion and equality for people with disabilities and to stand alongside them in resisting prejudice and in advocating for their needs in wider society.**

Those with HIV and AIDS

- A) **We reject and denounce all condemnation, hostility, stigma, and discrimination against those living with HIV and AIDS. Such things are a sin and a disgrace within the body of Christ. All of us have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory; we have been saved only by grace, and we should be slow to judge, quick to restore and forgive. We also recognize with grief and compassion that very many people become infected with HIV through no fault of their own, and often through caring for others.**
- B) **We long that all pastors should set an example of sexual chastity and faithfulness, as Paul commanded, and teach clearly and often that marriage is the exclusive place for sexual union. This is needed not only because it is the clear teaching of the Bible, but also because the prevalence of concurrent sexual partnerships outside marriage is a major factor in the rapid spread of HIV in the most affected countries.**
- C) **Let us, as the Church worldwide, rise to this challenge in the name of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us stand together with our brothers and sisters in areas hardest hit by HIV and AIDS, through practical support, compassionate care (including care of widows and orphans), social and political advocacy, education programs (particularly those that empower women), and effective prevention strategies appropriate to the local context. We commit ourselves to such urgent and prophetic action as part of the integral mission of the Church.**

## Lesson Six ~ Loving the Gospel of Christ Among People of Other Faiths

***As disciples of Jesus, we are gospel people. The core of our identity is our passion for the biblical good news of the saving work of God through Jesus Christ. We are united by our experience of the grace of God in the gospel and by our motivation to make that gospel of grace known to the ends of the earth by every possible means. (CTC)***

*Warm-up:* Watch Michael Ramsden, European director of RZIM Zacharias Trust, discuss witnessing boldly, from a position of humility, appealing to the example of Paul <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11485> How do you respond to his appeal to no longer wait, but to go, to speak, to preach the gospel wherever God asks you to go?

### Day One: Loving the Gospel of Christ Among People of Other Faiths

1A. ***'Love your Neighbor as Yourself' includes people of other Faiths*** (Read pp46-47). Which of the five 'we' statements (A-E) do you find most convicting? Explain why.



1B. ***We respond to our high calling as disciples of Jesus Christ to see people of other faiths as our neighbors in the biblical sense. They are human beings created in God's image, whom God loves and for whose sins Christ died. We strive not only to see them as neighbors, but to obey Christ's teaching by being neighbors to them. We are called to be gentle, but not naïve; to be discerning and not gullible; to be alert to whatever threats we may face, but not ruled by fear. (CTC)***



In what ways do the following scriptures give biblical support for the CTC statement above?

**Luke 10:27**

**1 Peter 3:15-16, Compare Acts 19:37**

**2 Timothy 1:7**

Do you feel you may have previously missed an opportunity to minister to someone of a different faith because of being 'ruled by fear?' Explain.

1C. ***The love of Christ calls us to suffer and sometimes to die for the gospel*** (Read pp47-48). Journal below your honest response to this statement.



1D. What encouragements do the following scriptures give regarding suffering for the gospel? Which scripture encourages you the most regarding any suffering you may be experiencing right now?

<b>2 Corinthians 4:7-10</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 12:9-10</b>

Pray today for someone you know that is truly suffering for the gospel. If you don't know someone who is, watch the following YouTube videos and pray.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mP6UNHFpvlq>.

- 1E. **Love in action embodies and commends the gospel of grace** (Read p48). **Read 2 Corinthians 2:14-16.** Which phrase (from the CTC or from 2 Corinthians) challenges you the most to want to be the aroma of Christ to others? To answer, focus on one present circumstance in your own life where others may need to experience your fresh fragrance.
- 1F. **Love respects diversity of discipleship** (Read p49, particularly A1, A2). **Read Acts 11:20-24, Acts 15:19, Romans 14:1-3** as biblical support for Point A1, A 2. Which of these challenges do you find most personally instructive regarding the need to respect diversity of discipleship? Explain.
- 1G. **Love reaches out to scattered peoples** (Read pp49-50). Is there one particular category of scattered peoples (p50 A, B, or C) with whom you regularly interface? Explain. What is one way you can take advantage of how God has positioned you to influence this individual/group toward Christ? Pray and ask Christ to give you an open door for the gospel with them.
- 1H. **Love works for religious freedom for all people** (Read p51). Which phrase in A or B do you sense the Holy Spirit nudging you to obey? What is one specific way you might be able to put feet to the Spirit's nudge in the coming month?



End your time with Christ today by thanking him for the religious freedom you enjoy. Ask him for the courage to reach out and build a loving relationship with one individual/family of another faith. What one act of kindness can you do to help nurture the deepening of this relationship?

## Day Two: Loving the Good News in a World of Bad News

***The gospel addresses the dire effects of human sin, failure and need. Human beings rebelled against God, rejected God's authority and disobeyed God's Word. In this sinful state, we are alienated from God, from one another and from the created order. Sin deserves God's condemnation. Those who refuse to repent and 'do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be punished with eternal destruction and shut out from the presence of God.'*** (CTC)

- 2A. **Read Genesis 3:1-13.** This chapter, often identified as 'The Fall,' tells the story of '**the dire effects of human sin, failure and need.**' As the CTC statement above says, Adam and Eve '**rebelled against God, rejected God's authority and disobeyed God's Word.**' (CTC) List the steps Adam and Eve took that would link them with one or more of these actions.



Step	
1.	4....
2.	
3.	

2B. ***In this sinful state, we are alienated from God, from one another and from the created order.*** (CTC) Read **Genesis 3:16-24**. List phrases that reflect each aspect of humankind’s sinful state.



Phrase from Genesis 3:16-24	Alienated from God	Alienated from One Another	Alienated from the Created Order

2C. Reflect on a time recently when you sinned. As a result of your sin, which of these three consequences (alienation from God, from others or from the created order) did you experience? Explain.



2D. These three earthly consequences are sad enough! However, the Bible makes clear, as reinforced in the CTC statement at the beginning of Day Two, that we don’t just experience sin’s consequences here on earth. We also experience eternal consequences, if no provision for our sin is ever obtained. According to the following scriptures, list phrases that describe the nature of these eternal consequences.

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9**

**Matthew 7:13-14**

**Revelation 20:14-15**

**Revelation 21:8, 27**

2E. Visualize someone you know and love experiencing these consequences. How do you feel about this?

In light of such a challenging reality, what is your heart attitude toward someone you know of another faith, or someone who feels called to minister to those of another faith? Be honest.

2F. To be fully reminded of the effects of sin and the power of evil for those without Christ, including those of other faiths, read the following paragraph alone and/or as a small group:



***The effects of sin and the power of evil have corrupted every dimension of human personhood (spiritual, physical, intellectual and relational). They have permeated cultural, economic, social, political and religious life through all cultures and all generations of history. They have caused incalculable misery to the human race and damage to God’s creation. Against this bleak background, the biblical gospel is indeed very good news.*** (CTC)

Close your time with the Lord today, thanking him that the gospel is indeed such very good news! Pray for three non-Christians with whom you would like to share the gospel’s good news in the coming months, including one who is presently of another faith. Pray about one step you could take to deepen your relationship with one of them this coming week.

## Day Three: Loving the Story the Gospel Tells

- 3A. *Paul defines the gospel by stating that 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter and then to the Twelve.'* (CTC)



**Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-5.** These verses summarize the gospel. List below each section of the gospel story as if they were continuous chapters in the same book.

Chapter One  
Chapter Two

Chapter Three  
Chapter Four

How might the above outline of the gospel story help you when you are trying to share the story with someone who has never heard it before?

- 3B. *The gospel declares that, on the cross of Christ, God took upon himself, in the person of his Son and in our place, the judgment our sin deserves. In the same great saving act, completed, vindicated and declared through the resurrection, God won the decisive victory over Satan, death and all evil powers, liberated us from their power and fear, and ensured their eventual destruction. God accomplished the reconciliation of believers with himself and with one another across all boundaries and enmities.* (CTC)



Chapter one of the gospel story centers on the death of Christ. In light of the following scriptures, list the accomplishments of the cross. Where possible, connect each verse to a phrase from the CTC statement above:

Accomplishments of the Cross

Phrase of CTC Statement

**Ephesians 2:14-18**

**Colossians 1:20-22**

**Colossians 2:15**

**Hebrews 2:14-15**

**1 Peter 2:24**

- 3C. Chapter three of the gospel story focuses on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The CTC statement says that *God also accomplished his purpose of the ultimate reconciliation of all creation, and in the bodily resurrection of Jesus has given us the first fruits of the new creation. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.'* *How we love the gospel story!* (CTC)



What insights do these scriptures give into what was accomplished by the resurrection of Christ?

**Ephesians 1:18-23**

**Ephesians 2:4-6**

**Philippians 3:10-11**

- 3D. If you were telling someone in your own words what Christ accomplished for them through his death and resurrection, how would you summarize your discoveries from Question 3B and 3C? Keep your explanation simple, while attempting to be thorough.



3E. *How we love the gospel story!* End your time with Jesus today singing the following hymn, thanking him for the precious story that has changed your life. Ask the Lord for fresh courage to share this magnificent story with someone without faith or someone of another faith you may meet this week.

Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard.

Tell of the cross where they nailed him,  
Writhing in anguish and pain.  
Tell of the grave where they laid him,  
Tell how he liveth again.

## Day Four: Loving the Assurance the Gospel Brings

4A. ***Solely through trusting in Christ alone, we are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and are counted righteous in Christ before God. Being justified by faith we have peace with God and no longer face condemnation. We receive the forgiveness of our sins. We are born again into a living hope by sharing Christ's risen life. (CTC)***



Use the following verses to defend this CTC statement:

**Romans 5:1-2**

**Romans 8:1-2**

**Ephesians 1:7-8**

**1 Peter 1:3**

Express thanks to God below for one amazing implication from these truths for your relationship with Christ today. Be as specific as possible, tying your gratitude to a present life circumstance.

4B. ***We are adopted as fellow heirs with Christ. We become citizens of God's covenant people, members of God's family and the place of God's dwelling. So by trusting in Christ, we have full assurance of salvation and eternal life, for our salvation ultimately depends, not on ourselves, but on the work of Christ and the promise of God. 'Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' How we love the gospel's promise. (CTC)***

What additional reassurances come to us when we believe and love the good news of the gospel? List these reassurances from the verses below as confirmations of the CTC statement above:

**Galatians 3:26-4:7**

**Ephesians 2:19-22**

**1 John 5:12-13**

**Romans 8:31-39**

Which one of these promises would you most like to share with someone you know of another faith? Write out below what you would like to say to him/her.

Now pray for the opportunity to tell them about this startling reassurance awaiting them if they place their hope in Christ alone.

