

**NOTE: HOW TO USE THIS BOOK**

**CONTINUING EBS:**

- Teachers/Facilitators Guide provided in the APPENDIX (at the end of this book).
- Use this as a continuing Evangelistic Bible Study (EBS).
- Form an INITIAL EBS GROUP of about 6-12 individuals consisting of Christians bringing one or two non-Christian friends.
- After completing the course, challenge the new graduates to invite other Christians and their non-Christian friends to join a new EBS group.
- Keep repeating this replicating process.

**FOLLOW-UP OF GRADUATES:**

- Graduates of the Bridge EBS course may proceed to the *NewLife Series (Books 1-14)*. Please see APPENDIX.

# **THE BRIDGE BACK TO GOD**



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## Lesson 1

## THE BRIDGE BACK TO GOD

## INTRODUCTION

1. To begin our study, may I ask you to travel with me in our imagination? Long, long time ago, there was a wonderful kingdom ruled by a king who loved his people very much and cared for all their needs. The king lived in his palace on top of the mountain and his people lived in the peaceful valley at the foot of the mountain. A straight royal highway connected the valley to the palace. The people of this kingdom often traveled on this highway to see the king if they had a need or a problem; and the king himself often used this highway to visit his people. But one day tragedy struck. A powerful earthquake shook the mountain and the valley; the earth opened up and created a wide chasm that separated the mountain from the valley. The earthquake broke the highway, and people no longer had a way to go to their king. The people wanted to build a bridge over the chasm but they had neither money nor the ability to do it. Well, guess who built the bridge? Yes, of course, the king did!

## GOD'S MESSAGE

2. This simple story illustrates for us God's wonderful message of love for you in the Bible. This message may be illustrated in the *The Bridge Illustration*.

3. In the beginning, God created our first parents perfect and without sin, in order to have a close relationship with Him. This relationship is represented by the line that connects God and man in the *Bridge Illustration 1*.

*Ilustrasyon 1*

**SA PASIMULA MALAPIT  
ANG RELASYON NG DIYOS AT TAO  
IN THE BEGINNING GOD AND MAN  
HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP**

**TAO   DIYOS  
MAN   GOD**

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4. However, a big spiritual earthquake happened. Our first parents sinned against God and their relationship with Him was broken. Not only did our first parents sin; all of us their children after them also sinned.

5. Let's read Romans 3:23.

<< **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**>>

- According to this verse, how many people sinned? All have sinned, all including you and me.
- What is the meaning of sin? Someone said, the root of sin is found in the middle letter “I” in the word “S-I-N”. Sin is rebellion against God; sin is declaring that we are the king/queen on the throne of our lives. Sin is taking control of the steering wheel of our life in order to follow the path we have chosen for ourselves. The theme song of the sinner is the song “I Did It My Way”.

6. Because of sin, all human beings received the punishment of death. Let’s read Romans 6:23.

**<< For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.>>**

- What is the meaning of death? The Bible tells us about two kinds of death.

First, there is physical death; let’s read Hebrews 9:27.

**<< And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.>>**

- There is the second death, which means that the soul of the unrepentant sinner will be cast into a place of eternal separation from God; let’s read Revelation 21:8.

**<But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.>**

Please look at *Bridge Illustration 2*.

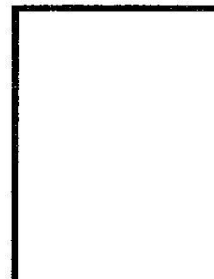
**Ilustrasyon 2**

**RELASYON NG DIYOS AT TAO NAPUTOL  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN BROKEN**

**TAO / MAN**

**DIYOS / GOD**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lahat ay nagkasala<br/><i>All have sinned.</i><br/>Rom 3:23</li> <li>2. Lahat ay mamamatay<br/><i>All will die</i><br/>Heb 9:27</li> <li>3. Lahat ay parurusahan<br/><i>All will be punished</i><br/>Rev / Apoc 21:8</li> </ol> |  |
|---|--|



7. Let's study Revelation 21:8 (above) carefully. In this verse we can read the list of sinners who will be cast into the place of torment. Included in the list are very bad sinners like murderers. But did you notice that not-so-very-bad sinners like liars are also included? In God's eyes, all sins are the same. All sinners, both the very bad and the not-so-very-bad, will be separated from God forever and will be thrown into the lake of fire.

8. What does this mean for us? This means that we all – everyone of us – are in danger! We may think that we have not committed the really bad sins, but all of us cannot deny that we have all committed the sin of lying, and because of this we are included in the list of those who will be eternally separated from God. Is there something we can do to escape this fearful destiny?

