

We Belong to God:

A look at the nature and
essence of
Christian life

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Introduction

The Foundation of It All!

1. God is:

- The only true and living God
- "I AM"
- Sovereign
- Creator
- Judge
- Father

2. Christ is:

- Son of God
- Immanuel
- Lord
- Savior
- High Priest
- The Living Word of God, and so he is the life giving light and the life giving bread;

3. And so, believers are:

- Servant
- Restored
- Christian

4. Final thought: We belong to God.

Lessons:

1. Result of God's work
2. Relationship with God
3. Relationship with Christ
4. Relationship with the church
5. Relationship with the world
6. Christian life
7. Christian mind
8. Christian heart
9. Christian identity
10. Christian practice
11. Christian fellowship
12. Our struggle
13. Spiritual freedom

Lesson 1

The Result of God's Work

The believer, the church, the Christian life – Christianity – is all a result of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is the work of God to save the world and establish the presence of his kingdom of God on earth. As a result of his work, all believers – every Christian -- belong to God. *Though God's wrath moved him to forsake the world that has rejected him, his love moved him to forgive the sinner who will forsake the world's unbelief and wickedness to worship and serve him (John 3:16-17).*

As a result of God's work to save us, all redeemed believers are in fellowship with God. *Because I belong to God I have a relationship with God that transcends this world and enriches me to live my life in this world.*

1. God moves and works to make it right with us (justification).
 - Justify – *to declare, innocent or guiltless*; to show, claim, or act to be right; to defend or uphold or well-grounded; to make exact; righteous
 - a) to make things right between each one of us and God.
 - b) salvation – everything God has done to save every believer from the power and penalty of sin, found in three primary works of God – justified, sanctified, and glorified.
 - The greatest need of every one (Romans 3:21-31)
 - a) No one is right with God and no one can make it right with God.
 - b) God had to make it right with us
 - Why is no one right with God?
 - a) The world has rejected God (Romans 1:18-31) – so man turned to wickedness and God's wrath stirred so the world is forsaken by God; forsaken means unforgiven
 - b) Believers cannot get it right by their own doing (Romans 2:1-3:20)
 - How does God make it right with us? (Romans 1:16-17)
 - a) the power of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - b) the faith of man to respond to that power of God at work
 - c) when does all of that happen – when man the sinner has the faith to give up their unbelief and to be baptized into that power (Romans 6:1-4, Acts 2:37-38)
 - What is the result of this work of God to make it right with us?
 - a) made to be innocent – we continue to struggle with sin but we are forgiven so we can remain right with God (1 John 1:5-10)
 - b) made to be transformed into and restore in us the image in which we were created to be (Romans 12:1-2)
 - Can we begin to see the meaning and power and love of God's amazing grace?!

2. God moves and works to make us sacred to him (sanctification).
 - Sanctify – *the amazing work of God to make the justified by him to be restored to the image he created us to be*; to make holy, set apart as sacred; consecrate; to purify and free from sin; render legitimate and binding; to make productive or conducive to spiritual blessing; holy
 - a) From our justification by God, He moves to make us sacred to him.
 - b) sacred – dedication to God because of our priceless value to him (1 Peter 2:9-10)
 - Now that God has justified the believer, now that he has made us sacred to him, he went to work to make him his own (note the result of the work of Christ in each of these):
 - a) salvation – God took us away from the power and destruction of sin and made us his own precious people (Titus 2:11-14)
 - b) redemption – God restored us to himself (Ephesians 1:3-11)
 - c) translation – God rescued us to himself (Colossians 1:13-14)
 - d) adoption – God took us to himself (Romans 8:14-17)
 - God saved us to call us out of the world to belong to him (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)
 - God saved us to become his craftsmanship (Ephesians 2:1-10)

3. God moves and works to treat us beyond what we deserve (glorification).
 - Glorify – to be bestowed with great praise, honor, distinction; to be invested with adoration and distinguished
 - God will make all things right forever; when all justified and sanctified believers will be made fit to live with God in his presence forever
 - Resurrection – God will raise us up out of this world with its material nature and deliver into our eternal home:
 - a) 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - b) 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 w/Romans 8:18
 - c) 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

4. Final thought:
 - Worthy-- when Christ the Lord came to us, the soul knew its worth!
 - For the love of God given to us all (John 3:16-17)
 - For the wrath of God taken from me (Matthew 27:45-46 w/Romans 1:18-31 and 3:21-27)
 - Loved not alone; forgiven not forsaken; mercy not justice; restored not lost

