STUDENTS FOLLOWING CHRIST

Christian Growth Lessons
When you have completed the "Knowing Jesus Christ' study, type or write out your personal testimony of salvation. Show it to your discipler and let them help you refine it. When you have a final copy, remove this sheet and place your personal testimony sheet here.

A "testimony" should include basically:

1) What brought you to the place of seeing that you needed to accept Christ?

2) In your own words, how did you accept Christ, including any Scripture verse that was particularly helpful to you.

3) Any thoughts you want to add about how your life has changed.
To the disciple:

In the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus called us to "Go, make disciples, baptizing them, and teach them to obey all I have commanded you." Now that you have accepted Jesus yourself, we want to help you learn and grow and change. Your discipler is offering themselves personally to you. In order to make the most of this opportunity, please be aware of some important factors:

1. The Christian Growth Lesson series is designed to help you specifically in areas where people typically struggle. If you apply yourself, you can avoid a lot of trouble and frustration in your Christian walk later and, in fact, you can grow very quickly.

2. While we want to cover the lessons with you, please also see your discipler as someone who can help you with any area of concern - Bible questions, how to deal Biblically with problems at home or at work, questions from Sunday School or church, etc. We really don't mind if it takes two years as long as we can help you grow and learn to live life Biblically.

3. What we hope is that you will really develop a discipling relationship with your discipler so that through the years, whenever you have questions, you can always call on them again for help.

4. Remember that you will benefit from this opportunity only to the extent that you apply yourself. Your discipler is offering their time and help to you but you need to take the initiatives. Seek them out. Ask them your questions. You make sure you profit as much as possible from this opportunity. Your discipler will be keeping the Pastor appraised of your progress but remember that your spiritual growth is ultimately your responsibility.

5. Finally, remember that, as you grow in being a disciple, you are becoming a disciple-maker. Learn as much as you can so that, when God gives you the opportunity, you yourself can be an effective discipler of someone else.

May the Lord bless your journey of discipleship!

Love in Christ
It's great that you want to be growing in Christ! This series of lessons has been developed as the result of years of counseling and ministry, just for the purpose of helping you grow. While the topics are fairly basic, the lessons themselves focus on areas in which Christians commonly struggle, even after having been saved sometimes for years.

The lessons are:

1. - ASSURANCE OF SALVATION
2. - GROWING IN CHRIST
3. - WHAT SHOULD WE DO WHEN WE SIN?
4. - YOUR BIBLE AND HOW TO USE IT
5. - PRAYER - TALKING TO GOD
6. - CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
7. - UNDERSTANDING YOUR BAPTISM
8. - LEARNING GOD'S KIND OF LOVE
9. - GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO GET ALONG AND SOLVE PROBLEMS
10.-BIBLICAL COMMUNICATION

As you complete these lessons, let God change you through His Word and note questions you have. If you are facing situations for which you would like to get answers or help, please feel free to discuss them with your instructor. We're here for your benefit and God has answers!

*We look forward to growing with you!*
ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Welcome, friend, into the family of God! Your decision to receive Christ as your personal Savior and Lord has brought you into a wonderful new life and relationship to God. One of the blessings that you can enjoy now is "assurance" of your salvation. You never need to worry again, "am I really saved for sure?" or "could it be that I've lost my salvation?" God wants you to have assurance! Let's study this together:

I. ASSURANCE THAT I AM SAVED

A. Does the Lord want you to know you are saved? Look up I John 5:13 to find the answer: Yes or No

B. In this verse, who are the people who can know that they have eternal life? Those "who __________ in the name of the __________ of God.

C. Are you confident that you are one of these people? Yes No Not Sure. If you answered "No" or "Not Sure" talk to the person discipling you and they can help you.

D. Read I John 5:13 again and circle the correct word:
   "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may (think, feel, wish, hope, know) that you have eternal life."

E. Before you were saved, did the Bible make much sense to you? _________. Do you find that you understand the Bible much better since you accepted Christ? _________. Look up I Corinthians 2: 12,14 and see what it says about "understanding." This change in your understanding is evidence that you have been born again!

F. Before you were saved, how much did you care about following Jesus and listening to His Word? _________. Has that changed? _________. Look up John 10:27. Jesus says that people who are His sheep "___________ Me." The very fact that you do want to listen to Him and follow Him, you have obviously become one of His ________!

G. Before you were saved, would you rather have been with other unsaved people or with born again Christians? _________. Has that changed? _________. Look at I John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we ____________ ." The fact that you now find a desire to be with other Christian is an evidence that you "have Passed from ________to ________ ."

II. ASSURANCE THAT I WILL ALWAYS BE SAVED

A. Look up John 10:27 again. Read verse 27, 28 and 29 and fill in the missing words:
"My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them _______________ life, and they shall _______________ ______________; no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand." What is Jesus promising for those who have become His sheep? ________________

B. Look up and read Romans 8: 35-39. What do these verses teach you? _______

C. Someone will ask, "But what if I do really bad things after I'm saved? It seems like God would just disown me." Look up Hebrews 12:5,6. What does it say the Lord does to those "He loves" and those He "accepts as a son"? "He ______________ those He loves and ______________ everyone He accepts as a son." You see, the Lord loves you so much, He does not disown you when you do wrong. Rather, as your Father, He corrects you. Read verse 10 to see this is true.

So you see, God wants you to know that you are saved and that you can never lose this wonderful salvation He has given you. With that settled, you are now free to grow and to serve the Lord and others! Read Psalm 62 as a praise to our great God!

If you have any questions, or something else you'd like to ask your discipler about, write them down here and they will be happy to help you!
Meditation on Lesson 1

1. Are you convinced that God wants you to know you are a saved person? Complete one of the following three sentences:
   
a. Yes, I am convinced God wants me to know because:

b. No, I’m not convinced because:

c. Actually, I’m still not sure because:

2. In Section I, letters E, F, and G, you saw three of the evidences that a person has been born again. What were they and how do you see them in your own life?
3. When you have doubts about your salvation, how can you use the Scriptures you have studied here to help you?

4. Do you see in the Scriptures that, now that you are saved, you can live in the security of knowing you’ll always be saved.

