

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP FOUNDATION STUDIES

Session #3

Welcome back to Session 3. I'm very glad to have you with us again.

If you haven't yet listened to Sessions 1 and 2, which have some really valuable information for you which will lead you nicely into this session, please go ahead and do so now. You will find these Session links in the description box below. Then come back and join us here.

Last session, we ended with the understanding that if you've just received Salvation, then you are a Spiritual baby no matter how old you are. In your new life in Christ being spiritually born again, you are considered as a new born baby needing spiritual food & sustenance to grow into maturity in your understanding of God & His son, Jesus Christ, your Saviour. The more you study & learn about God, the stronger & quicker you will grow into maturity.

There is so much to learn and it is a wondrous experience seeking more understanding of God. The Bible says in Jeremiah 29:13 that ...

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

By studying the Bible, that is where we will discover the wonders of God that He will reveal to us. Every time I study the Word of God, I am anticipating and expecting something new and exciting to be revealed to me and He never disappoints me, even after nearly 40 years.

Let's explore in more depth **Growing into Maturity** and the importance of studying the Bible, which is the very Word of God Himself.

The birth of a child into a loving family is always a time of great joy. When you were spiritually born again through faith in Jesus, all of Heaven rejoiced! Imagine that, when you gave your life to Jesus, there was rejoicing in Heaven over YOU !

Luke 15:10 tell us ... In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Your Father God is so glad that you've repented from your old way of thinking and as a result have come back into right relationship with Him and been adopted into His family. We know this is God's heart because we read in 2 Peter 3:9 ...

He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

As God's children we cannot grow by our own self efforts, our growth comes from God in and through His Word, the Bible. God wants all of us to grow in more knowledge of Him. He wants us to know Him and His Son deeply, so He helps us just like a good Father should. In John 15:4-5 Jesus gives us some valuable instruction when he tells us to ...

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”

Fruit is always a result of a healthy tree and the more plump, luscious and full of glorious colour a piece of fruit is, you know that it must have come from a healthy tree. God promises us good health and healing in this scripture in Proverbs 4:20-22 ...

“My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body”.

Just as a baby should grow up into a thriving, healthy adult, so should a new believer in Christ grow into maturity, thriving in their knowledge of God and His Kingdom.

1Peter 2:2-3 says ... ***Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness.***

Knowing God more intimately will cause us to grow to maturity in our faith and character and bear much healthy fruit.

Colossians 1:10 ... ***Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God more and more.***

Just like babies need milk to grow, we need spiritual milk. Just as we eat every day for physical health, we need spiritual food for our spiritual health.

The Bible is what provides us with spiritual food. Reading the Bible and meditating on it is one of the ways that we “remain” in Christ. As we do so, we will grow.

The Bible is not like **any** other book. It is supernaturally alive and once you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit will give you insight and understanding like you have never had before.

Hebrews 4:12 ... ***For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.***

John 6:63 ... ***The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.***

We all need to read the Bible every day.

The Bible is a large book but you will find yourself becoming familiar with it as you take the time to read it every day.

The Old Testament starts with Genesis (a history of the beginning of time) and the New Testament starts with the life of Jesus (the Gospels)

As a new Christian, the best place to start is the New Testament which is the 2nd part of the Bible. There we learn more about our Saviour Jesus and His life and death on the cross, which is the very essence of our Salvation.

It is important to get into the habit of reading the Bible every day. It is your spiritual food and is nourishment to your spirit and soul.

Make sure you have a modern translation that you can understand.

Find a quiet place where you can concentrate without any distractions.

Before you read, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand what you are reading and pay special attention to the things that stand out to you.

God wants His Word to enter our hearts and be alive within us. For our own good, He wants His Word to be active in our lives. Don't just read it like we would read a novel. It is more than that ! It is a book of instruction and guidance. We need to **meditate** on God's Word. This means to read it carefully and ponder over it. It's often best to concentrate on a chapter or even a section of a chapter, until its full meaning is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. This can have wonderful life-changing results.

Joshua 1:8 advises us to ...

Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.

We are to be doers of the Word, remembering that it is a Book of Guidance. We are not to be just hearers where it goes in one ear and out the other and does not benefit us.