9. In our own selves, there is really nothing that we can do. But God loves us so much, He Himself provided the way. God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in order to pay for our sins; let's read John 3:16.

<< For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. >>

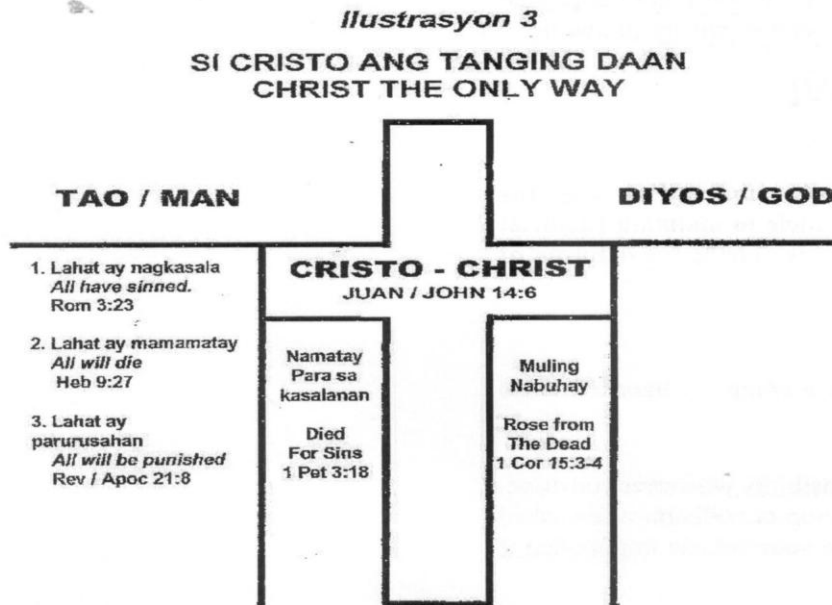
10. When He was on earth, Christ lived a perfect human life; He committed no sins that He should pay for. We, human beings, are the sinners, and we are the ones who should die for our sins. But Christ took our place on the cross, and He suffered and died on our behalf in order to pay for our sins. He did not remain dead; after three days He rose again.

**1 Peter 3:18: << For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us<sup>le</sup> to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit. >>**

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4: <<<sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. >>**

11. And now, He stands between God and human beings as the BRIDGE – the ONLY WAY – back to God. Please look at *Bridge Illustration 3*. Let's read John 14:6.

**<< Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.>>**



**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

12. Today, you are facing a moment of decision. Christ is knocking at the door of your heart. What is your response to Him? Let's read Revelation 3:20. According to John 5:24 and John 1:12, your response must include three important actions.

**John 5:24:** << “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” >>

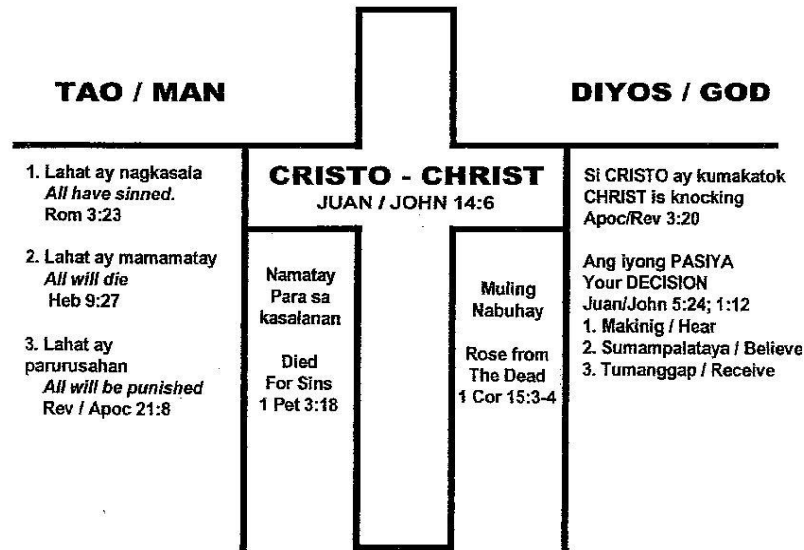
**John 1:12:** << But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. >>

- First, HEAR;
- Second, BELIEVE;
- Third, RECEIVE.

13. Please study *The Bridge Illustration 4*.

**Ilustrasyon 4**

**ANG IYONG PASIYA  
YOUR DECISION**



14. You may express your decision in a prayer similar to the one below. Please study the prayer carefully. Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, are you ready to pray this prayer right now?