5. Even though eternal security is clearly taught in the Bible, many people don’t want to believe it. Read the following arguments that you might hear. How could you answer them? (Use Scriptures as much as you can).

   a. “I don’t believe in eternal security. If that was true then once you were saved, you could live any way you want to and still go to Heaven!”

   b. “I don’t believe in eternal security. Even after you’re saved you have to prove yourself worthy to go to Heaven!”
6. In your own words, why does it really make perfect sense that God would want you to know that you’re saved and your salvation is eternally secure?

7. Memorize Isaiah 41:10 and be prepared to recite it to your discipler.
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

____________________________  __________
Discipler     Date
Students Following Christ
Christian Growth Lessons

Lesson 2

GROWING IN CHRIST

It is said that a sculptor was once asked how he was able to turn a piece of rock into such beautiful figures. He replied, "I just chip away everything that isn't the beautiful figure"!

Every one of us who is saved desires to be the beautiful figure that God would want us to be. The good news is that God, like the sculptor, desires to chip away from your life those old sinful, selfish habits and attitudes, and make you more like His Son, Jesus Christ.

Christlikeness is the goal of the Christian life. God gave us the Bible so that we would know what it means to be like Christ in all that we do and say. Growth and change, not perfection, is God's desire for your life. But how will this come about?

I. GOD'S GOAL FOR YOUR LIFE

A. Read Romans 8:28 & 29 and fill in the blanks to reveal God's goal for your life: "For those God foreknew He also predestined to be ______________ to the ______________ of His Son."

B. What do you think this means in your own words?  
________________________________________________________________________  
________________________________________________________________________

II. GOD'S MEANS FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE GOAL - Progressive Growth

When you accepted Christ, you were instantly translated from the power of Satan into God's Kingdom. However, learning to be a godly person is a lifelong process.

A. Read Philippians 1:6: What has God committed Himself to do for you?  
________________________________________________________________________  

B. Read Philippians 2:14 & 15. Does God's commitment to you mean that He expects nothing in return? _________________________________________________________________

C. Read I Timothy 4:7. What does God desire from us? _________________________  
________________________________________________________________________

D. Read I Thessalonians 4:9,10. What did Paul think the Thessalonians were doing very well in? ______________. Yet what did he urge them to do? ______________.

E. Read Luke 9:23. How often does Jesus say we must renew our commitment to follow Him?  
________________________________________________________________________
At some time in your Christian life, someone or something may cause you to think that godliness can be attained through some instant act of commitment or some formula that produces immediate holiness. This may be referred to as a "second blessing", "entire sanctification", "spirit baptism", the "filling of the spirit", "total surrender", or some other similar phrase. While all Christians long to be perfect, perfection will only occur in heaven. In the meantime, God desires that we are daily growing and conforming to the image of Jesus Christ. This is what your Christian life is all about!

III. GOD'S METHOD FOR GROWING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

A. Read Ephesians 4: 22-24. What are the three important aspects of growth identified in this passage?

1. _________________________________
2. _________________________________
3. _________________________________

B. What does Ephesians 4:23 mean when it says, "be made new in the attitude of your mind"? (Read John 17:17 for help). What kinds of things should you be doing to allow this to happen? ___________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

C. Read Ephesians 4: 17-19. What is the "old man" which must be put off according to Ephesians 4:22? __________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

D. What is the "new man" referred to in Ephesians 4:24? (Read Romans 13:14 for help.)
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

E. What specific sinful habits or thought patterns are you aware of in your life out of which you know God would want you to grow? And how can you apply these three steps to be growing in these areas? __________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

IV. GOD'S STRENGTH FOR GROWING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

A. Read I Corinthians 10:13. What are some things God promises here? ______________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

B. Read Philippians 4:13. What limits do we face as we desire to serve God and grow in the likeness of Christ? ______________________
_______________________________________________________________________
God offers us great hope and purpose in the Bible. He holds out to every man, woman, boy and girl the confidence of eternal life through simple faith in Christ. Having been saved, we know that one day God will transform us totally into the likeness of His Son. In the meantime, God expects us to be growing daily more and more like Him, putting off our old ways and putting on the new.
Meditation on Lesson 2

1. In lesson 2, we learned that God’s goal for your life (now that you’re saved) is for you to become more like Christ every day. Does this make sense to you? Does it leave any questions in your mind? If so, write them down here and go through them with your discipler:

2. Many people get the idea that God expects them to be perfect. Why is this unreasonable?
3. Back to Question III E. in the lesson, what particular habit (or habits) would you like to work on? Take it (or each one individually) and apply the three aspects of growth:

   a. Where in the Bible is this particular problem addressed? Find specific verses that apply to it. If you don’t know where or how to find such verses, call your discipler, pastor, or some other mature Christian who could give you some ideas. Write out the verse(s) that seem especially helpful:

   b. In these verses you found, what would you say is the “old man” that needs to be “put off?”
c. In these verses, what would you say is the “new man” that needs to be “put on?”


d. What are some specific, practical things you can do this week to put off the old and put on the new – so that, in fact, you know you are growing?
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

_________________________________________  __________
Discipler  Date
WHAT SHOULD WE DO WHEN WE SIN?

As we learned in Lesson 2, God's goal for us is to grow in the likeness of Christ. Growth, not perfection, is His expectation. Since we still have the old selfish nature even though we are saved, we still sin. Every selfish attitude, thought, word, deed, and habit is sin. It is essential to our growth in Christ that we learn the way God has provided for us to clear our conscience, to stay in fellowship, and to continue to grow.

Our old way of dealing with our sins must change. Like Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, our natural way of dealing with guilt is ineffective. The Genesis 3 kind of person runs from tree to tree, hides, blame-shifts, and tries to cover over sin so that God and others cannot see it. God's way is to grow in transparency - to walk in the light of His Word and deal with sin properly.

I. SEEING THE NEED FOR DEALING WITH SIN GOD'S WAY

A. From Psalm 32: 3, 4, describe the results of keeping silent about sin.

B. What does James 4: 1-3 say sin causes?

C. Read Psalm 51: 12, 13 and note the two things David expected after his sin was dealt with properly.
   1. 
   2. 

II. UNDERSTANDING REPENTANCE

A. Repentance Is Not Simply Sorrow.

Some have supposed that repentance only means feeling sorry about sin and the troubles it has caused. Read II Corinthians 7:10. Here Paul carefully distinguishes between the "Godly sorrow" which brings repentance, and the "worldly sorrow" which brings death.