4C. Close your time of worship today by singing from your heart the following song:



***In Christ alone, I place my trust  
And find my glory in the power of the cross.  
In every victory, let it be said of me.  
My source of strength, my source of hope is Christ alone.***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfYZgxV3g4w> YouTube video of Brian Littrell

## Day Five: Loving the Transformation the Gospel Produces

5A. ***Paul saw the ethical transformation that the gospel produces as the work of God's grace – grace which achieved our salvation at Christ's first coming, and grace that teaches us to live ethically in the light of his second coming. (CTC)***



**Read Titus 2:11-14.** In what ways do these verses challenge you to live an ethical lifestyle? List the specifics of this kind of lifestyle in light of Christ's first and second comings. To add a personal touch, write each statement as an 'I desire....' statement.

*I desire . . .*

5B. ***For Paul, 'obeying the gospel' meant both trusting in grace, and then being taught by grace. Paul's missional goal was to bring about 'the obedience of faith' among all nations. (CTC)*** Jesus and the apostle John both shared Paul's goal of teaching others obedience that comes from faith. Use the following scriptures to review this common thread of all three teachers:



**Romans 15:18-19, 16:26  
John 14:21  
1 John 2:3**

What are the benefits of knowing that not one, but three biblical instructors taught the same truth?

5C. How might their missional goals help shape your own mission as you endeavor to disciple other believers within your sphere of influence? Be specific. How will you challenge each of your disciples to be people of not just faith but action as well?



Focus on one disciple. Write out your action plan for discipling him/her in both FAITH **and** ACTION as a means of teaching him/her to love the transformation the gospel produces. In your plan, how could you include a desire to help him/her see people of other faiths transformed by the power of the gospel?

From completing this lesson, how has your own conviction deepened to bring the transformation of the gospel to people of other faiths? Explain.

## Lesson Seven ~ Discerning the Will of the Spirit for Evangelization of the World's Cities

Warm-Up: Watch Tim Keller's 'World Faiths – What is God's Global Urban Mission?

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11644>

' Describe your personal response to Tim's three main points. We must reach the cities and why. We **can** reach the cities and how. Why we can reach the cities. Do you agree or disagree with Tim's premise regarding cities being so strategic for world evangelization? Explain.

### Day One: Giving Urgent Strategic Attention to the Cities As A High Priority for World Evangelization

1A. Tim Keller quotes the following from the CTC as an answer to the question:



**'WHY MUST WE REACH THE CITIES?' Because half of the world's population is there. Because the young are there, the unreached people groups are more open to the gospel there. because the people at the top who have the biggest impact on culture are there and because the poor, the people at the bottom, are there. (CTC)**

Which of the above reasons for reaching cities most moves your heart to pray for, give to or personally get involved with the cities of our world today? Explain why you are drawn to this particular aspect of city involvement.

1B. Unreached people groups are more open to the gospel in cities. The CTC says the following about unreached and unengaged people groups:



**The heart of God longs that all people should have access to the knowledge of God's love and of his saving work through Jesus Christ. We recognize with grief and shame that there are thousands of people groups around the world for whom such access has not yet been made available through Christian witness. These are peoples who are unreached, in the sense that there are no known believers and no churches among them. Many of these peoples are also unengaged, in the sense that we currently know of no churches or agencies that are even trying to share the gospel with them. Indeed, only a tiny percentage of the Church's resources (human and material) is being directed to the least-reached peoples. By definition these are peoples who will not invite us to come with the good news, since they know nothing about it. Yet their presence among us in our world 2,000 years after Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations, constitutes not only a rebuke to our disobedience, not only a form of spiritual injustice, but also a silent 'Macedonian Call'. (CTC)**

**Read Acts 16:6-15.** What experiences with the Spirit did Paul's team have prior to the 'Macedonian Call'? How might these experiences have prepared Paul to receive the call when the Lord gave it?

1C. **List each phrase of Acts 16:9-10.** What insights might each phrase reveal about how to listen to and/or hear God?

1D. By responding to the Macedonian Call, Paul and his team went to an unreached/unengaged people group. Pray today for one person or mission you know that has received a Macedonian Call to an unreached or unengaged people group in one of today's cities.



1E. **We discern the sovereign hand of God in the massive rise of urbanization in our time, and we urge Church and mission leaders worldwide to respond to this fact by giving urgent strategic attention to urban mission. We must love our cities as God does, with holy discernment and Christ-like compassion,**

***and obey his command to 'seek the welfare of the city', wherever that may be. We will seek to learn appropriate and flexible methods of mission that respond to urban realities. (CTC)***

**Read Jeremiah 29:7.** What commands are given regarding how we are to relate to the city? What reassurance is promised if the city prospers?

Commands

Reassurance

1F. Tim Keller offers the following answers to this question, '**HOW CAN WE REACH THE CITIES?**'

***The Church must . . .***

***Be always patient with cultural sensitivities***

***Be constantly open to disorder and change***

***Be intensely evangelistic and famous for its concern for justice***

***Be attentive to the arts***

***Be cooperative with other believers across denominational lines***

Through your own church experience, with which of Tim's above answers have you personally invested yourself? Or which one of these actions have you witnessed another church doing well? Explain.

Give a positive example of how you or someone you know has integrated your/their work with your/their faith.

1G. To the question, '**WHY CAN WE REACH THE CITIES?**', Tim Keller answers . . . ***because we have the answers in Christ. He is our great High Priest.***

How can these descriptions of Christ as our High Priest give us hope for the cities' people?

**Hebrews 4:15-16**

**Hebrews 7:26**

Pray today to your great High Priest, on behalf of three city-dwellers you know who need Jesus as their great High Priest. Thank Him for His great love for the cities of our world.

## Day Two: Loving the Holy Spirit Who Breathes Life and Power into God's Evangelistic Missionary Church

2A. A missionary is often defined as one who has been sent. From the following scriptures, what insights can you glean about the missionary Father, the missionary Son and the missionary Holy Spirit as sending agents? In particular, notice who sent whom and for what purpose(s).

Missionary Father

Missionary Son

Missionary Spirit

Missionary Church

**John 6:38, 8:26, 29**

**John 14:26**

**John 15:26, 27**

**John 16:7-14**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

2B. Meditate on the following hymn. Underline fresh insights gleaned about what it means to be sent by the Father, Spirit and Son with their missionary heart for the world, particularly its cities.

So send I you to labor unrewarded  
To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown  
To bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing  
So send I you to toil for Me alone

So send I you to bind the bruised and broken  
Over wandering souls to work, to weep, to wake  
To bear the burdens of a world a-weary  
So send I you to suffer for My sake

So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred  
To eyes made blind because they will not see  
To spend, though it be blood to spend and spare not  
So send I you to taste of Calvary

'As the Father hath sent me, so send I you'

Use one line from this hymn as a launching pad for prayer below about your own response to being sent on a mission by the Trinity to one of the world's cities for God's glory.

2C. ***We love and pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit because without the witness of the Spirit to Christ, our own witness is futile. (CTC)***

Read John 16:12-16. List phrases from these verses that echo the truths of the CTC statement above.

2D. ***Without the convicting work of the Spirit, our preaching is in vain. When he comes he will convict the world of sin. (CTC)***

Read John 16:7-11. List phrases from these verses that echo the truths of the CTC statement above.

2E. **Read Acts 2:36-41, 16:14-15.** What examples do you find in these stories that demonstrate someone being convicted by the Spirit of God?



2F. ***Without the gifts, guidance and power of the Spirit, our mission is mere human effort. And without the fruit of the Spirit, our unattractive lives cannot reflect the beauty of the gospel. (CTC)***

Read Romans 8:5, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Galatians 5:16-25. List phrases from these verses that echo the truths of the CTC statement above.



2G. Even if all the gifts were present, what would the Church be like if none of the fruit of the Spirit were evident (*ie* no love, no joy, no peace, *etc*)?



2H. What would the Church be like if it had all the fruit of the Spirit but no gifts (*ie* no teaching, mercy, administration, leadership, *etc*)?



2I. Take a few moments to thank the Holy Spirit for giving his gifts **and** his fruit to his missionary Church. Thank him, in particular, for how his gifts **and** fruit benefit the cities of our world.



## Day Three: Identifying the Holy Spirit's Evangelistic Activity in the Old and New Testaments

### 3A. *In the Old Testament we see the Spirit of God active in creation, in works of liberation and justice, and in filling and empowering people for every kind of service. (CTC)*



Read the following passages, noting below ways the Spirit of God was active or inactive in the Old Testament in one or more of the ways mentioned in the CTC statement above. How might each activity have empowered Israel's evangelistic influence on the nations and cities around them?

CTC

Evangelistic Influence

**Genesis 1:26**

**Exodus 31:2-6**

**Isaiah 61:1-3**

**Micah 3:6**

In these same ways (i.e. in creation, liberation, justice or service), the Spirit of God is still active today through individual believers, churches and Christian organizations. Describe one believer, one church or one Christian organization that you appreciate for one of these four ways that they serve Christ in our cities. Choose someone you can thank in the coming week for serving Christ in one of these ways.

### 3B. *Spirit-filled prophets looked forward to the coming King and Servant, whose Person and work would be endowed with God's Spirit. Prophets also looked to the coming age that would be marked by the outpouring of God's Spirit, bringing new life, fresh obedience, and prophetic gifting to all the people of God, young and old, men and women. (CTC)*

In what ways did the Spirit of God **speak** through the prophets in the following Old Testament passages in similar ways as suggested in the CTC statement above?

**Joel 2:28-29**

**Isaiah 61:1-3**

**Ezekiel 11:19**

### 3C. How different life would have been for Old Testament believers if they had never experienced the ministry of the prophets. If you had been an Old Testament believer, describe one or two ways you feel your life would have been lacking if there had been no prophets during your lifetime.

3D.



***At Pentecost God poured out his Holy Spirit as promised by the prophets and by Jesus. The sanctifying Spirit produces his fruit in the lives of believers, and the first fruit is always love. The Spirit fills the Church with his gifts, which we 'eagerly desire' as the indispensable equipment for Christian service. The Spirit gives us power for mission and for the great variety of works of service. The Spirit enables us to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel, to discern the truth, to pray effectively and to prevail over the forces of darkness. The Spirit inspires and accompanies our worship. The Spirit strengthens and comforts disciples who are persecuted or on trial for their witness to Christ. (CTC)***

Read the following passages. For each passage, choose a phrase from the CTC statement above that most closely identifies with a phrase from the passage. Notice which scenes took place in a city or which letters were written to a city.

- |                              |     |                 |      |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------|------|
|                              | CTC | Biblical Phrase | City |
| <b>Acts 2:1-4</b>            |     |                 |      |
| <b>Galatians 5:22</b>        |     |                 |      |
| <b>1 Corinthians 12:4-13</b> |     |                 |      |
| <b>Acts 2:22-24</b>          |     |                 |      |
| <b>Ephesians 3:14-21</b>     |     |                 |      |
| <b>Acts 16:25</b>            |     |                 |      |

3E. **Read Acts 16:16-34.** What demonstrations of the Spirit's power can you find in this story? Allow the CTC statement at the beginning of Questions 3D to guide you in your discoveries.