*Lord Jesus, I HEAR God’s message of love for me today. I admit that I am a sinner; please forgive me of all the sins that I have committed against God. I BELIEVE that You died on the cross for my sins, and I believe that You rose again from the dead, and that You are alive today and forever more. Thank You that You are knocking at the door of my heart. Lord Jesus, I open my heart to You and I RECEIVE You as my Lord and Savior. I now surrender the throne and the control of my life to You. Help me to follow You from this day on and for the rest of my life. Amen.*

**THE PRODIGAL SON**  
**Luke 15:11-24 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. <sup>12</sup> And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood. <sup>13</sup> And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. <sup>14</sup> But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. <sup>15</sup> Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into

his fields to feed swine. <sup>16</sup> And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything*.

<sup>17</sup> “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, <sup>19</sup> and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’”

<sup>20</sup> “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

<sup>22</sup> “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring<sup>[b]</sup> out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. <sup>23</sup> And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; <sup>24</sup> for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

## Lesson 2

### GOD’S LOVE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. GOD LOVES YOU! This is the Good News at the heart of the Bible. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). In this book we will learn how to receive and experience God’s love with the help of two illustrations – the story of the **Prodigal Son** and the **Bridge Illustration**.

2. Let’s read the story of the **Prodigal Son** from Luke 15:11-24.

#### IN THE BEGINNING

3. In the story of the **Prodigal Son** we see the great love of the father for his sons because he prepared all his wealth as inheritance for his sons.

4. In the **Bridge Illustration 1** we see the great love of God when He created people in the beginning for a love relationship and partnership with Himself. This relationship is represented by a line that connects God and people.

*Ilustrasyon 1*

**SA PASIMULA MALAPIT  
ANG RELASYON NG DIYOS AT TAO  
IN THE BEGINNING GOD AND MAN  
HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP**

**TAO   DIYOS  
MAN   GOD**

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5. Let's read Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7. From these verses, how do we know that people were created with a physical part? People have a material part, the physical body which God formed using clay from the earth. People have a spiritual part; this is the breath of life (the soul and spirit), which God breathed into them.

6. God created people for a high purpose and position. Let's read Genesis 1:28 and Psalm 8:6. According to these verses, what was this high purpose and position? God created people for the high purpose and position to be rulers, under God, of all God's creation.

7. God's love for people was also shown by His provision for their needs. Let's read Genesis 2:8-9. According to these verses God planted different kinds of trees in the Garden of Eden to meet the needs of people. God created people with needs – physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual and eternal.

- For *physical needs* God provided trees for food.
- For *intellectual needs* God provided beautiful trees, representing everything in nature that people can admire, think about and study and which gives satisfaction to their feelings and emotions.
- For *moral needs* God provided the tree of knowledge of good and evil so people can exercise their power of choice.
- And for their *spiritual need* and the *need for eternal significance* God gave the tree of life that promised eternal life. Isn't this absolutely amazing? When God made us He put into us different kinds of needs, and He also created all the things that would meet those needs!

8. People also had the *need for love, companionship and relationship*. How did God provide for this need? Let's read Genesis 2:18, 21-25. God provided for the need for love, companionship and relationship through marriage and the family and society.

9. Today, God continues to show His love by providing for our needs. Here are verses that remind us of some of the blessings God continually gives to us. Acts 17:25 tells us that God gives to us life and breath. Let's remember this: everytime we draw our

breath, we must thank God for it. Acts 14:17 tells us that God controls the seasons, the sunshine and the rain to bring forth the harvest that provides our food. Psalm 145:15-16 tells us that not only human beings but all creatures look to God for their sustenance, which He faithfully provides because of His love for all His creation.

10. But more important than the blessings of physical life and material benefits is the gift of eternal life that God wants to give to all of us. Let's read together John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. What prayer of thanksgiving to God is worth for us to follow? Let's read together prayerfully this thanksgiving prayer from Psalm 103:1-5:

*Psalm 103:1-5: 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: 3 Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, 4 Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, 5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

12. In your life, what specific blessings do you want to thank God for at this time?

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MEMORIZE

*Matthew 5:45 That you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Matthew 5:45*