Lesson 2

Relationship with God

The essence and nature of our Christian life is our relationship with God. If I belong to God as a result of his work to save me from my sin, what then is the essence of my relationship with Him? *Devotion. I am devoted to God with my heart and mind and soul and spirit, that is, every fiber of my being. I am his and he is mine first, always, and forever.*

1. We are right with God (righteousness).

- Righteous – *the condition of being morally or spiritually right or justified*; character of being absolutely genuine; state of being upright, standing fully straight up without and single crook.
- My right relationship with God -- our relationship with God is right and good and true.
- *It is lived!* (2 Timothy 3:14-17)
- The standard of righteousness and not wickedness (Titus 2:11-14).
- The Christian will not practice sin (1 John 2:28-3:10).
- The Christian will desire to follow Christ, and seek to know him (Philippians 3:7-11).
- We are not ashamed to live this life no matter the ridicule, rejection, and resistance (1 Peter 3:12).

2. We belong to God (holiness).

- Holy – *to be set apart, devoted and dedicated to God and his purpose*; specifically recognized, declared and devoted to be sacred; entitled to worship or veneration; that which must be preserved whole and intact, that cannot be transgressed or violated; bind, restrict, enclose, or protect.
- My worship and service to God -- our relationship with God is dedicated and devoted to worship and to his service and will.
- *It is lived!* (1 Peter 1:13-14)
- Live a life pleasing to God – we abstain and set ourselves apart from impure living and dedicate ourselves to the self-control required to live out God's will (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)
- Because each believer is temple of God on earth, the dwelling place of God's Holy Spirit in this wicked/immoral world of darkness (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

3. We are molded and influenced into the image of God (godliness).

- Godly – conform to the laws and will of God, devout; coming from God; divine.
- My spirit and nature, character and behavior, mind and heart from God -- our relationship with God is a living reflection of the nature, character, and truth of God
- *It is lived!* (Colossians 3:1-17).
- We have no desire for the world; it is the way of God and not the way of the world (1 John 2:15-17).

- We bind ourselves to God and not the world – not to the darkness, wickedness, and sinfulness of its unbelief (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).
 - Expressed:
 - a) think as the mind of God
 - b) see with the eyes of God
 - c) hear with the heart of God
 - d) speak with the wisdom of God
 - e) handle with the hand of God
4. Our relationship with God is that we belong to him as the result of his work of redemption.
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – Is this work a process that builds this relationship?
 - “washed” – righteous; “sanctified” – holy; “justified” – godly
 - What is God doing?
 - a) Righteous ---- God turns one from sin, unbelief, and unrighteousness and turns to righteousness (converted)
 - b) Holy ---- God then sets him apart from that sin, unbelief, and unrighteousness by setting him apart from the world and setting him apart to himself
 - c) Godly ---- God then trains and disciplines him to live by his truth and will
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:9 – an example
5. Final thought – Man is made by God in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-28).
- The world believed in Moses day that their kings were the representative of their gods. Now they know that every human is made (created) in God’s image and so the life and person of every one of us represents God’s presence on earth.
 - “Such and awesome, even frightening, concept makes the biblical call to godly living all the more critical; if we fail to represent God’s nature on earth, no other created thing is left to answer the call.” (Epic of God: a Guide to Genesis, Michael Whitworth; Start2Finish Books, 2014)
 - *Transcendence* -- our relationship with God lifts us above the world and flesh.
 - This is the truth, character, nature, perspective, and meaning that define the Christian life. This defines the practical daily spiritual life of Christianity. This is the character of the truth the believer finds when he devotes himself to follow Christ. For the Christian, they are defined by God himself, his nature, and his truth (Matthew 5-7).
 - This way of life is how the Christian transcends the life of the world. Righteous is concerned with the practice of what is right and just. Godly is concerned with the mentality that reflects what is good. Holiness is concerned with what is devoted to God and serving him. While righteous and godly are not the sole property of Christianity, holiness is solely the property of Christianity. All three are defined by what you believe to be the standard of what is righteous, godly, and holy. For the Christian, that standard and measure is God as he revealed himself in the Holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - All three are rooted in how God sees us, what he wishes for us, what he desires from us. The result is a life that seeks to please him and to be free from the control of the sinful spirit that rules this world – the spirit of unbelief and rebellion against God. That

requires the grace, mercy, love, and truth of God. It requires the faith, hope, love, and devotion of the believer. They all fuse together in Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior (Titus 2:11-14).