Activity

Demonstration of the Spirit's power

3F. When recently have you experienced one of these demonstrations of the Spirit's power at work in your life? Describe your experience.



### Day Four: Engaging in Purposeful, Fruitful Evangelistic Mission in Our Cities by the Presence, Guidance and Power of the Holy Spirit

***Our engagement in mission, then, is pointless and fruitless without the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. All we do in the name of Christ must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament makes this clear in the life of the early Church and the teaching of the apostles. It is being demonstrated today in the fruitfulness and growth of Churches where Jesus' followers act confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit, with dependence and expectation. (CTC)***

4A. For today's study, match the following city scenes from Paul's missionary journeys from Acts with one or more of the phrases describing the Spirit's powerful work from the CTC statement above.



<b>Acts 13:1-3 (Antioch)</b> <b>Acts 16:6-10 (Macedonia)</b>	Suffering, enduring under persecution
<b>Acts 14:8-10 (Lystra, Derbe)</b> <b>Acts 16:19-40 (Philippi)</b>	Peace-making
<b>Acts 14:19-20 (Antioch, Iconium, Derbe)</b>	Casting out demonic spirits
<b>Acts 14:21-24 (Derbe, Lystra, Iconium)</b>	Presence, guidance of the Holy Spirit
<b>Acts 15:1-35 (Jerusalem)</b>	Ethical transformation/social engagement
<b>Acts 16:16-18 (Philippi)</b>	Evangelism
<b>Acts 19:23-41 (Ephesus)</b>	Bearing witness to the truth, Discipling
<b>Acts 16:16-19 (Philippi)</b> <b>Acts 17:10-12 (Berea)</b>	Healing the sick



4B. Reflect on a ministry opportunity you have had recently when you sensed the Spirit's power working through you. Perhaps you listened to the heart of a friend or family member or taught a class or shared Christ with a co-worker. Could any of the above CTC descriptions of God's Spirit at work be used to describe your situation? Explain.



4C. Ask God today to allow you to be used by his Spirit in someone else's life.

## Day Five: Rejoicing in the Authentic Work of the Spirit in Our Cities, while Recognizing and Rejecting False Manifestations

***There is no true or whole gospel, and no authentic biblical mission, without the Person, work and power of the Holy Spirit. We pray for a greater awakening to this biblical truth, and for its experience to be reality in all parts of the worldwide body of Christ. However, we are aware of the many abuses that masquerade under the name of the Holy Spirit, the many ways in which all kinds of phenomena are practiced and praised which are not the gifts of the Holy Spirit as clearly taught in the New Testament. There is great need for more profound discernment, for clear warnings against delusion, for the exposure of fraudulent and self-serving manipulators who abuse spiritual power for their own ungodly enrichment. Above all there is a great need for sustained biblical teaching and preaching, soaked in humble prayer, that will equip ordinary believers to understand and rejoice in the true gospel and to recognize and reject false gospels. (CTC)***

5A. From reading the following passages, what masquerading abuses, delusions or false identifications with the Spirit's power can you find?

**Acts 8:9-25**

**Galatians 1:1-10, 4:8-20**



5B. Have you ever experienced any false manifestations of the Spirit's power from someone who claimed to be a follower of Christ?

If your answer is 'yes,' what were your main conclusions or insights from this experience?

If your answer is 'no,' thank the Lord for protecting you from such abuses.

5C. What steps can you take to make sure you aren't drawn toward such false manifestations of the Spirit in the future?



5D. Allow the CTC statement below to lead you/your small group to prayer. Ask that every aspect of your ministry would always be empowered by the Holy Spirit as described here:

***Our engagement in mission, then, is pointless and fruitless without the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. All we do in the name of Christ must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament makes this clear in the life of the early Church and the teaching of the apostles. It is being demonstrated today in the fruitfulness and growth of Churches where Jesus' followers act confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit, with dependence and expectation. (CTC)***



## Lesson Eight ~ Discerning the Will of the Father for the Evangelization of Children

Warm-Up: Watching this video on the evangelization of children.

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11563>

What is your personal response to this statement, ‘We, the body of Christ, have a significant part to play in shaping the next generation?’ Describe one way you have you been moved by this challenge from this video.

### Day One: Understanding the Father’s Strategic, Loving Heart for the Evangelization of Children

***All children are at risk. There are about two billion children in our world, and half of them are at risk from poverty. Millions are at risk from prosperity. Children of the wealthy and secure have everything to live with, but nothing to live for.***

***Children and young people are the Church of today, not merely of tomorrow. Young people have great potential as active agents in God’s mission. They represent an enormous under-used pool of influencers with sensitivity to the voice of God and a willingness to respond to him. We rejoice in the excellent ministries that serve among and with children, and long for such work to be multiplied since the need is so great. As we see in the Bible, God can and does use children and young people - their prayers, their insights, their words, their initiatives - in changing hearts. They represent ‘new energy’ to transform the world. Let us listen and not stifle their childlike spirituality with our adult rationalistic approaches. (CTC)***

1A. In what ways do you see God choosing to use children or young people in the following passages? Categorize their ministry involvements according to the CTC categories above:



	Their Prayers	Their Insights	Their Words	Their Initiatives
1 Samuel 3:1-20 Samuel				
2 Chronicles 34:1-4 Josiah				
Luke 2:42-52 Jesus				

Which of these three children’s activities, in both deed and word, are most unfamiliar and therefore perhaps most challenging to you? Write a prayer below, thanking God that ‘a little child may lead them’ (Isaiah 11:6) as you reflect on how this child’s example has freshly motivated you toward Christ-like living.

1C. **We commit ourselves to:**

**A) Take children seriously, through fresh biblical and theological inquiry that reflects on God's love and purpose for them and through them, and by rediscovering the profound significance for theology and mission of Jesus' provocative action in placing 'a child in the midst'.**

**Read Mark 9:33-37.** The disciples were arguing about who was the greatest. Jesus teaches them about true servanthood by placing a child in their midst. What are the most difficult challenges and some of the most delightful joys we as adults face when we are blessed with welcoming a child into our midst?

Difficult Challenges

Delightful Joys

From creating these two lists, describe one aspect of servanthood you can learn from being around children.

1D. **We commit ourselves to:**

**B) Seek to train people and provide resources to meet the needs of children worldwide, wherever possible working with their families and communities, in the conviction that holistic ministry to and through each next generation of children and young people is a vital component of world mission.**

**Read Acts 6:1-7.** In this biblical setting, a group of people were being neglected, namely the Grecian widows. The apostles took this neglect seriously. What steps did they take to meet needs that had previously been ignored?

How might we apply this same diligence to meet the needs of children worldwide? Give one example of an organization or church group where you have witnessed a similar determination to 'not neglect the daily needs' of children?

Since all children are at risk, whether in poverty or prosperity, what risks are the children you described above facing? Explain how you can pray for them as a result.

1E. **We commit ourselves to:**

**C) Expose, resist, and take action against all abuse of children, including violence, exploitation, slavery, trafficking, prostitution, gender and ethnic discrimination, commercial targeting, and willful neglect.**

Watch the following video regarding abused children and youth. <http://www.hhch.org/>  
What aspect of this video moved you most deeply?

**Read Exodus 1:8-21.** What were the specifics of the abuse the Israelites were facing? How did God use the midwives to offer them protection and relief?

How might this story offer hope regarding the greatness of our God and how he protects his people from abuse through the provision of other people?

Pray today for the world's children who still need a 'midwife' to intervene and stop their abuse.

## Day Two: Knowing God the Father through His Son and the Spirit

***Through Jesus Christ, God’s Son, and through him alone as the way, the truth and the life – we come to know and love God as Father. As the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children, so we cry the words Jesus prayed, ‘Abba, Father’, and we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, ‘Our Father’. Our love for Jesus, proved by obeying him, is met by the Father’s love for us as the Father and the Son make their home in us, in mutual giving and receiving of love. This intimate relationship has deep biblical foundations. (CTC)***

2A. What insights do the following scriptures reveal as to how we can know God the Father through a relationship with his Son and the Spirit? With each scripture, complete the following phrase—‘I can know God the Father because . . .’—, first grounding your statement in the Word of God. In the second column, expand your biblical insight into a testimony of your own personal experience of how you have come to know the Father through the Son and the Spirit.



‘I can know God the Father because . . .’

Grounded in the Word

Grounded in my personal experience

John 14:6

. . . because

. . . because

Romans 8:14-16

. . . because

. . . because

2B. **Read John 14:8-9.** In what ways did Philip reveal that he did not fully understand the truths about his Heavenly Father revealed to us in John 14:6 and Romans 8:14-16?

2C. Thank the Father for giving you his Son and Spirit so you could come to know him more fully as your Abba Daddy. Ask Abba’s forgiveness for any way in which you have been tempted, as you pray, to agree with Philip when he said to Jesus, ‘Show us the Father and it will be enough for us,’ because you haven’t fully realized that you are able to get to know the Father through the Son and the Spirit.



2D. Write a prayer to your Abba Daddy, telling him how much you love him for choosing to reveal himself to you through Jesus, his Son and through his Holy Spirit. Thank him for one aspect of his nature that delights you because you know Jesus.



Thank your Heavenly Father for a second aspect of his nature that brings you sheer joy because you know the Spirit.

2E. Pray today for one child you know who does not know the Father through his Son or through his Spirit. Ask God for an opportunity to share the love of the Father with him/her. Write your prayer below:

## Day Three: Loving God as the Father of His Children

***We love God as the Father of His people. Old Testament Israel knew God as Father, as the one who brought them into existence, carried them and disciplined them, called for their obedience, longed for their love, and exercised compassionate forgiveness and patient enduring love. All these remain true for us as God's people in Christ in our relationship with our Father God. (CTC)***



- 3A. **Read Psalm 78**, a psalm that reviews Israel's history. Write out one verse from this psalm that matches each phrase from the CTC repeated below. Choose one verse for each phrase that means the most to you, as there may be several verses for each phrase.

*We love God as the Father of his people.*

*Old Testament Israel knew God as Father, as the one who brought them into existence,*

*carried them*

*and disciplined them,*

*called for their obedience,*

*longed for their love,*

*and exercised compassionate forgiveness and patient enduring love.*

- 3B. If you had been an Israelite, which verse from this psalm and accompanying phrase from the CTC would have been the richest expression to your own heart of God's desire to be a Father to his people? Why?



- 3C. **All these remain true for us as God's people in Christ in our relationship with our Father God. (CTC)**  
In reviewing Psalm 78's matching verses with the CTC statement above, which verse that 'remains true for us as God's people' strikes the deepest cord in your own heart?

***Using this verse as a springboard***, write a prayer to your Father God describing where you presently are in your own relationship with him. Be as honest as you can, using as many feeling words as possible. Perhaps the following phrases could be helpful to get you started. 'Abba Father, I'm grateful that, OR I'm angry that, OR I'm humbled that, I'm sorry that, I'm upset that, I'm longing that, I'm eager to, etc.'