There are several reasons why a person may feel sorry:
   1. He may be sorry he got caught.
   2. He may be sorry for how he hurt other people.
   3. He may be sorry he cannot continue in his sin peacefully.
   4. He may be sorry his great plans are not working out.

Read Matthew 27: 3-5. Judas is an example of someone who was very sorry for what he had done, but his sorrow did not cause him to turn to God.
B. The Meaning of Repentance

1. The word "repent" simply means "to change direction" or "to turn around and go the opposite way". Repentance is a change of mind, will, and direction concerning sin, self, and God.


III SPECIFIC STEPS FOR DEALING WITH SIN

A. Agreement with God's Word about our sin.

According to I John 1:9, what should we do when the light of God's Word shows us that we have sinned? _______________________________________________________________

B. Confession to God.

1. The word "confess" means "to say the same thing" or "to agree with God about my sin". Which of the following is a Biblical confession and which is not:
   (a) "Lord, forgive me. You know I couldn't help it".
   (b) "Lord, you know I don't know why I did it".
   (c) "Please forgive me. You know I did it because of the way so-and-so treated me".
   (d) "Lord, I had no excuse. I see how wrong I was. Please forgive me".
   (e) "I'll do better next time".
   (f) "Forgive me if I've sinned".

2. Read how David spoke of his sin in Psalm 51:1-4.

C. Confession to Appropriate People.

Read Matthew 5:23, 24. What did Christ command us to do when our sin has caused a problem in a relationship with another person? ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

D. Change.

Confession of sin is not enough. Some might ask, "This is an easy way to deal with sin. Does this mean I can keep doing this sin if I want to, as long as I confess it"?

1. What is God's answer to this question in James 4:7-10? __________________________

2. What does Proverbs 28:13 say in response to such a question? _____________________
________________________________________________________________________

We must confess and ______________________ our sins.
Meditation on Lesson 3

1. What would you say are typically the ways that people deal with their sins, failures, conflicts, etc? What do they do to try and “make things right”?

2. From your answers to question 1, which do you think you have usually done?

3. How is the Biblical approach for dealing with sin different? How is it better?
4. Someone may tell you, “You should end your day by asking God to forgive all your sins from that day.” What’s right about this? What’s wrong with it?

5. Are there any glaring sins in your life that you have not really dealt with Biblically? This could be something from your past or something going on right now. Try to be honest here and write them down, then let your discipler help you evaluate them.

6. If you and your discipler agree that any of the sins you listed do need to be dealt with, what is your plan? (Do this question with our discipler).

Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________ 
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to the next lesson.

Discipler ___________________________ Date __________________
YOUR BIBLE AND HOW TO USE IT

Now that you have received Jesus Christ as your Savior, He desires to teach you how to live life His way. The Bible says that living life His way will bring you love and joy and peace. But how can you know what He wants you to do and how He wants you to live?

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD

In II Timothy 3:1, the Bible warns us that in the Last Days (today), terrible times would come. Rather than getting better and better, this world will only get worse. But God has an answer for the Last Days. This answer is found down in verses 14 through 17. Read these verses.

A. What is the Bible able to do for a person in the end of verse 15? ______________________
________________________________________________________________________

B. Verse 16 says that "all scripture is______________________________". This means literally that the Bible is the words of God, which He has spoken to us, just as we "breathe out" our words.

C. What four things does verse 16 say the Bible is useful for?
(1). _________________________
(2). _________________________
(3). _________________________
(4). _________________________

D. Read verse 17. What does this verse say is the reason why God gave us the Bible? ________
________________________________________________________________________

These verses tell us that God gave us the Bible to first show us how to be saved, then to provide us with a guide that is sufficient to lead us in whatever God wants us to do. It is our "Owner's Manual" for life. Last week we saw that God's goal for our life is to grow in the likeness of Christ. The Bible tells us everything that means for you and I in our everyday lives.

II. HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE

Look up II Peter 1:19-21. Approximately forty men wrote the books of the Bible over a period of some 2000 years.

A. Who moved these men to speak according to verse 21? ________________________________

B. What are we assured was never the case in the end of verse 20 and the beginning of vs. 21?
________________________________________________________________________
C. Why do you suppose that this is so important? _____________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF OBEYING THE BIBLE

A. Read John 14:21. What do we show the Lord Jesus when we obey the Bible?
________________________________________________________________________________

B. Read James 1: 22-25. What does God want us to do and not to do? (see especially v.22)
________________________________________________________________________________

C. In the last line of James 1:25, when can we expect God's help and blessing? (put a check beside the correct answer)

___ When we hope to do right
___ When we intend to do right
___ When we pray about doing right
___ When we are doing right

IV. HOW WE RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM GOD

A. Read Psalm 119: 105. How does this passage describe the Bible? ______________________
________________________________________________________________________________

B. Read Ephesians 6:17. What is the "sword of the Spirit"? ______________________________

C. Read John 14:26. What does the end of this verse say that the Holy Spirit will do for you?
"He (the Holy Spirit) will _____________ you of ____________ I (Jesus) have said to you."
What does this have to do with receiving guidance from God? _________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

It is extremely important for you to realize early in your Christian life that God's Holy Spirit
does not intend to guide you through your feelings, circumstances, or dreams and visions.
The extent to which He can guide you is directly dependent on how much of the Word you
have in you.

V. LEARNING THE BIBLE

The Bible itself indicates several important aspects of how to be learning its life-changing truths
for yourself.

A. Hearing God's Word.

What does the following verse teach about hearing God's Word?
1. Ephesians 4: 11

B. Reading God's Word.

Read Psalms 1: 1-3. These verses teach the importance of making the Word of God (the Law of the Lord) your delight. One way of doing this is by regularly reading the Bible on your own to obtain an overall knowledge of it. Just a few minutes a day (like just 5 minutes at night before you go to bed) can be a great aid in learning the Bible.