- They are concerned with what is right and just in the eyes of God that reflects the higher moral standard than what is popular and tolerated by the world. It is a moral integrity that lives at a level above the self-serving spirit of materialism, paganism, sinfulness, rebellion, and unbelief that rules this world. They are bent on a reverence toward God. It is the life of separating yourself from the life of the world and devoting yourself to the life that desires God and his will, seeks a relationship with him and to serve him (Ephesians 5:1-14).
- So the Christian will walk a path that is so very different from the world because it is the path that is not of the world. He follows the path of Christ and will not follow the path of the world (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).
- Beware and expect no less -- "Do not be surprised or discouraged. The world will hate you because it hates me" (John 15).
- The Christian is not complete without all three, cannot be one without the other two; they are bound together.

Lesson 3

Relationship with Christ

1. Christ's Disciples

- Disciple – one who is a *student of and follower of* another's teaching and doctrines; to be *trained and disciplined in* the teachings and doctrines of another; to *grasp* intellectually, *analyze* thoroughly; the *capacity to absorb and live* the teachings and doctrines of another.
- A disciple of Christ is one who has converted to Christ and his teaching (
- A disciple's devotion to Christ is the most precious thing to him (Mark 8:34-38)
- A disciple's devotion is to know and follow and live Christ (Philippians 3:7-11)
- A disciple of Christ will be transformed by Christ -- a matter of how we think and live and not who we are or how we look (Romans 12:1-2)
- A disciple of Christ is hated by the world for it hates Christ (John 15:18-27)
- A disciple of Christ will suffer if necessary to follow Christ in this world (1 Peter 3:13-16, 4:12-16)

2. God's Workmanship

- Workmanship – *the product or result of labor and skill and work executed*; the handiwork of the craftsman
- The believer is the result of the design, skillfulness, and faithful care of the craftsman (Jeremiah 18:1-8)
- The believer in Christ is saved by God's grace from sin and its disobedience so that God can craft him to His good will (Ephesians 2:1-10)
- The believer is his workmanship so that his power can work in is for his glory on the earth (Ephesians 3:20-21).
- The believer is made a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

3. Christ's Sheep

- Sheep – creatures who *need and follow their shepherd, they trust their shepherd because they do not have the wisdom to lead themselves nor the strength to protect themselves against their natural enemies.*
- The shepherd knows who each one of his sheep are and they each one know their shepherds voice – Christ knows who are not of the flock though they may seek to be among us and he there is no power on earth or in hell that can pluck us from his hand; the believer will know what voices are not Christ's and will not follow (John 10).
- As we follow Christ, he will lead us to the pure waters of life, the rich pastures of righteousness, through and to the other side of our trials, and bless us with mercy and

goodness every day of our life until we rest forever in the pastures of Heaven with God (Psalm 23).

- So, Christ is our faith and hope and love, our joy and peace and grace.

4. Final thought: Christian means “person of Christ”.

- We belong to God in Christ (Matthew 1:18-21, Romans 5:11, Romans 6).
- A Christian imitates the example of Christ in his life – he lives the teachings and spirit and mind of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- A Christian trusts Christ with his soul and his very life.
- Christ is the believer’s best thought and work every day; Christ is the very purpose of his life (Colossians 3:1-4).

Lesson 4

Relationship with the Church

1. God's Family

- The family of God has been born again.
- God is the father whose love is endless and boundless (1 John 2-4). Father and children – we do not give our hearts to anything that is not a part of or from God (1 John 2:15-17). This relationship changes us so that the world will not recognize nor understand us (1 John 3:1-3). We give up the practice of sin to be purely like our like or father (1 John 3:4-10). We love one another because we are family regardless of how anyone else thinks of us (1 John 3:11-24). Our Father gives us this love we have for the family and that love is the mark of the family (1 John 4:7-21).
- This love from God for one another is our victory against the world (1 John 5:1-5).