- 3D. Pick a country of the world with which you feel a deep connection other than your own. Pray today for the children of that country, that they will be able to know God as their Heavenly Father. Pray for Christian workers there giving their full attention to children, like the deacons in Acts 6:1-6.

## Day Four: Loving God as the Father Who Gave Us His Son

***We love God as the Father, who so loved the world that he gave his only Son for our salvation. How great the Father's love for us that we should be called the children of God. How immeasurable the love of the Father who did not spare his only Son, but gave him up for us all. This love of the Father in giving the Son was mirrored by the self-giving love of the Son. There was complete harmony of will in the work of atonement that the Father and the Son accomplished at the cross, through the eternal Spirit. The Father loved the world and***

***gave his Son; 'the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me.' This unity of Father and Son, affirmed by Jesus himself, is echoed in Paul's most repeated greeting of 'grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins...according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (CTC)***



4A. The CTC statement above speaks of the sacrifice the Father made in giving us his Son reciprocated by the sacrifice that Christ made in giving himself on our behalf. Read the following verses. Identify which verses speak to which sacrifice.

Verses	Sacrifice of Father	Sacrifice of Son
<b>John 3:16</b>		
<b>Romans 8:32</b>		
<b>Galatians 1:3-5</b>		
<b>Hebrews 9:14</b>		
<b>1 John 3:1</b>		
<b>Philippians 2:5-8</b>		
<b>Hebrews 12:2-3</b>		

4B. When recently have you experienced someone sacrificing something on your behalf? What was your response? Did you take it for granted or were you truly grateful? How did you express/not express your gratitude? Explain.

4C. **Read Matthew 26:36-46.** What insights can you glean about Christ's honest response to the sacrifice he was about to make on your behalf?



Envision this scene from your Heavenly Father's perspective. How difficult must it have been for him to turn down his only Son's repeated request? Compare or contrast the Father's degree of difficulty in saying 'no' with a time recently when you have chosen to say 'yes' or 'no' to a request someone you love has made of you? A child? A dear friend? A relative? A work associate?



3E. Christ said 'yes' to the most difficult sacrifice he would ever have to make. The Father said 'no' to his only Son's most desperate heart cry. Both of them made these sacrifices for the 'joy set before them' (Hebrews 12:2) accomplished on our behalf (*ie* our salvation, our sanctification, our resurrection power, our being able to draw on the fruit of the Spirit, *etc.*) How can Christ's 'Hebrews 12:2 joy' and the Father's assumed joy as well, deepen your **own** joy regarding the benefits you received from the Father and the Son's mutual sacrifices? Write a prayer to your Heavenly Father, thanking him for **your deep joy** birthed from **his initial deep sorrow**. Include in your prayer your gratitude that they both made these sacrifices for all the little children of the world.

Dear Heavenly Father,

Just think! Our Father God turned down a request of his only begotten Son so he could say 'yes' to the requests and benefits he could give to those he chose to adopt into his family (Ephesians 1:5) as a result of his only Son's sacrifice.

## Day Five: Loving the Father Whose Character We Reflect, Whose Care We Trust

***We love God as the Father whose character we reflect and whose care we trust. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus repeatedly points to our heavenly Father as the model or focus for our action. We are to be peacemakers, as sons of God. We are to do good deeds, so that our Father receives the praise. We are to love our enemies in reflection of God's Fatherly love. We are to practice our giving, praying and fasting for our Father's eyes only. We are to forgive others as our Father forgives us. We are to have no anxiety but trust in our Father's provision. With such behavior flowing from Christian character, we do the will of our Father in heaven, within the kingdom of God. (CTC)***

5A. ***We are to be peacemakers, as sons of God. (CTC) Read Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18 and James 3:17-18.*** According to these scriptures, as a peacemaker, what character traits of your Heavenly Father are you to reflect? (See Study Note #1)



5B. ***We are to do good deeds, so that our Father receives the praise. (CTC) Read Matthew 5:13-16.*** What character traits of your Heavenly Father are you to reflect as a doer of good deeds?



5C. ***We are to love our enemies in reflection of God's Fatherly love. (CTC) Read Matthew 5:38-48.*** What principles are given for how to relate to our enemies?



5D. ***We are to practice our giving, praying and fasting for our Father's eyes only. (CTC) Read Matthew 6:16-21, 24.*** What principles of fasting and giving are we challenged to model?



5E. ***We are to forgive others as our Father forgives us. (CTC) Read Matthew 6:12-15, 18:21-22.*** What challenges and/or warnings about forgiveness are listed in these scriptures?



5F. ***We are to have no anxiety but trust in our Father's provision. (CTC) Read Matthew 6:25-34.*** What fresh insights do you see about how to trust your Father's ability to provide for you?



5G. Which aspect of the character of the Father do you most need in your own life right now (5A-5F)? What one step can you take this week to help that part of your Heavenly Father's character?



5H. List five children you know. Pray for each of them to be able to know their Heavenly Father well enough to reflect his character as they grow up...to become peacemakers, doers of good deeds, loving their enemies, practicing giving and forgiving.

Pray for the children of the country on which you focused in question 3D. Ask that they too would have opportunity to get to know their Heavenly Father well enough to reflect his character.

## Lesson Nine ~ Calling the Church of the Living God Back to Humility, Integrity and Simplicity

*Warm-Up:* Watch the video regarding God's call to a life of simplicity, integrity and humility, <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11556>

How do you respond to Chris Wright's challenge that the biggest single obstacle to world evangelization is idolatry—the idols of power and pride, popularity and success, and wealth and greed? Which idol is most tempting for you to worship and serve above the Living God?

### Day One: Walking in Distinctiveness as the Living God's New Humanity

- 1A. ***Walking is the biblical metaphor for our way of life and daily conduct. Seven times in Ephesians Paul speaks of how Christians should, or should not, walk.***



***Walking in distinctiveness, as God's new humanity. The people of God either walk in the way of the Lord, or walk in the ways of other gods. The Bible shows that God's greatest problem is not just with the nations of the world, but with the people he has created and called to be the means of blessing the nations. And the biggest obstacle to fulfilling that mission is idolatry among God's own people. For if we are called to bring the nations to worship the only true and living God, we fail miserably if we ourselves are running after the false gods of the people around us.***

***When there is no distinction in conduct between Christians and non-Christians - for example in the practice of corruption and greed, or sexual promiscuity, or rate of divorce, or relapse to pre-Christian religious practice, or attitudes towards people of other races, or consumerist lifestyles, or social prejudice - then the world is right to wonder if our Christianity makes any difference at all. Our message carries no authenticity to a watching world. (CTC)***

**Read Ephesians 4:17-32.** What distinctive lifestyle choices are believers to make, to set themselves apart from the world as God's new humanity?

Which choice challenges you the most to a distinctive lifestyle for Christ? Why?

- 1B. During your personal study, read the following aloud as a means of recommitting to a radical distinctiveness from the ways of the world. When your small group meets, recommit together to this same radical distinctiveness by reading the following in unison.

***Since there is no biblical mission without biblical living, we urgently re-commit ourselves, and challenge all those who profess the name of Christ, to live in radical distinctiveness from the ways of the world, to 'put on the new humanity, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.'*** (CTC)



- 1C. ***Walking in love, rejecting the idolatry of disordered sexuality.*** *God's design in creation is that marriage is constituted by the committed, faithful relationship between one man and one woman, in which they become one flesh in a new social unity that is distinct from their birth families, and that sexual intercourse as the expression of that 'one flesh' is to be enjoyed exclusively within the bond of marriage. This loving sexual union within marriage, in which 'two become one', reflects both Christ's relationship with the Church and also the unity of Jew and Gentile in the new humanity. (CTC)*

***Paul contrasts the purity of God's love with the ugliness of counterfeit love that masquerades in disordered sexuality and all that goes along with it. Disordered sexuality of all kinds, in any practice of sexual intimacy before or outside marriage as biblically defined, is out of line with God's will and blessing in creation and redemption. The abuse and idolatry that surrounds disordered sexuality contributes to wider social decline, including the breakdown of marriages and families and produces incalculable suffering of loneliness and exploitation. It is a serious issue within the Church itself, and it is a tragically common cause of leadership failure. (CTC)***

**Read I Corinthians 6:15-20, Ephesians 5:31-32 and Romans 1:20-27.** What principles and/or examples of righteous or unrighteous living are given in these passages that reinforce different phrases from the CTC statement above?

Righteous living (by principle or example)

Unrighteous living (by principle or example)

- 1D. Which principle or example do you find most convicting?



Which one encourages you the most when you think of old habit patterns you have overcome since surrendering your life to Christ?

- 1E. During your personal study, read the following aloud as a means of recommitting to a radical distinctiveness from the ways of the world. When your small group meets, recommit together to this same radical lifestyle by a reading of the following:

***Group A: We recognize our need for deep humility and consciousness of failure in this area. We long to see Christians challenging our surrounding cultures by living according to the standards to which the Bible calls us.***

***Group B: As members of the Church we commit ourselves:***

***To do all we can in the Church and in society to strengthen faithful marriages and healthy family life;***

***Group A: To recognize the presence and contribution of those who are single, widowed, or childless, to ensure the church is a welcoming and sustaining family in Christ, and to enable them to exercise their gifts in the full range of the church's ministries;***

***Group B: To resist the multiple forms of disordered sexuality in our surrounding cultures, including pornography, adultery and promiscuity;***

***Group A: To seek to understand and address the deep heart issues of identity and experience which draw some people into homosexual practice; to reach out with the love, compassion and justice of Christ, and to reject and condemn all forms of hatred, verbal or physical abuse, and victimization of homosexual people;***



**Group B: To remember that by God’s redemptive grace no person or situation is beyond the possibility of change and restoration. (CTC)**

### Day Two: Loving the Living God Above All Rivals

***'We love God above all rivals. We are commanded to love and worship the living God alone. But like Old Testament Israel we allow our love for God to be adulterated by going after the gods of this world, the gods of the people around us. We fall into syncretism, \* enticed by many gods such as greed, power and success, serving mammon rather than God.'* (CTC)**

**\* an attempt to reconcile opposing viewpoints**



**2A. Read Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 5-8, 6:1-3.** What stipulations did God add related to his commands, as the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land? What benefits would they gain from the nations for their obedience? What personal benefits were promised if they chose to obey?

Personal benefits gained as a result of their obedience	Stipulations of commands	Benefits for obedience gained as they related to other nations



**2B.** All of these benefits are not necessarily promised to us personally today. If you had been an Israelite, which benefit would have been most attractive to you as a motivation to obey? Why?