C. Studying God's Word.

Read II Timothy 2:15. We must study the Bible in order to be able to "correctly handle the word of truth". As you study, ask the following kinds of questions:

1. What is the context about? In other words, what do the other verses all around the passage say? The words surrounding a passage usually throw some light on its meaning.

2. Who is speaking and who is being spoken to? This may have a major impact on the interpretation of the passage.

3. What do the words mean? The Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Identify the key words in the passage, then, use books like Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible or Vine's Expository Dictionary to discern the meaning of the original words.

4. What is the "telic purpose" of the passage? As we studied earlier, all the Scriptures are given to adequately equip us for every good work. What this means is that every passage of the Bible is given for some specific purpose. In order to correctly interpret the Bible it is important to discern this purpose for the passage being studied.

   EXAMPLES:  I Peter 3:7 - Husband's role.
   I Peter 3:1-6 - How a believing wife should live with an unbelieving husband.
   Ephesians 6: 1-4 - Parent/Child relationship.

5. Is your interpretation consistent with the rest of the Bible? Every passage must bear the weight of the rest of the Bible. All of the 31,177 verses are perfectly in balance.
Meditation on Lesson 4

1. Looking back at Section I of the lesson, why do you think the Bible is important?

2. Looking back at Section II, how would you answer a person who says:
   a. "The Bible is just a collection of men's writings."
   b. "The Bible is the Word of God, but since men wrote it, it contains errors."
3. Based on your study, write out a statement of what you personally believe about the Bible:

4. "Mysticism" is one of the most harmful errors that Christians fall into today. "Mysticism" is the idea that the Holy Spirit "guides" us through things other than the Scriptures. People say "The Holy Spirit led me to do this or that," based on feelings, circumstances, etc., rather than taking the time to diligently search the Scriptures. As you saw in Ephesians 6:17, the "Sword of the Spirit" is the Word of God and, in II Timothy 3:17, it is the Scriptures that make us "thoroughly equipped for every good work." Does this make sense to you? Does it leave any questions you'd like to have answered? If you do, write them here. Either way, definitely ask your discipler to discuss this matter more with you. The error of "mysticism" is extremely common. You will hear it in Christian books, sermons, testimonies, music, even from older Christians who ought to know better. If you fall into it, however, it will draw your heart away from the Bible and, in the end, leave you frustrated, confused, and ignorant of how to apply the Bible to your everyday life and decisions.
5. What is your plan for hearing, reading, and studying the Bible? One of the best things you could do is to ask your discipler what works for them. Then, while you're being discipled, imitate their system. In time you will develop your own system but you will progress faster if you start by simply imitating someone else's system.

Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler ...........................................  Date
Lesson 5

PRAYER - TALKING TO GOD

Now that you are a child of God, another one of the tremendous benefits that you enjoy is the privilege of prayer. You are now able to talk directly with the Creator of the universe. Through the Bible God speaks to you, while in prayer you speak to Him. What a privilege! Yet you will find out quickly that prayer is one of the most difficult disciplines to learn as a Christian. The best thing you can do is get a good start on prayer early in your Christian life, then watch as God blesses through it over the years!

I EXAMPLES OF PRAYER

Look up the following examples of prayer. What can you learn from their example?

A. Jesus, Mark 1: 32-39

1. Jesus prayed after a very busy day - it's good to wrap up a "busy" time with prayer.

2. Jesus prayed after a very successful day - that's when it's easy to forget to stop and thank God for what He has given us.

3. Jesus prayed before a new venture - we need to take our days to God and ask for His strength, wisdom, and blessing.

4. ______________________________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________________________

6. ______________________________________________________________________

B. Early Church, Act 4: 24-31

1. ______________________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________________

4. ______________________________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________________________
II. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

Look up the following verses. What hindrances to prayer are suggested by each?

A. Proverbs 28:9

B. James 4: 1-6

C. Matthew 6:7,8

D. I Peter 3:7

What do you think honestly may be hindrances to prayer in your own life? What can you do to overcome these things?

III. HOW TO PRAY

A. Is there a special time and place when I should pray?

What do the following verses teach about the time and place of prayer?

1. Luke 5: 16; I Kings 8: 22,23

2. I Thessalonians 5: 17; Psalms 55: 16,17

As can be seen in these verses, you can pray any time and in any place, yet it is also a characteristic of godly people to have regular times of prayer in private places. When and where could you plan to have a regular time of prayer? (Note that it is better to start with some manageable plan and then increase it as the habits get established. For instance, you could start with a plan to pray for five minutes each morning, then increase to ten minutes when you have developed a solid consistent habit). Your plan:

B. What should I say in my prayers?
The most important thing to remember is that God is a Person and He wants to be spoken to like a Person. He is God and so we need to pray respectfully, but there is no "magic" language or predetermined words that you have to say. However, there are certain elements that are important to good prayers. Note the following elements of prayer and briefly explain what they mean in your own words:

1. Praise - Psalm 117: 1
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Thanks - Psalm 118: 1
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. Confession - I John 1: 9
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. Requests for self and others - Philippians 4: 6
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

C. Some suggestions to help you.

1. Make a prayer list. This will be a basic guide to help you remember important prayer requests. Make a list of your immediate family members and friends, pastor, missionaries, unsaved friends, noting any specific needs in their lives, then note any special needs in your own life. You can then spread them out over say a week's period, praying for some of them each day.

2. If you have trouble thinking of ways to praise God, just turn to the Psalms and read one to God, meaning what you say from your own heart.

3. You may also want to keep a "hot" list of urgent prayer requests. This way, when a friend asks you to pray for them for some urgent need or problem, you will have a place to note it and to remind you to pray about it. It will really encourage them if you ask them about it later and honestly say that you were praying for them.

Work hard to develop a consistent habit of prayer, then watch as you see the Lord work His wonders again and again!
Meditation on Lesson 5

1. In your own words, what is prayer?

2. Based on your study, what would you say are some wrong views of prayer? Wrong ideas about prayer?

3. Someone will say, “When you pray, you shouldn’t ask for things for yourself - that would be selfish prayer.” What is wrong with this?
4. Someone else will say, “When you pray, you shouldn’t bother God with little things, like asking Him for new furniture or a particular gun or a car to replace your old one.” There is something very wrong with this statement. Do you see what it is?