2. Christ's Body

- 1 Corinthians 12 -- The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts that inspire faith and promote unity. Those gifts are – wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous deeds, preaching the Word of God, discernment in spiritual matters, speaking in tongues; are these all given today?
- Though we serve the same Lord, the same Holy Spirit gives us different gifts that enable all of us to serve the Lord (1-11). The body of Christ functions like the human body (12-31) – each member has its function and that is what it does; each body member “knows” his “gift” or “ministry” and it “wants” to complete that function.
- Romans 12:1-8 – these spiritual gifts of ministry; they are not gifts of miraculous powers but for service to our Lord.
- Our relationship with the church – we are Christ's servants to work together as one in full use of our individual gifts to cause the church to function fully and healthy.

3. Chosen, Holy, Beloved

- Colossians 3:12-17 – we live this new life with each other by the power of the risen Christ, as though we become a “new humanity (Phillips)” (1-11).
- Chosen – hand picked out of all by God; Holy – to be purified and devoted (dedicated) to God; Beloved – dear to the heart of God.
- We live that three-fold relationship with God in the merciful, kind, gentle, and humble spirit that makes us forgive one another and forbear with one another (12-13). Yet, the thread that holds all of this together and so holds us together in unity is love (14). Then give the peace of Christ the reigns of your thinking, let his peace control your will, desire, attitude, and thoughts (15). Finally, give place for the teaching of Christ to

live in you always and give no place to the ambitions, desires, and pride of the world, for they will tear you apart (16-17).

4. Final thought: in the church, we are who we are as we belong together.

- We are God's children – he gives us a love that empowers us to not follow the world.
- We are God's servants – follow Christ as we give ourselves to the ministries given us to serve God together in harmony.
- We are God's people – he hand-picked all of us to be his one precious treasure.

Lesson 5

Relationship With the World

1. Called Out, Set Apart, and Sent Out:
 - Called out (Matthew 11:25-30) -- In Christ, God calls us from the burdens, cares, and way of the world for loving this life.
 - Set apart (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1) – the world and the church cannot mix or blended, all of God and righteousness and none of the world and wickedness (Matthew 6).
 - Equips and prepares us to live in this world without compromise, surrender, and betrayal, that we do not become part of the world (Ephesians 6:10-18).
 - Sent out (Matthew 28:18-20) – Then God sends out into the world to make of them disciples for Christ and teach them to obey Christ, to train them to no longer believe in the way of the world and follow or think and practice its life.

2. Transformed and Pure:
 - Transformed (Romans 12:1-2) – We do not pursue the thinking and life and belief systems of the world because we have been completely changed by God.
 - Pure (Ephesians 5:1-14) – We will not make partnerships with the world because we will not follow the immortality and impurity of the world's greed and lust driven ambition and we will follow the path of the light and love of God.
 - Heavenly wisdom (James 3:13-18) – We reject the selfish, burning greed, and immoral path of the world's belief systems and follow the meekness, purity, peace, mercy, reason, and love of the mind of God.

3. Salt and Light:
 - God came to the world in Christ and by his life gave light to the world in its darkness and the world could stop and overpower the light (John 1:1-5).
 - Jesus used God's light to heal the blindness of their hearts and open their eyes to see God, to dispel the darkness of their souls (Matthew 4:12-17 with Luke 4:16-21).
 - But the world prefers the darkness because it loves their sinful practices (John 3:16-21).
 - The property of salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16) – light reveals what is there to be seen and salt changes or alters the nature of where it is applied; so, the Christian bears the light of God into the world to reveal its unbelief and wickedness and show it the righteous, holy, godly life of Christianity.

4. Final thought -- We live in this world not as a part of the world but as vessels of God's presence and people and vessels of Christ presence and work.
 - We live the godly life with the spirit of love in the midst of the ungodly world (1 Corinthians 16:13-14).

- We stand for God and opposed the world.
- We identify ourselves with Christ and not the world.
- We seek for the world to be converted to Christ.
- We live by faith in God not and not in the world's belief systems.

Lesson 6

The Christian Life

Christianity is far more doctrine and teaching. It is not an argument and it is not an exercise in rhetoric. Christianity is life; *Christianity is lived*.

1. Spiritual life:

- Only a spiritually minded man can understand this wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).
- Life of fellowship with God through Christ that is lived in the light of righteousness and not the darkness of the world (1 John).
- The natural man is a carnal mind – thinking and life is directed by his flesh, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.
- The spiritual man is a spiritual mind:
 - a) only he can see the things of God (John 14:1-6)
 - b) only he can see the truth of spiritual life (Matthew 5-7 and 1 John)
 - c) only he can see the truth of spiritual nature (Colossians 3).