**2C.** Why do you suppose the Israelites were warned in Deuteronomy 4:2 not to add to or subtract from these commands? How would their obedience to this stipulation have kept them from the sin of syncretism, which can be defined as *'a combination of different beliefs'* or *'an attempt to reconcile opposing viewpoints?'*



**2D.** Is there an area in your life where you are compromising and/or tempted to compromise your intimacy with Christ or your desire to live whole-heartedly for him? Explain.

Pray and ask the Lord for the courage to remove this area completely from your life right now. You might want to ask a trusted friend to pray for you as you endeavor to break an old habit, refuse to revert to an old 'god' or choose to no longer hide a secret sin.

### Day Three: Loving the Living God with a Passion for His Glory

**3A. Read Isaiah 45:23-24 and Philippians 2:9-11.** What similarities and differences do you see between these Old and New Testament descriptions of God’s passions? List the actions of God and His motivations for each one.

Actions of God	Similarities	Differences

--	--	--

3B. When you picture this event in your mind, what is your emotional response to the activity of God in these verses?

3C. Perhaps it is more difficult to live for God’s glory only when we **are** facing challenging circumstances. Read about the choices of the following women, each of whom was facing a taxing her central focus so that she might live for his glory?



	What she chose	What she said
<b>Luke 1:23-25</b> (Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist)		
<b>Luke 1:34-38</b> (Mary, mother of Jesus)		
<b>Esther 4:12-17</b> (Queen Esther)		

3D. By contrast, what choices did the each of following women make at similar taxing moments that revealed alternative heart priorities than the glory of God?



	What she chose	What she said
<b>Genesis 16:1-5</b>		
<b>Job 2:7-10</b>		
<b>Acts 5:1-11</b>		

3E. Which example, either positive or negative, most deepens your motivation to live for the glory of God alone? How do you see this woman modeling or not modeling a lifestyle of humility, integrity and simplicity? In a journal, write a prayer to the Lord expressing your deepened commitment. Include the name of one of these women as a springboard for your prayer.



### Day Four: Loving the Living God with a Zealous/Jealous Love

***If God desires every knee to bow to Jesus and every tongue to confess him, so should we. We should be 'jealous' (as Scripture sometimes puts it) for the honor of his name – troubled when it remains unknown, hurt when it is ignored, indignant when it is blasphemed, and all the time anxious and determined that it shall be given the honor and glory which are due to it. The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God) but rather zeal – burning, zeal – for the glory of Jesus Christ. Before this supreme goal of the Christian mission, all unworthy motives wither and die. (John Stott, CTC)***

4A. In light of the previous CTC statement, what insights do you glean about the Lord’s jealous love from the following passages?



**Nahum 1:2**

**Zephaniah 1:17-18**

**1 Corinthians 10:18-22**



4B. The preceding CTC statement implies that the Lord’s jealous love expressed in his desire for ‘every knee to bow,’ should lead us to a greater zeal for his glory. **Read Numbers 25:1-13.** What actions does the priest Phineas take to demonstrate his zeal for God’s glory?

What affirmations of Phineas’ actions did the Lord state to Moses?

4C. What promises did the Lord make as a means of honoring Phineas for his actions? Who would benefit from each?

Promises

Who would benefit

4D. Reflect on one way this story shocks or challenges you to desire to have greater zeal for the Lord and His glory. Confess any desire to please man above the Lord himself.



**Day Five: Grieving Over Our World Where Our Living God is Not Glorified**



5A. **Read 1 Kings 10:23-11:1-12.** In what ways did the Lord bless Solomon before his downfall?

What warnings did God give to Solomon that he chose not to heed? What were the consequences?

Warnings

Consequences



5B. **Read 1 Kings 12:20-33.** *(For a summary of what happens between Solomon’s reign and this story where Jeroboam becomes king, see Study Note #1).*

To make sure he retained his kingship and did not forfeit it to Rehoboam once again, Jeroboam took some decisive actions. List each one of his decisive actions.

*We **fall into syncretism**, enticed by many gods such as greed, power and success, serving mammon rather than God. (CTC)*

*It should be our greatest grief that in our world the living God is not glorified. The living God is denied in **aggressive atheism**. The one true God is related or distorted in the practice of world religions. Our Lord Jesus Christ is abused and misrepresented in some popular cultures. And the face of the God of biblical revelation is obscured by Christian nominalism, syncretism and hypocrisy. (CTC)*

5C. In light of the above two sections of the CTC, which king do you feel **fell** into syncretism and which king was more **aggressive** in going after other gods, even though his aggressive actions were not atheistic (an atheist doesn't believe in any god).

Both kings fell from their whole-hearted devotion to Jehovah. How would you describe the differences between their downfalls?

5D. What examples can you cite of the Church (at large) 'falling into syncretism?' What examples can you give of your country today doing the same?

5E. What examples can you cite of 'aggressive atheism' in your own town and/or country today?



5F. Although we may despise someone who aggressively walks away from Christ toward the world's ways, we are all prone to fall into syncretism. Without giving names, cite examples of how you have witnessed other believers who have fallen, perhaps at first, quite unintentionally, into syncretism. By what paths did they meet their demise?



5G. There can be many paths that lead to a syncretistic lifestyle. However, Solomon's life gives us grave warning not to 'hold fast' to friendships or relationships that lead us to serve the 'gods' of others, whether those gods be greed, power, success, money, clothes, popularity, etc. Ask the Lord to reveal to you today if there are any of your present relationships where you are being strongly influenced by someone to serve their god, while compromising your own passion for God's glory. (See Study Note #2)



In this relationship, pray and ask the Lord to reveal to you one step you could take this week to be the greater influence.

Spend five minutes today thanking God for five people in your life who most help you run pursue God and his glory. List them below. Perhaps you could thank one of them this week for their influence in your life.

As a small group, state the following commitment out loud as a means of reinforcing your individual and corporate desire to exalt God's name above all others, recommitting yourselves to a lifestyle of humility, integrity and simplicity. To reinforce this commitment, follow the reading of the CTC with the reading of Psalm 138:2 printed below.

***Loving God in the midst of a world that rejects or distorts him calls for bold but humble witness to our God; robust but gracious defense of the truth of the gospel of Christ, God's Son; and prayerful trust in the convicting and convincing work of his Holy Spirit. We commit ourselves to such witness, for if we claim to love God we must share God's greatest priority, which is that his name and his Word should be, exalted above all things. (CTC)***

***I will bow down toward Your holy temple and will praise Your name  
for Your love and Your faithfulness, for You have exalted  
above all things Your name and your word. Psalm 138:2***

## Lesson Ten ~ Calling the Church of the God Who First Loved Us Back to Humility, Integrity and Simplicity

*Warm-Up:* Watching the video of Richard Stearns on poverty and wealth.

<http://converation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11545>

How would you restate in our own words the most stirring challenge you heard him give?

What is your response to his declaration that there is a 'Hole in our Gospel' when Jesus proclaimed a whole gospel of proclamation, compassion, and justice (Matthew 25:42-43)?

### Day One: Exploring the Biblical Foundations of the Love of God



1A. Read the following verses, looking for biblical 'firsts,' 'greats,' 'the new' or implied associations with the love of God. Fill in the chart below. Highlight the one that freshly touches your heart today.

Scripture	biblical 'firsts' 'greats' 'the new' or implied associations
Matthew 22:36-40	
John 13:34-35	
Galatians 5:22	
1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13	



1B. What does Scripture's emphasis on the primacy of the love of God tell us about God and his priorities?



1C. Name a few of the world's top priorities. In what ways do these priorities pale when compared with the love of God?

Which of the world's priorities is most tempting for you to take on as your own priority? What is one step you can take to guard your heart against giving in to this temptation today?

1D. *'Christian love for one another is how the unseen God, who made himself visible through his incarnate Son, goes on and makes himself visible to the world.'* (CTC, John 13:34-35) **Read Acts 9:36-42.** Name the individuals and groups of people in this story. In what ways did each show love for other believers? How did their love express the truth of John 13:34-35 and the CTC statement above? Fill in the following chart with your insights.

Individuals/Groups	How did they show love?	Love expressing truth of John 13:34-35?

How did God use their loving expressions to reach others with the gospel? How might their humility, integrity and simplicity have added to the gospel's influence?

1E. Describe a time when you have seen the love that believers have for one another become a visible expression of God's love to someone who does not yet know Christ.

1F. Thank God today for your love for other believers and the reassurance that it gives you that you are born again, that you know God and that God dwells in you. Thank him specifically for three believers that you love and for one quality in their lives that causes you to love them.

Why not tell one of them today about your love and the reassurance that it gives you that you know God and that he dwells in you?

## Day Two: Grasping the Breadth of the Permeating Love of God

***'Such love is not weak or sentimental. The love of God is covenantally faithful, committed, self-giving, sacrificial, strong, and holy. Since God is love, love permeates God's whole being and all his actions, his justice as well as his compassion.'* (CTC)**

2A. To fully grasp how God's love is not weak or sentimental, examine the ways that the love of God is coupled with the CTC attributes in each of the following passages. List the attributes and any fresh insights they give you into the love of God.

Attribute

Fresh Insights

**Deuteronomy 7:7-9**

**Psalms 103:6-18**

**Hosea 2:19-20, 11:1**

**Matthew 12:18-20**

**Galatians 2:20**

2B. Which attribute coupled with God's love from Question 3A do you most need in your own life right now? Ask God to show you his permeating love in this way in one area of your life in the coming week.

2C. **Read Hebrews 8:8-13.** List the specifics of the 'new covenant' of love that God promised to make to Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Notice how it differs from the 'old covenant' made at Sinai (v.9).

In what ways does this covenant reinforce that the love of God is *covenantally faithful, committed and self-giving*?

Specifics of the new covenant

reinforce the named aspects of the CTC

Describe one way that you are personally grateful for the new covenant God has made with us as his children. Thank him right now for loving you in this way.

2D. **The love of God is also strong and holy. (CTC)** These aspects of God's love are often demonstrated in his willingness to discipline us as his children. **Read Hebrews 12:7-13.** What reasons are given for why we are to endure discipline? What eventual blessings does God promise to give to those who endure hardship as sons (daughters)? What specifics of the process of discipline are given?

Reasons to endure discipline or hardship

Eventual blessings for/results of enduring discipline

Process of discipline

Write a prayer to the Lord, thanking him for the strong and holy aspects of his love expressed through discipline. Thank him for a recent time he disciplined you in order to *'have you share in his holiness (Hebrews 12:10).'*

2E. **Review John 8:1-18. Since God is love, love permeates God's whole being and all his actions, his justice as well as his compassion.' (CTC)** What insights does Jesus' encounter with a sinner teach about how the love of God permeates his whole being, including his justice?

When recently have you seen our Father God demonstrate his justice to one of his children?  
Thank him for allowing you a front row seat!

2F. **Read Luke 7:11-15.** What insights does this description of Jesus' encounter with the widow teach about how God's love permeates his whole being, including his compassion?

When recently have you seen our Father God demonstrate his compassion to one of his children?  
Thank him for allowing you a front row seat!