5. Look at the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Where do you see in it the same elements of prayer you studied in Lesson 5?

6. Take the time to organize some kind of a prayer list - either on index cards, in a notebook, on your computer, etc. Look back at Section C. on page (3) of the lesson for ideas. Make it your goal to spend time praying over your list at least five days a week (although consider three times a success). Show your discipler what you have done and ask for any suggestions or help they might offer.

7. Memorize Philippians 4: 6,7
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler                                   Date
Lesson 6

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

God's concern for you did not stop after you were saved. Part of His plan for your growth and conformity to the image of Christ is accomplished through your participation in the local church. Let's study this important institution and its place in your life.

I. WHAT IS A CHURCH?

In English the word "church" may refer to a building or to a denomination (as in "The Baptist Church in America." It is important to see what the word means in the Bible:

A. The Universal Church

Look up Matthew 16:18. What do you think Jesus meant when He used the term "church" in this verse? ________________________________________________________________ ________________________________________________________________

B. The Local Church

The majority of New Testament references are to what we call "local churches." This term refers to specific groups of believers who met together in their own cities.

1. Look up Revelation 1:4. To whom did John write the book of Revelation? ________________________________________________________________ Note that John recognized the uniqueness of the individual churches. He did not write to "the church which is in Asia" but to the seven churches.

2. Look up Acts 14:21-23. Did Paul think it was important to make sure the bodies of believers in each city were organized into churches with leaders? Yes No

II. THE ORGANIZATION OF A CHURCH

A. Look up Philippians 1:1. What are the three groups addressed at the church in Philippi?

B. Overseers

In the New Testament, the titles "overseer, elder," and "pastor" all refer to the person we know today simply as the pastor. "Overseer" refers to his authority and responsibility to "oversee" the work of the church. "Elder" refers to his character, as he should be a mature man who can be an example to others. "Pastor" refers to his job of "shepherding" the people of the church. Look up I Peter 5:1-4 to see all of these aspects of a pastor's work mentioned together.
C. Deacons

Look up Acts 6:1-4 to see the first election of deacons in the church. Why were they needed?
__________________________________________________________________________

Why are they still needed today? ____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

D. Saints

1. Look up I Corinthians 1:2. Paul addresses the people at the church of Corinth as "those __________________ in Christ Jesus and called to be _____________." In the New Testament, the terms "saint, sanctified, and holy" refer to all saved people, not just certain "super spiritual" ones, so the "saints" of a church were its general membership.

2. Look up Acts 2:41. What were the two characteristics of the people who were "added" to the church?
   a. ______________________________________________________________________
   b. ______________________________________________________________________

Note that, in the New Testament, there is no authority above the local churches except Jesus Christ Himself. This is called the "autonomy" or "self-rule" of the local church.

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

A. Look up Matthew 28:18-20. This is known as the "Great Commission." What are the four things the church is told to do in verses 19 & 20?
   1. Therefore, go...
   2. ______________________________________________________________________
   3. ______________________________________________________________________
   4. ______________________________________________________________________

B. We are told to "make disciples of all nations." Look up Acts 1:8 to see this command stated in a different way. What does this mean in your own words? ____________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

C. See then (back in Matthew 28), the church is to baptize and to teach those who have been saved. What specifically is the church to teach? What does this mean in your own words?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

It is important to realize that the purpose of the church is to tell others about Christ, then to baptize those who are saved, then to teach them to both know and apply the Bible in their lives.
IV. YOUR PART IN THE CHURCH

A. Read Hebrews 10: 24, 25. What are believers told not to do? _________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

B. Read I Peter 4: 7-10. What is one thing that the believer should do from each of these verses?

Verse 7: ___________________________________________________________________
Verse 8: ___________________________________________________________________
Verse 9: ___________________________________________________________________
Verse 10: __________________________________________________________________

As you study your Bible, you will see that the local church is the one institution, which God created to carry out His Great Commission. All your life, God's desire is that you commit yourself to a Bible-preaching church. There you can be taught yourself and also you can give your own gifts and abilities to be a part of seeing others saved and growing in Christ.
Meditation on Lesson 6

1. How has this study changed the way you think about “church?”

2. Who came up with the idea of a “church” to begin with?

3. The sad fact is that most of the “churches” in existence today are extremely poor examples of what Jesus intended. How do many people respond to this fact? How will you?
4. In Section III on page 2 of the lesson, we discussed the Great Commission as being the purpose of the church:

   a. In your own words, write out what you believe to be the purpose of the church:

   b. If this is true, then what are some things that are not necessarily the purpose of the church?

5. Honestly, prayerfully evaluate yourself:

   a. What are some talents, abilities, or skills you have that you could give to the Lord in some way in His church?

   b. Are there any particular ministries you’d really like to be involved in?
6. If you are not presently an active member of a Biblical church, discuss with your discipler joining here at Fellowship. Do you have any hesitations or concerns? Any reasons you’d be excited to join? Discuss these too with your discipler.

7. If you already are a member of a Biblical church, are you a regular attender and are you actively giving yourself there? If not, what do you need to change? What steps do you need to take?

Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____. is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to the next lesson.

Discipler ___________________________ Date __________


Lesson 7

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BAPTISM

Your baptism is an exciting part of your new walk with the Lord! On the one hand it may seem a little scary, but on the other hand, it is fun to know that you are doing something in obedience to your Lord. While baptism is an exciting part of being a Christian, however there is often much confusion about it. Let's study the subject together and seek to develop a good Biblical understanding of it.

I. IS IT IMPORTANT?

Someone may ask, "Is baptism important? After all, salvation is by faith alone."

A. Look up Matthew 28:18-20. This passage is called the "Great Commission." In it, Jesus is giving His disciples some last minute instructions for what He wants them to do. Jesus wants His people to "go," to "make disciples of all nations," and to__________________________________________________________, and to__________________________________________________________.