Jesus says in Matthew 7:24-29 ... ***“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand.***

When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

James 1:22 says ... ***But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.***

Make time for God's Word every day. You will receive great benefits for your diligence.

Proverbs 4:20-22 ***My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body.***

Psalms 119:105 ***Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.***

This all sounds like good advice ! I sure don't like stumbling around by myself in the dark and we can certainly relate to that in our day to day lives !

God's Word will renew and transform our minds so that we will understand God's will for our lives and direct us on the right path, all for our own good. It's a supernatural transformation.

Romans 12:2 advises us not to ... ***copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*** Now, let's take a closer look at this wonderful life-changing Book, the Bible.

There is both historical and archaeological proof for the Bible.

Thousands of documents of the Greek New Testament have been discovered, some from as early as the second century. No other ancient text has the extensive documentation to verify it like the New Testament has.

Fulfilled prophecies also show the authenticity of the Bible's truth. More than 300 prophecies about the first coming of the Messiah were fulfilled in the life of Christ!

Jesus declared that the Scriptures were inspired. In Mark 13:31, our Saviour says ... ***"Heaven & earth will disappear, but My words will never disappear."***

In Luke 24:25-27 ***Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures."***

Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering His glory?" Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The Bible is the Word of God. It was written over a 2,000 year plus period by 40 different authors, all of whom wrote under inspiration by the Holy Spirit as God revealed it to them. Every word is truth, filled with God's power and authority.

2Timothy 3:16-17 says ... ***All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work.***

The Bible is so interesting and exciting, full of true stories and so rich in history. It is by far the most compelling book you'll ever read. You can discover people in the Scriptures who made a difference in their time, and they can make a difference in your life in this present day, as their stories impart understanding to you. Just to name, but a few ... there was ...

- Esther - The Woman who saved a Nation from Genocide
- Bathesheba - The Mom who imparted Wisdom to Solomon
- A little Girl - who helped a General win his most challenging battle
- The Young boy who offered Jesus his 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish for a great Miracle when Jesus fed 5000 men, and women and children

All these people and hundreds just like them are described in the pages of Scripture waiting to be discovered! We can identify with them, learn from them and apply the important biblical truths they share with us.

The Bible is a compilation of many books, but it is not compiled in chronological order. Chronological order means the date by which the events took place. The books are instead compiled by the subject matter.

You will find an index in the front of your Bible which lists all the books. Hundreds of years after the Bible was written, chapters and verses were added to the original manuscripts to help you to find the subject matter easily.

There are a total of 66 books in the Bible – 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

The Old Testament has the following categories:

There are 5 books of the Law, 12 books of History, 5 books of Poetry and Wisdom, 5 books of the Major Prophets and 12 books of the Minor Prophets.

The Old Testament covers the time from the creation of the world up until about 400 years before Jesus was born. It was originally written in the Hebrew language.

The New Testament has the following categories:

The Gospels comprising 4 books, 1 book of History, 13 books of Paul's Letters, 8 books of General Letters, and 1 book of Prophecy.

The New Testament starts with the life of Jesus and the beginning of the church, and ultimately concludes outlining the prophetic end of this world. It was originally written in the Greek language.

The word Testament means “Covenant” or “Agreement” and contains the covenants or agreements that God made with His people.

Jesus came to bring us into a new covenant with God and that is why the book with the accounts of Jesus’ life and afterwards is called the New Testament and this is the best place to start learning about your new life in Christ. We will explain more about this Covenant in future sessions.

Luke 22:20 *After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and His people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.”*

It is because of the blood of Christ poured out for you and for me that we can stand here today made holy by God in His sight and back in right relationship with Him, our Creator. We owe Him everything we have, all of our being. Thank you Jesus for your obedience to death, even death on a cross for us.

Join me for our next session No 4 where we will discover our new identity in Christ and what a wonderful new life we have in Him.

If you haven’t already, please subscribe to this You Tube Channel for notifications of new videos as soon as they become available.

Until next time, bye for now and enjoy reading and meditating on the most important and life-changing book in the entire world, the Bible. May God bless you and reveal Himself and the wonders and mysteries of His Heavenly Kingdom as you enjoy your ongoing life in Christ.