2G. In reviewing all aspects of the permeating love of God, thank him for one aspect you most need today, while also thanking him for the **breadth** of his love, a love that is neither weak **nor** sentimental.

### Day Three: Framing Our Convictions and Commitments in Terms of God's Love

3A. Conviction/Commitment #1: *'to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.'* (CTC, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Matthew 22:37)

**Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9.** In what ways were the Israelites to help their children make the command to love the Lord our God both a conviction and a commitment?

How might these actions have helped their children involve their whole heart, soul, mind and strength in learning to love God?

3B. What insights can you glean about your heart, soul, mind and strength from the following?

Heart	Mind
<b>Psalm 119:11</b>	<b>Psalm 139:23</b>
<b>Psalm 131:1</b>	<b>Isaiah 26:3</b>
<b>Proverbs 4:23</b>	<b>Isaiah 55:8-9</b>
<b>Jeremiah 17:9</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 2:16</b>
Soul	Strength
<b>Psalm 19:7</b>	<b>I Samuel 30:6</b>
<b>Psalm 42:1-2</b>	<b>1 Chronicles 16:11</b>
<b>Psalm 131:2</b>	<b>Psalm 18:1-2</b>

Which of the above two or three insights gives you a clearer picture as to how you can love the Lord more fully? Be specific. Allow the Spirit to minister to your heart as you reflect.

3C. Conviction/Commitment #2: ***'to love our neighbor (including the foreigner and the enemy) as ourselves.'*** (CTC, Matthew 22:39, Leviticus 19:18).

In what ways do the following scriptures give you a clearer biblical understanding of your neighbor and how you might love him/her?

**Leviticus 19:18, 34**

**Luke 10:27-37**

Thank God right now for someone who has recently treated you as his/her 'neighbor.'

## Day Four: Framing Our Convictions and Commitments in Terms of God's Love (Part 2)

4A. Conviction/Commitment #3: ***'to love one another as God in Christ has loved us.'*** (CTC, John 15:12).

What comparisons do the following scriptures make between how Jesus loved us and how we ought to love one another?

**Philippians 2:5-8**

**Colossians 3:12-14**

**I Peter 2:21-23**

Which comparison do you find most convicting? Which teaches the most about walking in humility, integrity and simplicity? Why?



Thank God for his patience with you as he endeavors to transform you daily from one degree of glory to another (2 Corinthians 3:18).



4B. Conviction/Commitment #4: ***'to love the world with the love of the One who gave his only Son that the world through him might be saved.'*** (CTC, John 3:16)

**Read Acts 16:16-34.** What **examples** of Christ-like love did Paul and Silas model in this story? List all the **Christ-like actions** they took to *'love the world that it might be saved.'*

4C. Which one of their examples/Christ-like actions would you most like to emulate so that 'the world might be saved?' Pray and ask the Lord of the harvest to send you out as his Christ-like laborer into his harvest field.

### Day Five: Walking with the God Who First Loved us in Humility, Integrity and Simplicity

This God who first loved us longs that our lives be permeated with his love and that our convictions and commitments grow out of understanding that he loved us first. However, idols of power, success and greed often keep us from walking in humility, integrity and simplicity. Today we will focus on our need to eliminate these idols so we can walk with God who first loved us as he intended for us to walk. As Richard Stearns has so aptly said, there is a 'Hole in our Gospel!' May today's lesson challenge you to live wholly for him, in proclamation, compassion and justice!



5A. ***Walking in humility, rejecting the idolatry of power. In our fallenness and sin, power is often exercised to abuse and exploit others. We exalt ourselves, claiming superiority of gender, race, or social status. Paul counters all these marks of the idolatry of pride and power with his requirement that those who are reciprocal love is to be expressed in marriage, family, and socio-economic relations.*** (CTC)

What insights regarding humility can you glean from the following passages? Highlight any verse that encourages you to reject the idol of power. Explain the connection.

<b>Proverbs 11:2</b>	<b>Colossians 3:12-13</b>
<b>Proverbs 15:33</b>	<b>James 3:13</b>
<b>Proverbs 22:4</b>	<b>1 Peter 5:5</b>

5B. Reflect on someone you consider humble. Describe him/her using one or more of the above verses.



In a present situation where you might be tempted to grow proud, how can you glean from their example by endeavoring to walk in greater humility?

5C. **Read Ephesians 5:15-6:9.** Humility is lived out in relationship. What further insights regarding humility can you glean from Paul's exhortations in living out specific roles in the Body of Christ?

5D. ***Walking in integrity, rejecting the idolatry of success. We cannot build the kingdom of the God of truth on foundations of dishonesty. Yet in our craving for 'success' and 'results' we are tempted to sacrifice our integrity, with distorted or exaggerated claims that amount to lies. Walking in the light, however, 'consists in ...righteousness and truth'. (CTC)***



**Read Ephesians 5:8-10 and 1 Chronicles 29:17.** What insights regarding integrity can you glean from these verses? What connections do you see between your insights and the CTC statement above?

Insights

Connections

5E. In the CTC statement below, underline specific examples of lack of integrity in blue. In red, highlight the underlying temptations that if yielded to, can lead to lack of integrity. (or underline and circle)

***We call on all church and mission leaders to resist the temptation to be less than totally truthful in presenting our work. We are dishonest when we exaggerate our reports with unsubstantiated statistics, or twist the truth for the sake of gain. We pray for a cleansing wave of honesty and the end of such distortion, manipulation and exaggeration. We call on all who fund spiritual work not to make unrealistic demands for measurable and visible results, beyond the need for proper accountability. Let us strive for a culture of full integrity and transparency. We will choose to walk in the light and truth of God, for the Lord tests the heart and is pleased with integrity. (CTC)***

Reflect on a time when you were faced with circumstances that challenged your freedom to walk in integrity because of the temptation to worship the idol of success. What steps did you take to resolve the situation while maintaining integrity? If you compromised your own uprightness, ask Christ for forgiveness and receive his cleansing now. Commit to not compromise your integrity in the future by worshipping the idol of success.

5F. Pray today for a missionary you know, that they will not give in to the temptation of exaggeration of reports or of twisting the truth for the sake of success. Pray that their supporting churches and individual donors will not give in to unrealistic demands for measurable and visible results beyond the need for proper accountability.

5G. ***Walking in simplicity, rejecting the idolatry of greed. Colossians 3:5 The widespread preaching and teaching of 'prosperity gospel' around the world raises significant concerns. We define prosperity gospel as the teaching that believers have a right to the blessings of health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions of faith and the 'sowing of seeds' through financial or material gifts. Prosperity teaching is a phenomenon that cuts across many denominations in all continents. (CTC)***



In the following passages, what actions did people take or not take to walk in simplicity and/or reject the idol of greed?

**Acts 5:1-11**

**2 Corinthians 2:17**

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

Which above example, either positive or negative, most powerfully motivates you to want to live a lifestyle of simplicity without greed?

5H. End your time with the living Lord today by writing out below a prayer of commitment to a lifestyle of humility, integrity and simplicity. Ask Christ that your life would be free of idols so you won't be a stumbling block to anyone who does not know Christ and who needs your trustworthy testimony to help validate the good news of the gospel.

## Lesson Eleven ~ Partnering with the People of God for Unity in the Church and in Mission

*Warm-Up:* Watch the Partnership Illustrations Video

<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11608> Share which illustration of partnership moved you the most. Explain why.

### Day One: Defining the People of God

***The people of God are those from all ages and all nations whom God in Christ has loved, chosen, called, saved and sanctified as a people for his own possession, to share in the glory of Christ as citizens of the new creation. As those, then, whom God has loved from eternity to eternity and throughout all our turbulent and rebellious history, we are commanded to love one another. For 'since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another,' and thereby 'be imitators of God...and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.' Love for one another in the family of God is not merely a desirable option but an inescapable command. Such love is the first evidence of obedience to the gospel, the necessary expression of our submission to Christ's Lordship, and a potent engine of world mission. (CTC)***

1A. From the following scriptures, find phrases that reinforce different aspects of the definition of the 'people of God' in the CTC statement above. Record each phrase below. Also record its corresponding 'people of God' description from the CTC statement above.



	Phrase from scripture	definition CTC phrase
<b>John 13:34-35</b>		
<b>Ephesians 1:14</b>		
<b>Ephesians 2:19</b>		
<b>Ephesians 5:1-2</b>		
<b>2 Thessalonians 2:13-14</b>		
<b>1 Peter 2:9</b>		
<b>Revelation 7:9</b>		

1B. Personalize one of these phrases by completing the following: 'Thank you Lord that you define me as belonging to the people of God. Because of how You see me, I have the privilege of seeing myself as . . .'



1C. Focus on one person in God's family who is easy for you to love but who struggles with their self-worth. Reflect on how God describes them *in Christ—loved, chosen, called, saved and sanctified, his own possession, to share in the glory of Christ as citizens of the new creation!* (CTC)

Which of these phrases would you most love for them to understand about how God sees them? Write a short paragraph to him/her below describing who they are to you and to our Lord.

Perhaps the Lord may direct you to use the above paragraph as the rough draft of an email or a short note to help them hear who they truly are in God's sight.

## Day Two: Partnering as the People of God for Unity and Honesty in the Church

*Jesus' command that his disciples should love one another is linked to his prayer that they should be one. Both the command and the prayer are missional - 'that the world may know you are my disciples', and that 'the world may know that you [the Father] sent me'. (CTC)*

- 2A. **Read John 17:20-23.** List each desire that Jesus had for his disciples and the anticipated results of each prayer he prayed for them.



Review the CTC statement above as it compares with Christ's John 17 prayer. Underline phrases from the CTC that reinforce Jesus' words from this high priestly prayer.

- 2B. What do you understand the following statement to mean: 'Both the command and the prayer are missional?' Rewrite this statement in your own words below.



What if Jesus had chosen to pray for us to love for one another but without a missional objective in mind? What difference would it make in our relationships with nonbelievers?

As an act of obeying this command, have you ever purposely chosen to allow your love for another believer to be seen by someone(s) who does NOT know Christ? What was the outcome of your purposeful choice?

- 2C. ***A most powerfully convincing mark of the truth of the gospel is when Christian believers are united in love across the barriers of the world's inveterate divisions - barriers of race, color, gender, social class, economic privilege or political alignment. (CTC)***



Study the following passages, looking for examples of love that cross one or more of these barriers. How might a nonbeliever have responded if s/he had observed this unity among diverse believers? State the nature of the diversified unity. Then state the nonbeliever's anticipated response.

**Acts 1:12-14**

**Acts 13:1-2** (hint: research the people mentioned in verse 1)

**2 Corinthians 8:1-6**

Which area of diversity is most challenging for you? Race, color, gender, social class, economic privilege or political alignment? Honestly confess any area of prejudice below:

2D. **Love speaks truth with grace. (CTC)** In what ways do the following scriptures reinforce this principle?