2. Manifests God and not the world:

- Marks of the Christian life (Romans 12) – God transforms the believer from the carnal mind and life of the world to think as he thinks, to serve his will, and practice his righteousness.
- Spirit of the Christian life (Matthew 5-7) – manifests the essence and nature of the spirit and mind of God (5), seeks the righteous kingdom of God (6), and bears the fruits of obedience to God (7)
- Growth of the Christian life (2 Peter 1) – growth of the divine nature in us; that by God's power we escape the evil of the world's lust (3-4), devote ourselves to the development of God's character (5-7), and do not betray our hope of living with God forever (8-11).

3. Pilgrim's Journey:

- The believer is on a journey home (1 Peter) – We belong to God and so are on a pilgrim journey to cross over Jordan into the Promised Land!
- Chapter 1 -- God has called the believer to a pilgrimage journey home because of our redemption (3-12) and that sets us apart from the world's wickedness and dedicates us to holy living (13-14).
- Chapter 2 – Because we belong to God and so we are on a pilgrim journey home, we are God's people; we do not belong to the world and lives are not invested in this world or its life.
- Chapters 3 & 4 – Because we do not belong to this world, we will suffer for righteousness and following Christ -- on our journey, we may need to endure suffering for doing the good of and living our loyalty to God.

- Chapter 5 – So we place our lives in the hands of God and we trust him to care for us on our pilgrim journey.
 - “This world is not my home. I am just passing through” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18) – no matter what occurs on our journey through this world/life, no matter how weak our body becomes, God will empower our spirit to finish the journey and cross over Jordan.
 - Consider Romans 8:31—39 for your encouragement.
4. Final thought – The Christian life is not lived for this life and the Christian is not invited in this world.

Lesson 7

The Christian Mind

1. Love:

- Love – Christian love is love of the highest order.
- Christian love is patient and kind and so it will stand up against everything (1 Corinthians 13).
- The Christian loves God with every fiber of his being and love his neighbor as he loves himself and how we love that way is taught in Christ (Matthew 22:34-40).
- The Christian love his enemies for their soul's well-being (Matthew 5:44-48).
- Christian love does not love the world (1 John 2:15-17).
- Christian love is godly, fearless, the expression of our fellowship with God – along with keeping Christ's commandments, and expresses itself in our love for our brethren (1 John 4:7-21).
- Christian love is responsive (1 John 3:11-18).
- Christian love is the sweet spirit that binds us in our fellowship (Colossians 3:12-17).
- Christian love is moral -- what is right and good and true (Ephesians 5:1-14).

2. Faith:

- Faith – Christian faith is conviction of the highest order.
- Christian faith dies without the expression of obeying the teachings of Christ; Christian faith lives by living -- or obeying -- the teachings of Christ; this is the essential nature of our faith. (James 2:14-26).
- By our Christian faith, Christ will train how we think and how live (2 Timothy 3:14-17).
- The result of that training, the life of our Christian faith, is that we are transformed into and live the life of the new man (Colossians 3:1-11).

3. Hope:

- Hope – the only destiny or reward that is everlasting.
- Treasures invested in eternal life and not this life (Matthew 6:19-34).
- Christian hope is our vindication in the face of the world's rejection (1 Corinthians 15:50-58).
- Christian hope is our strength in the face of the world's attacks (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

4. Fruit of this life that binds us to -- belongs to -- God:

- Peace of mind and spirit in trusting Christ (Philippians 4:4-13).
- Strength to live our lives in the righteousness of Christ (Ephesians 3:14-21).
- Joy of knowing and living in Christ (1 John 1:1-10).

5. Final thought -- Christian love, faith, and hope bind us to God; they bind us to eternity. The faith and love and hope of the world can only bind us to the life and place of trouble and sin, a destiny of only ruin and torment.
- The Christian loves, believes, trusts, desires, is content with, and finds pleasure in all that is righteous. So, we hate all that is evil (Romans 12:9).
 - Our love, faith, and hope is the devotion and loyalty and commitment that defines our life and identifies us (Mark 8:34-38).
 - We desire our God.
 - We serve the will of our God.
 - We trust our God.