B. Look up Matthew 3:13-17. Why did Jesus insist that John baptize Him in verse 15? What does this mean? ____________________________________________________________

C. Look up Acts 8:36. What was this man's attitude toward his baptism? __________________

What we see in these verses is that (1) Jesus commanded that those who were saved (became disciples) were to be baptized, (2) that Jesus Himself as our model was baptized, (3) that Jesus said that participating in baptism was simply an act of obedience, done out of a desire to do all that pleases God, and (4) that the early believers thought it was very important.

II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BAPTIZED?

The phrase "to be baptized" unfortunately means a lot of things to a lot of people. Some people sprinkle water on you others would pour water on you, while others actually immerse you in the water. (These are all called different "modes" of baptism). Still others will say that it doesn't matter, as long as you are sincere. What does the Bible say?

A. According to Moulton's Greek Analytical Lexicon, the original Greek word "baptizo" means, "to dip, to immerse." If a Greek speaking person was dying a shirt, he would "baptizo" the shirt in the dye, meaning clearly that he would plunge it into the water. Obviously, based on the meaning of the word itself, when Jesus commanded that His disciples should be baptized, He intended that they should be immersed in water.
B. Look up the following verses and then note in each case, which fits the context better, sprinkling, pouring, or immersion?

Matthew 3:16 ______________________________________________________________

John 3:23 _________________________________________________________________

Acts 8:36, 38, 39 _________________________________________________________

C. Look up Romans 6: 3-5. What is it that your baptism pictures? (Note especially verse 5).
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

So you see that your baptism is a picture of what has already happened to you spiritually. When you were saved you "died, were buried, and arose again with Jesus Christ." When you are baptized by immersion you go back into the water (dying), disappear for a second under the water (your burial) and then come up out of the water (your rising again). Your water baptism by immersion now serves as a perpetual reminder to you that you have died to your old life and from now on can live a new life in Christ.

III. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A. Look up Acts 2: 41. What preceded the peoples' baptism? ___________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

B. Look up Matthew 28: 18-20 again. Who is to be baptized? ___________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

C. Based on what you have already studied, why does it make sense that only believers should be baptized? _____________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

If you still have any questions in your own mind about the subject of baptism or church membership, take the time to write them down in the space below or on the back of this page. Welcome again to the family of God!
**Meditation on Lesson 7**

1. Try to write out a statement of what you think the Bible teaches about baptism:

2. As you are probably all too aware, many churches and people have many different ideas about baptism. When you run into these people in town, at work, or in your family, what do you think should be your attitude toward such people?

3. Have you been Biblically baptized? If not, discuss this with your discipler. Do you have any reservations about it?

4. If you have not been Biblically baptized, do not move on from this lesson until you have contacted the pastor and started the process of baptism and church membership.
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler  Date
LEARNING GOD’S KIND OF LOVE

Look up John 13: 34,35. In verse 34, what commandment did Jesus give to His disciples the night before He went to the Cross? _________________________________________________________________

In verse 35, what would all men know if they saw this love between believers? ____________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

In the Bible, love is called the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5: 22). Real observable love will be the characteristic of any growing Christian and is itself essential to growth.

I. WHAT IS BIBLICAL LOVE?

A. List (in your own words) 14 characteristics of God’s kind of love in I Corinthians 13: 4-7.

1. ________________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________________________________
5. ________________________________________________________________________
6. ________________________________________________________________________
7. ________________________________________________________________________
8. ________________________________________________________________________
9. ________________________________________________________________________
10. _______________________________________________________________________
11. _______________________________________________________________________
12. _______________________________________________________________________
13. _______________________________________________________________________
14. _______________________________________________________________________

B. Do these characteristics focus on how you feel or on what you do? ____________________

C. In John 3:16 it says that "God so loved that He ____________________________________.

D. Who is the supreme example of love in Ephesians 5:25? ____________________________.

II. WHAT ARE SOME HINDRANCES TO GROWING IN BIBLICAL LOVE?

A. Broken Fellowship With God

Look up I John 4: 7-11. See there that God is the source of real love. One must be united with God in salvation and walking in fellowship with Him if we are to be able to ourselves know and express love.
B. Adherence To False Ideas

We may have picked up wrong ideas about love. Which of these have you observed?

1. Love is an excuse for not disciplining children.

2. Love is an excuse for not having and upholding Bible convictions (strong positions that we should hold).

3. Love is an excuse for not solving problems with other people.

4. Love is a reason to get married even though problems are not being solved.

5. Love is a way to describe lust.

6. Love can be fallen into and out of.

7. Love is not masculine.

C. Fear Of Risk

Which of the following reasons might we give for not expressing and growing in Biblical love?

1. It is costly.

2. It requires commitment and sacrifice.

3. It makes me vulnerable.

4. Deep down inside, I still think that it is possible to have a magical love without any problems (the "happily ever after" of fairy tales).

Note that loving relationships are not built on the absence of problems, but rather when two people are willing to solve their problems God's way and grow together through them.

D. Dependence On Self

We cannot grow in love in our own strength (John 15:5).

III. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "GROW IN LOVE"?

Growing in love means to:

1. Love God and the Bible (John 14:21).

2. Looking to the interests of others (Philippians 2:3,4).
3. Be solution-oriented (Ephesians 4:15,29).

4. Express love in observable actions as well as in words (I John 3:18).

5. Be quick to say "forgive me," and "I forgive you" (Ephesians 4:32).

6. Be willing to go and restore others who have fallen into sin (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19,20).

7. To be determined to give love regardless of the response you get from others (Romans 5:8; I Peter 2:21-24).

IV. AREAS OF LOVE TO GROW IN

Think about the following areas of your life. What could you do to grow in love in these areas?

1. God and the Bible

2. Your spouse

3. Your children

4. Your brothers and sisters in Christ.

5. Unsaved people.

As you grow in your Christian life, you will learn more and more the importance of Biblical love. It is the key to real freedom and a fulfilling life. Be prayerful and diligent to grow in love.
Meditation on Lesson 8

1. Looking back at the lesson, why do you think that Jesus chose love to be the mark of discipleship?

2. What else might we naturally think would have been or should be the mark of discipleship? What’s wrong with each of these?

3. Practically speaking, what do you think this love should “look” like? What should be different about true disciples? Try to be as specific as possible.