**Proverbs 27:6**

**John 1:14, 17**

**Ephesians 4:14-15**

2E. When recently have you seen someone model a life which is full of both grace and truth? How did their approach embrace **love's** call for honesty?



2F. ***The prophetic love must be heard today. Our love for the Church of God aches with grief over the ugliness among us that so disfigures the face of our dear Lord Jesus Christ and hides his beauty from the world – the world that so desperately needs to be drawn to him. (CTC)***

2G. Paul longed that the church in Corinth reflect the beauty of our Lord. Read the following concerns Paul expressed to the Corinthians. Reflect on one way each concern showed Paul's desire that the Corinthians not disfigure the face of our loving Lord.

Concern	Paul's desire to avoid disfiguring Christ
---------	---

**1 Corinthians 5:1-6**

**1 Corinthians 6:1-8**

**1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 33-34**

Which of these three areas of disfigurement have you seen displayed in a church family where you have participated? What honest steps were taken or could have been taken to help purify Christ's church?

2G. Is there an area in your own church where you feel God calling you to embrace love's call to honesty? Journal about it, asking the Lord for insight into your responsibility to help promote a church family that is full of truth and grace, without any disfigurement of Christ's beauty.

End your time with the Lord today by reading the following paragraph out loud to help increase your own passion for any step God might ask you to take, to bring unity and honesty in God's family or to increase your own passion to pray for the unity of the Body of Christ worldwide.

***We urgently seek a new global partnership within the body of Christ across all continents, rooted in profound mutual love, mutual submission, and dramatic economic sharing without paternalism or unhealthy dependency. And we seek this not only as a demonstration of our unity in the gospel, but also for the sake of the name of Christ and the mission of God in all the world. (CTC)***

***A divided Church has no message for a divided world. Our failure to live in reconciled unity is a major obstacle to authenticity and effectiveness in mission.***

***We lament the dividedness and divisiveness of our churches and organizations. We deeply and urgently long for Christians to cultivate a spirit of grace and to be obedient to Paul's command to 'make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'***

***While we recognize that our deepest unity is spiritual, we long for greater recognition of the missional power of visible, practical, earthly unity. So we urge Christian sisters and brothers worldwide, for the sake of our common witness and mission, to resist the temptation to split the body of Christ, and to seek the paths of reconciliation and restored unity wherever possible.***

## Day Three: Partnering as the People of God in Global Mission

3A, From the following passages, what examples can you find where global partnering between regions contributed to effective global mission?



**Acts 11:19-30**

**Romans 15:22-32**

**2 Corinthians 8:1-15**

- 3B. **In red**, underline the statements from the CTC below that you find most personally convicting about your own attitude toward global partnership. List one step you could take to commit to global missions in the coming months, even if just in prayer. (Or underline)
- 3C. **In blue**, underline the statements that describe resistance to partnership in the body of Christ. (Or double underline)
- 3D. **In green**, underline the statements that celebrate excellence in partnership in the body of Christ. (Or circle)

***Partnership in mission is not only about efficiency. It is the strategic and practical outworking of our shared submission to Jesus Christ as Lord. Too often we have engaged in mission in ways that prioritize and preserve our own identities (ethnic, denominational, theological, etc), and have failed to submit our passions and preferences to our one Lord and Master. The supremacy and centrality of Christ in our mission must be more than a confession of faith; it must also govern our strategy, practice and unity.***

***We rejoice in the growth and strength of emerging mission movements in the majority world and the ending of the old pattern of 'from the West to the Rest'. But we do not accept the idea that the baton of mission responsibility has passed from one part of the world Church to another. There is no sense in rejecting the past triumphalism of the West, only to relocate the same ungodly spirit in Asia, Africa, or Latin America. No one ethnic group, nation, or continent can claim the exclusive privilege of being the ones to complete the Great Commission. Only God is sovereign.***

***A) We stand together as church and mission leaders in all parts of the world, called to recognize and accept one another, with equality of opportunities to contribute together to world mission. Let us, in submission to Christ, lay aside suspicion, competition and pride and be willing to learn from those whom God is using, even when they are not from our continent, nor of our particular theology, nor of our organization, nor of our circle of friends.***

***B) Partnership is about more than money, and unwise injection of money frequently corrupts and divides the Church. Let us finally prove that the Church does not operate on the principle that those who have the most money have all the decision-making power. Let us no longer impose our own preferred names, slogans, programmes, systems and methods on other parts of the Church. Let us instead work for true mutuality of North and South, East and West, for interdependence in giving and receiving, for the respect and dignity that characterizes genuine friends and true partners in mission.***

***The mission of the Church on earth is to serve the mission of God, and the mission of theological education is to strengthen and accompany the mission of the Church. Theological education serves first to train those who lead the Church as pastor-teachers, equipping them to teach the truth of God's Word with faithfulness, relevance and clarity; and second, to equip all God's people for the missional task of understanding and relevantly communicating God's truth in every cultural context. (CTC).***

3E. As a small group, read aloud the above CTC statement as an expression of your commitment to partnering as the people of God in Global Mission.

## Day Four: Partnering as Equally Gifted Men and Women for World Evangelization

4A. ***Scripture affirms that God created men and women in his image and gave them dominion over the earth together. Sin entered human life and history through man and woman acting together in rebellion against God. Through the cross of Christ, God brought salvation, acceptance and unity to men and women equally. At Pentecost God poured out his Spirit of prophecy on all flesh, sons and daughters alike. Women and men are thus equal in creation, in sin, in salvation, and in the Spirit.***



From the following, list the biblical foundations for each phrase of the CTC statement above.

<b>Genesis 1:26-28</b>	<b>Galatians 3:28</b>
<b>Genesis 3</b>	<b>1 Peter 3:7</b>
<b>Acts 2:17-21</b>	

4B. *All of us, women and men, married and single, are responsible to employ God’s gifts for the benefit of others, as stewards of God’s grace, and for the praise and glory of Christ. All of us, therefore, are also responsible to enable all God’s people to exercise all the gifts that God has given for all the areas of service to which God calls the Church. We should not quench the Spirit by despising the ministry of any. Further, we are determined to see ministry within the body of Christ as a gifting and responsibility in which we are called to serve, and not as a status and right that we demand. (CTC)*



From the following, list the biblical foundations for each phrase of the CTC statement above.

<b>Romans 12:4-8</b>	<b>1 Peter 4:10-11</b>
<b>1 Corinthians 12:4-11</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians 5:19-20</b>
<b>Ephesians 4:7-16</b>	<b>1 Timothy 4:1-14</b>

4C. *A) We uphold Lausanne’s historic position: ‘We affirm that the gifts of the Spirit are distributed to all God’s people, women and men, and that their partnership in evangelization must be welcomed for the common good.’ We acknowledge the enormous and sacrificial contribution that women have made to world mission, ministering to both men and women, from biblical times to the present.*

*B) We recognize that there are different views sincerely held by those who seek to be faithful and obedient to Scripture. Some interpret apostolic teaching to imply that women should not teach or preach, or that they may do so but not in sole authority over men. Others interpret the spiritual equality of women, the exercise of the edifying gift of prophecy by women in the New Testament church, and their hosting of churches in their homes, as implying that the spiritual gifts of leading and teaching may be received and exercised in ministry by both women and men.’ (CTC)*

4D. List the biblical foundations below for each phrase of the CTC statement above, particularly noting passages that generate differing views held by those seeking to be faithful to Scripture.

<b>1 Timothy 2:12</b>	<b>Philippians 4:2-3</b>
<b>Titus 2:3-5</b>	<b>Colossians 4:15</b>
<b>Acts 18:26, 21:9</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 11:5, 1 Corinthians 14:3-5</b>
<b>Romans 16:1-7</b>	<b>Romans 14:1-13</b>

4E. What is one way you could affirm a sister and/or a brother in Christ to use gifts for God’s glory?



4F. As a small group, read aloud the CTC statement below as an commitment to Lausanne’s desire to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

***We call upon those on different sides of the argument to:  
Accept one another without condemnation in relation to matters of dispute, for while we may disagree, we have no grounds for division, destructive speaking, or ungodly hostility towards one another;***

***Study Scripture carefully together, with due regard for the context and culture of the original authors and contemporary readers;***

***Recognize that where there is genuine pain we must show compassion; where there is injustice and lack of integrity we must stand against them; and where there is resistance to the manifest work of the Holy Spirit in any sister or brother we must repent;***

***Commit ourselves to a pattern of ministry, male and female, that reflects the servanthood of Jesus Christ, not worldly striving for power and status.***

***We encourage churches to acknowledge godly women who teach and model what is good, as Paul commanded,[98] and to open wider doors of opportunity for women in education, service, and leadership, particularly in contexts where the gospel challenges unjust cultural traditions. We long that women should not be hindered from exercising God's gifts or following God's call on their lives.***

## Day Five: Partnering in Solidarity with the Persecuted People of God

- 5A. ***Loving one another includes especially caring for those who are persecuted and in prison for their faith and witness. If one part of the body suffers, all parts suffer with it. We are all, like John, 'companions in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus'. (CTC)***



In what ways do the following scriptures provide biblical underpinnings for particular phrases from the CTC statement above?

**Hebrews 13:1-3**

**1 Corinthians 12:26**

**Revelation 1:9**

Whom do you know who is being persecuted or in prison for their faith? Spend a few moments praying for their endurance, their courage, their love for fellow prisoners, their physical protection, their hope for a better future, their belief that God's mercies are new to them every morning!

- 5B. ***We commit ourselves to share in the suffering of members of the body of Christ throughout the world, through information, prayer, advocacy, and other means of support. We see such sharing, however, not merely as an exercise of pity, but longing also to learn what the suffering Church can teach and give to those parts of Christ's body that are not suffering in the same way. (CTC)***



**Read Revelation 3:7-13** to learn about the church in Philadelphia. ***'Let him who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'*** What is God's Spirit saying to you about the suffering Church from your study of the Church in Philadelphia? Record what the Spirit says to you below:

- 5C. ***We are warned that the Church that feels itself at ease in its wealth and self-sufficiency may, like Laodicea, be the Church that Jesus sees as the most blind to its own poverty, and from which he himself feels a stranger outside the door. (CTC)***



**Read Revelation 3:14-22.** ***'Let him who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'*** What is God's Spirit saying to you about the Church at ease? Record what the Spirit is saying to you below:

What is one way you have been tempted to allow ease in wealth or self-sufficiency to rob you of intimacy with Christ? Confess the area where you are most tempted to rely on yourself rather than on Christ. Ask Him to help you believe with every fiber of your being in every area of life the truth of John 15:5, 'Without me, you can do nothing!'