Lesson 8

The Christian Heart

1. Loyalty:

- Character of loyalty to Christ (Matthew 16:24-28)
- Example of Peter (Luke 22:54-62) – do not become blind to the evil and temptation that is around you.
- Rich young man (Mark 10:12-31) – do you love anything more than God?
- Those who would follow (Luke 9:57-62) – loyalty is the highest level of commitment

2. Devotion:

- Example of Peter (John 21) – not something we grab hold of quickly but it is developed stronger and deeper and richer as we grow spiritually.
- Example of Paul (Romans 1:14-17, 2 Corinthians 11:16-33) – devotion to Christ and the work of God among men will drive our lives to the brink of loss and lay us on the altar of sacrifice.
- Example of the apostles (2 Corinthians 6:1-13) – “grind out the grist mill” to do whatever it takes.

3. Humility:

- The humble heart is the heart we need to be a friend with God (James 4:7-10).
- The humble heart freely submits itself to the teachings of Christ, the Word of God (James 1:19-27).
- The humble heart submits itself to serve his brothers (Galatians 1:1-10).
- The humble heart is the heart of servant that will do whatever it takes to (Philippians 2).

4. Final thought – The loyal devoted humble heart will not turn, surrender, compromise, or give up and quit.

- Christ himself is the example this heart for God as he lowered himself in prayer to God in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-42).
- We live our Christianity as though we really mean it! (2 Corinthians 4:7-12).
- The Christian heart lives the heart of love for God and fellows (Matthew 22:34-40).
- The Christian heart has no love or longing for the world (1 John 2:15-17).

Lesson 9

The Christian Identity

1. The Word of God

- The Word is God's grace and truth given to us in God's Son on earth living among us (John 1:1-14) -- He is the light giving life of God among us.
- This light of God, the Word of God, is our salvation and cleansing (1 John 1).
- That light is the truth and grace of God that lives in us when we follow Him (John 8:12-38) – that light living in us frees us from the practice of sin and the darkness of the world's unbelief.
- It is the living force of God that drives into our very being and lays open every fiber and secret of our whole self and entire existence open before God (Hebrews 4:11-13) – it will expose us and judge us.
- Living in us the Word of God will be our truth and authority of life, our conviction and conscience and character (Colossians 3:16-17).
- Living in us the Word of God will change us (James 1:19-27).
- Living in us God will carry out his work of redemption of the world given in Christ (Matthew 5:13-16).

2. The Cross of Christ

- Must Jesus bear the cross alone?
- The cross is the purpose of our life (Mark 14:34-36).
- The cross is the mark we bear for our faith and obedience, for our fellowship with God before the world that we belong to God and not the world (Galatians 6:11-17).
- When we take up the cross, it will draw a line in the sand between us all who will not believe and will create division and tension and strife when they tempt and dare us to cross it or we teach and challenge them to believe (Matthew 10:34-39).
- The cross of Christ is a thing hard for the world to see but is the very life of the believer (1 Corinthians 1:18-31) – a foolish thing to the world but to the believer it is the power of God.
- The means by which God has destroyed the wisdom and beliefs of the world (Colossians 2:11-15).

3. The Fruit of the Spirit

- The Holy Spirit of God is our mark before God that we belong to him and are not of the world (Ephesians 1:13-14).
- The Holy Spirit will dwell in us we will live by him and not the flesh (Romans 8:1-11).
- The fruit of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives is the spirit of our walk to follow Christ that makes us who we are and frees us from the path of the world (Galatians 5:16-26).

4. Final thought – The Word of God, the cross of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit all identify and make us who we are.

Lesson 10

The Christian Practice

1. Prayer

- Prayer is a mark of the Christian life (Romans 12:12).
- Prayer is an expression of the Christian spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- The peace of God in prayer (Philippians 4:4-6).
- The love of God in prayer (Matthew 5:44-48).
- The healing and salvation of God in prayer (James 5:13-20).

2. Assembly

- Example of the first church (Acts 2:41-48).
- Be devoted to the practice of assembling with the saints because it will nurture and feed your faithfulness (Hebrews 10:19-39).
- The character and actions of the mature faithfulness that can be grown (Hebrews 11).

3. Good Works

- Good works are our heavenly treasure (1 Timothy 6:17-19).
- Devotion to the good works of spiritual living (Titus 3:1-10).
- Good works of caring for one another soul and life's burdens (Galatians 6:1-10).

4. Final thought – The Christian practice will nurture and enrich our relationship with God, build and establish us with God (1 Peter 5:6-10).