4. As you look at the list of “False Ideas” about love under Roman Numeral II in the lesson, are there any of these you think you might particularly struggle with? Write them down here and discuss them with your discipler.
5. From Roman Numeral IV, “Areas of Love to Grow In,” pick one of these areas and make some specific plans how to grow in this. Remember the process from Lesson 2- 1) Identify the area to grow in 2) Find applicable Scriptures 3) Identify specific points where you can put off the old man and put on the new 4) Implement your plan. Stay on this until you have made some definite growth in love in this particular area of your life.

6. Memorize John 13:34,35
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that ______________________________
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler __________________________ Date __________
Lesson 9

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO GET ALONG AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

On the night before He died, Jesus told His disciples, "By this shall all men know that you’re My disciples, if you love one to another" (John 13:35). In Ephesians 4:16, Paul describes a healthy church as one in which every member is meeting needs and, as a result, the body is not only healthy, but also increases. Hebrews 10:24 commands believers to stimulate one another to love and good works.

This love and care is not to cease when a believer does wrong in a way that hinders growth and interpersonal relationships. In Galatians 6:1, believers are commanded to set out to "restore" a believer who is "overtaken in (overcome by) a fault." Love is to motivate us in all we do, not just when things are going well. Love cannot stop when conflicts arise; love must seek to restore. We are to care for one another when the need is greatest.

However, we must be careful. The greater the problem, difference, or conflict; the greater the love that must be shown and the greater the need to follow Christ's principles. Let's study them.

I. WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I HAVE HURT SOMEONE ELSE?

Look up Matthew 5:23,24. How important is it to God that we maintain good relationships with others? What does He want us to do? __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

II. WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN SOMEONE ELSE HURTS ME?

A. The first thing to do when you think someone has hurt you is deal with your own vengeful heart.

1. What should be the Christians attitude toward another person who has hurt him? Look up Mark 11:25 and Romans 12:17-21. __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Read the parable in Matthew 18:23-35. Based on this parable, why should believers be willing to forgive those who hurt them? If you have trouble, look up Ephesians 4:32 also.

________________________________________________________________________

As we shall see, this does not mean that we should not go and deal with problems; it means that we must first deal with our own attitudes so that, when we do go to a person, we do it out of love.
B. Note the steps taken in Matthew 18:15-17.

1. (v.15) "If your brother sins against you". Compare this with Galatians 6:1: "if someone is caught in a sin".

   a. Note: This does not refer to personal preferences. There is a sin- a breaking of scriptural truth and the brother is "caught in it" or "overcome" by it.

   b. Does this allow us to go to each other based on "hearsay?" What if the person falls in an area but recovers quickly and keeps on growing?

2. (v.15) "Go" Do not wait until the reproofs of life teach him or until others are hurt. Go! This is a test of Christian love. How is it described in verses 12-14? ______________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

3. (v.15) Step #1 - "Go and show him his fault"

   a. Who are you to go to about the problem? ______________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

   b. Why is this important? __________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

   c. What is it that you are to show them? _____________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

4. (v.16) Step #2 - "If he will not listen"

   a. What is to be done if step #1 fails? _____________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

   b. Why is this important? __________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

5. (v.17) Step #3 - "If he refuses to listen to them"

   a. What is to be done if step #2 fails? _____________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

   b. Who is commanding that this be done? Is it unloving? __________________________________________________________________________________________

   c. What is still the goal according to Galatians 6:1? _____________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

   d. Read I Corinthians 5:1,12,13, then II Corinthians 2:6-8. What does it say concerning the successfulness of the command in I Corinthians 5:13?
6. Note:

a. Step #3 is the last resort. The first two steps may be continued if there is no great danger or rapid deterioration and if there is progress.

b. "Treat him as you would a pagan" (v.17).

The goal is still to restore them. Christians are still kind to pagans and concerned for their best interests. You should determine to continue to be kind to the person but you can no longer recognize them as a fellow Christian. The fundamental difference between a believer and an unbeliever ought to be that, when confronted about sin, a believer will repent and get right. This called "walking in the light" (I John 1:7) as opposed to running and hiding and blamewhifting, which is called "walking in the darkness" (I John 1:6). A person who professes to be a believer but persistently walks in darkness (will not repent even after all the steps outlined above) is not acting like a believer and can no longer be treated like one. This is for their good and for the good of the church's testimony for Christ in the community.

7. When a person comes to you to tell you about a problem with another person, how should you tell him to handle it according to Matthew 18:15?

________________________________________________________________________

8. To whom did Christ promise a blessing in Matthew 5:9?
Meditation on Lesson 9

1. Is it encouraging to you to know that the church is a place where problems can and should be solved? Discuss this with your discipler.

2. How do you think this lesson is an expression of what you learned in Lesson 8 “Learning God’s Kind of Love”?

3. Is there anyone right now whom you know you have sinned against and where your relationship is strained and needs to be reconciled? Write it down and discuss it with your discipler. Don’t fear this. God wants you to enjoy good relationships.
4. In the parable in Matthew 18:23-35, who would you be? What do you think is the lesson of this parable?

5. Does the process of church discipline make sense to you? Do you have questions? Write them down here and discuss them with your discipler:

6. Is there anyone in the church you think has sinned in a way that you need to address with them? Is this something where you need to simply “let love cover a multitude of sins” or do you truly believe it needs to be addressed? Discuss this with your discipler and, if it does need to be addressed, they will do all they can to help you through it.

7. Memorize Matthew 5:9
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____, is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler  Date
COMMUNICATION

Good relationships don't happen automatically! Neither are they immune from problems. All of us are sinners, which means that we are naturally selfish — and that is all it takes to create conflicts.

But take heart! Good marriages, happy homes and lasting relationships can be built by people who know Jesus Christ and follow His principles for communication especially as they relate to communication and problem solving.

In Ephesians 4:22-24, Paul stressed the importance of putting off the "old man" and its way of doing things and putting on the "new man." With regard to communication and problem solving, this means that we must put off our old ways of talking and handling problems and begin to learn and to practice God's ways.

The following verses (Ephesians 4:25-32) present what we may call the "Four Rules of Communication" which we are to use in all our relationships. They are good for both preventing and solving problems.