## Lesson Twelve ~ Living An Integrated Faith

Warm-Up: <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11417>

### Day One: Integrating Our Understanding of God as Central to Our Mission



- 1A. ***We are committed to world mission, because it is central to our understanding of God, the Bible, the Church, human history and the ultimate future. The whole Bible reveals the mission of God to bring all things in heaven and earth into unity under Christ, reconciling them through the blood of his cross. In fulfilling his mission, God will transform the creation broken by sin and evil into the new creation in which there is no more sin or curse. (CTC)***

What phrase from each passage supports the concept that world mission is central to our understanding of God?

Scriptures	Biblical Phrase	CTC phrase
<b>Genesis 12:1-3</b>		
<b>Ephesians 1:9-10</b>		
<b>Colossians 1:19-20</b>		
<b>Revelation 7:9</b>		

- 1B. Now in your own words, describe why the Bible says we should be committed to world mission.



- 1C. ***God will fulfill his promise to Abraham to bless all nations on the earth, through the gospel of Jesus, the Messiah, the seed of Abraham. God will transform the fractured world of nations that are scattered under the judgment of God into the new humanity that will be redeemed by the blood of Christ from every tribe, nation, people and language, and will be gathered to worship our God and Savior. God will destroy the reign of death, corruption and violence when Christ returns to establish his eternal reign of life, justice and peace. Then God, Immanuel, will dwell with us, and the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever. (CTC)***

Read the following scriptures to increase your biblical understanding of God’s desire to transform the fractured world of nations into a new humanity of nations gathered to worship our God in heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ. Record your insights below:

**Genesis 11:1-11**

**Genesis 12:1-3**

**Colossians 1:19-20**

**Hebrews 11:7**

**Revelation 7:9**

Now in your own words, restate how God's big picture plan for all the nations underscores why we should be committed to world mission.

- 1D. End your time with God today expressing in prayer how your present understanding of God's heart for all the nations (as a result of completing Day One) is affecting your own heart response to the importance of the nations in your own life. Be honest yet open and teachable!

## Day Two: Integrating the Sharing of God's Mission as Central to Our Purpose

***God calls his people to share his mission. The Church from all nations stands in continuity through the Messiah Jesus with God's people in the Old Testament. With them we have been called through Abraham and commissioned to be a blessing and a light to the nations. With them, we are to be shaped and taught through the law and the prophets to be a community of holiness, compassion and justice in a world of sin and suffering. We have been redeemed through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bear witness to what God has done in Christ. The Church exists to worship and glorify God for all eternity and to participate in the transforming mission of God within history. Our mission is wholly derived from God's mission, addresses the whole of God's creation, and is grounded at its center in the redeeming victory of the cross. This is the people to whom we belong, whose faith we confess and whose mission we share. (CTC)***

- 2A. Each gospel writer makes clear that God calls his people to share his mission. Record below the exact words each gospel writer used in reiterating Christ's command to go to the nations:



**Matthew 28:19**

**Mark 16:15**

**Luke 24:46-49**

**John 17:15-23, John 20:21**

**Acts 1:8 (Luke's rendition of the Great Commission)**

Why do you suppose every gospel writer felt it important to record Christ's call to go to the nations?

How important has this Great Commission been in your own walk with Christ? How might you want it to increase in importance in your walk with Christ as a result of what you are learning?

- 2B. **Read 1 Peter 2:4-10.** Since Peter is speaking in this letter to Jews who have believed in Jesus, he uses Old Testament imagery to describe them. In that the CTC statement above calls us to join with the Old Testament saints to advance the gospel, list below each name Peter uses to describe



his readers as well as imagery He uses to describe Christ. Also list the implications of each of these names, noting Peter’s missional identification. Give the verse for each of your discoveries.

Verse	Imagery of God’s People	Missional Implications	Image of Christ

Which image touches your heart afresh today? Into what present situation in your own life is this image most deeply speaking? Journal below how this fresh image of yourself may help change how you approach your present turmoil or triumph.

### Day Three: Integrating the Proclamation and Demonstration of the Gospel



**3A. *The source of all our mission is what God has done in Christ for the redemption of the whole world, as revealed in the Bible. Our evangelistic task is to make that good news known to all nations. The context of all our mission is the world in which we live, the world of sin, suffering, injustice, and creational disorder, into which God sends us to love and serve for Christ’s sake. All our mission must therefore reflect the integration of evangelism and committed engagement in the world, both being ordered and driven by the whole biblical revelation of the gospel of God. ‘Evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God... The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world... We affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and humankind, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ... The salvation we proclaim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.’ (CTC)***

Today we will consider the biblical mandates for proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. Next we will observe biblical illustrations of Jesus and the disciples integrating the two as if they were two colors of thread beautifully interwoven into the same fabric. Let’s begin by investigating the essentials of our proclamation message.

What are the essentials of the good news message that we are to proclaim?

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

**2 Corinthians 4:5**

**Acts 2:32-39**

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**1 Corinthians 1:23**

**Mark 10:43-45**

**3B. Below, record key insights of God’s commands regarding engagement in the world.**



**Isaiah 1:17**

**James 2:14-18**

**Genesis 1:26-27**

**Matthew 28:19-20**

**Leviticus 19:18**

**2 Corinthians 5:20**



3C. Why is it important to understand that proclamation *and* demonstration of the gospel both are strong biblical callings to all Christians?

3D. Ask the Lord for an openness to integrate **both** in your ministry, not just one to the exclusion of the other. Give an example of how you have recently seen them successfully integrated.

3E. ***‘Integral mission is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world, we betray the Word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the Word of God, we have nothing to bring to the world.’ (CTC)***

Our natural tendency is to focus on one priority while ignoring the other or focus on one while minimizing the other. Describe a church or Christian organization where you feel both priorities are equally addressed or both are well integrated into their ministry philosophy. What do you think is the secret to their successful implementation of both priorities?

3F. **Read Mark 1.** Notice how masterfully Christ integrates both into his ministry lifestyle. Record one or two examples of each in the chart below:

Scene/Verse(s)	Examples of the Christ’s Priority on Proclamation	Examples of Christ’s Priority on the Demonstration of the Gospel

3G. **Read Acts 3.** In what ways did Peter and John demonstrate a high priority on both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel? Fill in the chart below.

Verse	Examples of the Peter and John’s Priority on Proclamation	Examples of Peter and John’s Priority on the Demonstration of the Gospel

3H. From observing both Jesus and Peter and John, what insights have you gleaned about living an integrated ministry lifestyle of both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel?

3I. Which comes most naturally to you? Proclamation or demonstration of the gospel? Give an example from your own ministry.

3J. **Read I Peter 4:11.** This passage is often used to differentiate between speaking and serving gifts. Sometimes those with speaking gifts are more drawn to proclamation while those with serving gifts are more drawn to demonstration of the gospel. Team ministry is often a great solution! Each member can use his/her gifts to empower both proclamation **and** demonstration of the gospel to take place together.



Describe a time when you were free to use your gifts in ministry, while someone else exercised a set of gifts which were complementary to yours. How satisfying was your experience?

Thank the Lord today for the joy of team ministry where both proclamation and demonstration of the gospel can take place side by side.

## Day Four: Integrating Our Commitments to Make Known God's Revelation and Reflect His Character

- 4A. Understanding the need for missions involvement is one step short of committing to it. To grasp better how truly to commit oneself to any priority, read the following scriptures, recording below insights you glean about commitment.

***We commit ourselves to the integral and dynamic exercise of all dimensions of mission to which God calls his Church. God commands us to make known to all nations the truth of God's revelation and the gospel of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ, calling all people to repentance, faith, baptism and obedient discipleship.***

***God commands us to reflect his own character through compassionate care for the needy, and to demonstrate the values and the power of the kingdom of God in striving for justice and peace and in caring for God's creation.***

***In response to God's boundless love for us in Christ, and out of our overflowing love for him, we rededicate ourselves, with the help of the Holy Spirit, fully to obey all that God commands, with self denying humility, joy and courage. We renew this covenant with the Lord - the Lord we love because he first loved us. (CTC)***

**Psalm 37:5**

**Acts 20:32**

**Proverbs 16:3**

**2 Corinthians 5:9**

**Acts 14:23, 26**

In one sentence, summarize what you have learned about commitment.

- 4B. It's much easier to commit to something we feel passionate about. Describe one of your passions. Why do you feel passionate about it?

- 4C. One way to grow in passion is to share the passion of someone we love. If our spouse, child or best friend is passionate about something, we can tend to grow in our love for their passion. What is one step you can take to grow in your passion for missions, remembering that it is close to your Heavenly Father's heart, the reason Christ sacrificed himself for you and his world and the motive for why the Holy Spirit has chosen to fill you as well as all those chosen from every tribe and tongue and nation? Perhaps you could choose one way to express your passion from the list below:

**Pray** (eg for one missionary per day, etc.)

**Give** (eg give to a missionary monthly, volunteer your time at a local mission, etc. OR

**Go** (eg short-term summer missions project, to visit a missionary on the field, etc.)

Write your own goal here:

## Day Five: Integrating Discipleship and Reconciliation

***God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. God's Spirit was in Cape Town, calling the Church of Christ to be ambassadors of God's reconciling love for the world. We sought to listen to the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in his mercy, through his Holy Spirit, Christ spoke to his listening people.***

- ***The need for radical obedient discipleship, leading to maturity, to growth in depth as well as growth in numbers;***
- ***The need for radical cross-centered reconciliation, leading to unity, to growth in love as well as growth in faith and hope.***

***Discipleship and reconciliation are indispensable to our mission. We lament the scandal of our shallowness and lack of discipleship, and the scandal of our disunity and lack of love. For both seriously damage our witness to the gospel.***

***We discern the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ in these two challenges because they correspond to two of Christ's most emphatic words to the Church as recorded in the gospels.***

- ***In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus gave us our primary mandate - to make disciples among all nations.***
- ***In John's Gospel, Jesus gave us our primary method - to love one another so that the world will know we are disciples of Jesus.***

***We should not be surprised, but rather rejoice to hear the Master's voice, when Christ says the same things 2,000 years later to his people gathered from all around the world. Make disciples. Love one another.***

5A. From the following scriptures, in what ways does Jesus either verbally challenge and/or model a lifestyle of becoming a disciple and making disciples?



**Matthew 18:20**

**Matthew 28:19-20**

**John 1:39-49**

5B. In each of the following scriptures, what sacrifices are asked of a disciple?

**Luke 9:23-24**

**Luke 14:26-27**

**Luke 14:33**

5C. Which of the above sacrifices do you find most challenging to make? Explain.



5D. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 and Colossians 1:21-22.** What insights can you glean about reconciliation and why it is indispensable to our mission?



5E. Who was an agent of reconciliation in your life who helped you become reconciled to Christ? What aspect of their words or actions did you find most compelling?



5F. Describe why you feel that discipleship and reconciliation are like two wings of an airplane? Why are each necessary aspects of our mission? Perhaps phrases from the CTC statement above may aid you in answering this question.

5H. In relating to others, which is your strength? your weakness? Write one measureable goal for yourself for the next month so that your weakness may be strengthened.