Lesson 11

The Christian Fellowship

1. Covenant

- One another – the mutual quality and spirit and responsibility of relationship that bonds or binds two or more people together as though they were one; in the church, we are many members of one body, one family.
- We practice mutual restoration and renewal (Galatians 6:1-5).
- We practice mutual ministry (Romans 12:3-8).
- We practice mutual kindness and forgiveness (Ephesians 4:31-32).
- We practice mutual acceptance (Ephesians 4:1-3).
- We practice mutual doing good (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15).
- We practice mutual love (1 John 4:7-12).
- We mutually serve one another on our pilgrim journey in this world, especially in the midst of suffering (1 Peter 4:7-11).

2. Unity

- Unity – the quality and function and relationship of the same mind and same spirit and same work.
- Ephesians 4
- Be a church worthy of its the name of Christ (1) -- we belong to God so we invest our lives in God's work when we bring our walk under His control; unity is how we walk in a manner that is worthy of the discipleship and fellowship of the Lord's Church.
- If we break the spirit of our walk we will break the unity (2-3).
- The only path of this unity (4-6).
- The gift to live this unity, the gift to live this walk (7-10) -- each one of us who answers the gospel's call to follow Christ answers the gospel's call to be united in Christ (John 17) has been given the gift of God's grace to walk in this unity.
- The work that produces this unity (11-16) -- how does each one of us use the gift given us and the purpose is to prepare and establish God servants in this work (12-13)
- The results of this work (14-16).
- So, we must learn to be Christian tinkers (17-24).
- Then our unity will express itself in manifesting the spirit of righteous living (25-32).

3. Harmony

- Harmony – the capacity and spirit of getting along, of working together, the spirit of a common purpose, focus, and work.
- Colossians 3:12-17
- Roots of this harmony (1-4) -- you are in Christ, so seek only him, from your baptism to your resurrection is the living transformation of the disciple's life.

- You are in Christ, so wear Him (5-11) -- get rid of the evil and get it out of your life. Then wear the new life and live in it.
- You are in Christ and wear his clothes, so let Him live in you (12-17) -- put on Christ and live under his Lordship, put on the Lordship of Christ; It is a life of love and compassion, peace and harmony, and humility and obedience.
These are the Christ-like qualities that we seek to wear (become and live) in our relationship with one another because we have put on Christ (12-14):
- Peace and harmony with one another is in the spirit and life, character and nature of love and compassion (1 Corinthians 13:1-7).

4. Final thought – Christian fellowship is not a social event, not a warm fuzzy experience. The characteristics of Christian fellowship are:

- togetherness
- accountability
- benevolence
- belonging

Our Struggle

Lesson 12

1. The nature of our struggle is a war that is being fought inside us.
 - The war between our flesh and our spirit (Galatians 5:16-26)
 - The war between sin and righteousness (Romans 7:14-25)
 - The war between God and Satan for our minds (2 Corinthians 10:1-6)

2. The characteristics of this war are the elements of our nature.
 - Our own will – what we want, what we value and treasure
 - Our own mind – what we think and our attitude and what we believe and rationalize
 - Our own emotion – what is our state of mind at any given point or moment in the day
 - Our own flesh – what our natural desires crave
 - Our own experiences – what have we done as an adult
 - Our own environment – what do we surround ourselves with, where do we spend our time, what is in our home
 - Our own relationships – who do we commit to/invest in, who do we entangle ourselves with, who do we care about
 - Our own teaching and training – what have we been taught
 - The influence of others and situations and circumstances on all of these

3. The weapon of Satan in this war is the nature of our life.
 - The Christian's perspective of own life (Matthew 6).
 - All the circumstances and situations of our lives.
 - Cares of life – burden that can distract us and turn us from God, to push God out of our lives and leave him no room to return.
 - Trials of life – burden that can cause us to question and doubt God.
 - Temptation and spirally nature of sin – each temptation yielded to will make it easier until that sin is our practice and engulfs other evils, or “Yield not to temptation”.
 - Allurements and pressures of this world – there is no love for God in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life that Satan uses to grab hold of us and turn us from God.

4. Final thought: The entirety of the Christian life is the daily tension between Christ and the world, between God and this life.
 - Why? – Because we choose to belong to God!
 - So, God will use it all to draw us closer to himself (James 4:7-10)
 - “All of God and none of self” -- “I surrender all” -- “Here I stand in the will of God”.
 - God is our devotion.
 - Christ is our identity and definition.
 - The Bible is our truth.
 - Christianity is our life.