I. **BE HONEST** (v. 25)

   A. Most of us come into our salvation tending to think of ourselves as basically honest people. However, one of the things that God says we must "put off" is lying. What are some ways in which we are actually being dishonest, but perhaps don't admit it? __________________________________________

   B. Instead of lying, this passage says that we should "speak the truth."

   1. Speaking:
      a. Look up I Corinthians 2:11. When it comes to relationships and problem-solving, why is it important for you to speak? __________________________________________

      b. Some people say, "If I just don't say anything, then no one can say I lied." What is wrong with this claim? __________________________________________

   2. Speaking The Truth:
      a. Read Proverbs 6:16-19. How important is it that you learn to carefully choose to speak truthfully whenever you open your mouth? Why? What kinds of other sins does God put on the same plane with dishonesty? __________________________________________
3. Speaking The Truth In Love:

Read back in Ephesians 4:15. As we saw in the "Biblical Love" lesson, Biblical love is essential to growing as a Christian. This passage says clearly that Biblical love is to affect how we talk to each other.

a. Having studied Biblical love two lessons ago, if you need to talk to someone and resolve a problem, in what specific ways should love affect your communication?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

b. With these things studied, it is apparent that (1) everyone needs to grow in being honest, (2) honesty is more than just not lying, (3) clamming up (not speaking the truth) is just as bad as blowing up (speaking the truth without love).

II. KEEP CURRENT (vs. 26,27)

One of the great joys of being a Christian is learning that problems can be solved. No matter how bad your life was before you were saved, no matter how many problems you have now, no matter how many people you know whose lives are filled with unresolved conflicts, your life doesn't have to be that way. In fact, God wants you to solve those past conflicts and get to the place where you actually only have to deal with today's problems today.

A. Verse 26 begins, "In your anger do not sin." We normally think of anger as always wrong but actually it is a normal human emotion. The key is what you do with the energy of your anger. What does the rest of this verse imply that you should do with that energy? What does it mean? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

B. You have no doubt heard sayings like "Time heals all wounds." Based on this verse of scripture, is this saying true? ____________________________________________

C. What does verse 27 say happens if we do not keep current and solve problems? Translate this into everyday life. What kinds of things will happen in any relationship where problems are not solved? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

III. ATTACK THE PROBLEM, NOT THE PERSON (v.29)

A. What kinds of things should we not say and what kinds of things should we say, according to verse 29? ____________________________________________
B. Especially in dealing with difficult situations, it is essential that you learn to isolate what is actually the problem. The first rule of thumb is to recognize that the person is not the problem. Their behavior may be a problem. Look at Matthew 5:21,22. What did Jesus think of words that attack people?

C. Look up Job 2:9,10 in the Old Testament. In Job 1:1, God tells us that this man Job was a mature, godly man. How did Job attack the problem and not the person in 2:10?

D. How could you rephrase the following statements so that they attack the problem and not the person?

1. "You're late again! When will you ever learn to organize your time?"

2. "Those are the worst grades you ever got! If I would have brought home grades that bad, my parents would have skinned me alive!"

3. "You never remember my birthday."

4. "That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. You know we can't afford a new car."

IV. ACT, DON'T REACT (vs. 31,32)

Our natural sinful way of living is to simply react to whatever happens. If someone crosses us, we get angry. If something disappoints us, we get sad. When life is going our way, we're happy. God says this has to stop. We are to putt off the old feeling-oriented lifestyle (v.22) and to put on a life that is guided by the Word of God (v.24). We are to "act" (choosing to do what is right) rather than to "react" (just responding in whatever way we feel like). This same problem and its solution directly affects communication.

A. What kinds of "reactions" are we to avoid, based on verse 31?

B. What kinds of "actions" are we to put on, based on verse 32?
C. Look up Romans 14:12. Why is it important that you learn to "act," (choosing to say what is right rather than how you feel), even if you think the other person is totally wrong in the way they are acting or speaking?

______________________________

______________________________

Look up James 1:26. How important is it to God that you learn to communicate Biblically and lovingly? As you study through your Bible over the years you will notice how often God emphasizes the importance of words. As you grow in loving communication, you will find that it reaps benefits all through your life.
Meditation on Lesson 10

1. Write out the Four Rules of Communication on an index card (or something like it) and either use it as a bookmark in your Bible or tape it to your bathroom mirror for a few weeks.

2. Look back at the Ephesians 4:25-32 passage. Do you see where each of the “Rules” is based on what the verses say? This is an important step so take the time to think about it. It is very important that you see the Four Rules of Communication as based on God’s Word, not just some human ideas.

3. Who is the most significant “other” in your life (as in husband, wife, very close friend, etc.)? Would they be willing to very deliberately “practice” the Four Rules of Communication with you? You will find attached a sheet entitled “Conference Table”. Have your discipler explain it to you. It is a very deliberate way you can practice the Four Rules with another person and grow in your communication. Have Conference Tables with your “other” for a period of three weeks and report each week to your discipler how it is going, which rules you have the most trouble with, etc. If no one else is willing to practice the Four Rules with you, ask your discipler if you and him/her could do this.
4. Memorize the Four Rules and be able to repeat them quickly to your discipler.

5. Look at the verses associated with the Four Rules. Pick the verses that help you the most and memorize them.
CONFERENCE TABLE

The following material is intended to present a tool that can be used in becoming aware of and in applying the Four Rules of Communication found in Ephesians 4:25-32. If you are married, have a roommate, or just a friend who would also like to learn to be a better communicator, this outline will provide a framework to help you work through communication skills as you attempt to resolve some apparent difficulty.

1. Choose a time.
2. Choose a place.
3. One person be designated to keep records. (topic discussed, solution determined, steps to implement solution, any topic not solved, etc.)
4. Agree on a cue.
6. Select a topic. (a conflict from that day or a past problem with present effect)
7. Remember the goals:
   a. To identify poor communication habits and to practice putting on good habits.
   b. To seek solutions to problems and implement steps to change, put off sins and put on righteousness.

“But, speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into Him, Who is the Head, even Christ”
Ephesians 4:15
Based on his/her answers and our discussions, I am convinced that
Has a good grasp of the material in Lesson _____. is applying it in his/her life and is ready to move to
the next lesson.

Discipler             Date