Lesson 3

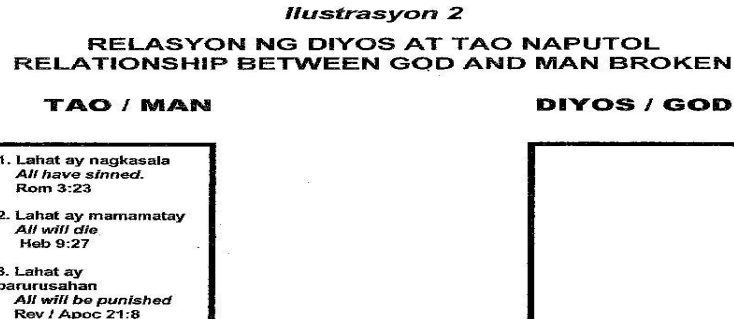
PEOPLE SINNED

IN THE BEGINNING, God created our first parents perfect, and He prepared for them a perfect world in which to live. But our first parents disobeyed God and committed sin, and their close relationship with God was broken. As a result of their sin, poverty, disease, pain, sorrow and death came into the world.

1. Let's read again the story of the **Prodigal Son** from Luke 15:11-24.

2. One day the **Prodigal Son** rebelled against his father. He took his portion of the inheritance, turned his back on his father, and went to a far country in order to get away from the authority of his father.

3. In the *Bridge Illustration 2*, we see that the same thing happened to our first parents. They sinned against God; as a result, their close relationship with God was broken. And we their children followed in their life of sin and separation from God.



4. What is the meaning of sin?

***Isaiah 53:6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.***

***1 John 3:4: Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.***

5. The action of the Prodigal Son in rebelling against his father gives a clear picture of what sin is: Sin is turning our back on God in order to go our own way and to follow our own desires (let's read Isaiah 53:6). Our selfish desires break and contradict the commandments of God (let's read 1 John 3:4).

6. What kinds of selfish desires tempt people to turn their backs toward God? Let's read 1 John 5:15-16. According to these verses, people's selfish desires are of three kinds:

7. **LUSTS OF THE FLESH.** These are bodily physical desires. God created our bodies with these desires. In themselves, physical desires are not wrong. But when do physical desires become wrong? They become wrong when they are misused or abused, and when they are indulged in outside of the purposes and boundaries that God intended them to be used. Two examples:

(a) The desire for food. Food is good and necessary; but gluttony or excessive eating is sinful.

(b) The desire for sex. God gave sex to be enjoyed within the bounds of marriage. Sex outside of marriage is sinful. Many people today turn away from God because they want to satisfy their sexual desires outside the bounds of marriage.

8. **LUSTS OF THE EYES.** These are desires connected to our eyes. The desires of our eyes become sinful in two ways:

(a) Envy and covetousness. When we see things, which other people have but which we don't have, we feel envious toward them and we covet what they have.

(b) Fame or popularity. When we want people's approval and admiration more than God's acceptance and commendation, then we are yielding to the lusts of the eyes.

9. **PRIDE OF LIFE.** This sin manifests itself in our desire to be the king/queen in our life instead of God controlling us. Pride makes us strive for position and power over other people and we don't care if we step on them or hurt them in our desire to get to the top.

10. The problem with sin is that it makes us blind. Let's read Proverbs 14:12. Sin also makes our hearts to deceive us. Let's read Jeremiah 17:9.

11. This is why God gave the **TEN COMMANDMENTS** to serve as a standard and as a mirror to show us our sins. For example, let's look at three commandments.

(a) **DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.** According to Jesus, do you need to have physical relations with another person (not your spouse) in order to commit the sin of adultery? Let's read Matthew 5:27-28. Do you admit that you have entertained lust for someone in your heart at least once? Therefore, have you committed adultery?

(b) **DO NOT MURDER.** According to Jesus, do you need to actually kill a person physically in order to be guilty of the sin of murder? Let's read Matthew 5:21-22? According to 1 John 3:15, even if you only hate someone, what are you guilty of? Do you admit that you have hated somebody in your heart at least once? Therefore have you committed murder?

(c) **DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS (DON'T TELL A LIE).** According to Revelation 21:8, mention the kinds of sinners who will suffer the second death. Who is the last one on the list? The liar, right? Can you honestly say that you have never told a lie? Since you have told a lie, you are a liar; therefore, where is your eternal destination according to Revelation 21:8?

12. How many people sinned? Let's read Romans 3:23. According to this verse, all have sinned. Am I included in "all have sinned"? Are you included in "all have sinned"?

13. What is the effect of sin on our relationship with God? Let's read Isaiah 59:2. Sin brings a separation between God and us. This is what happened to the Prodigal Son. When he rebelled against his father, he became separated from his father. But we must be clear about one thing: The father did not separate from his son; the son separated from his father. The father still loved his son; but the son went away and could no longer enjoy the love of his father. This is what happens to us when we sin against God. We separate ourselves from God and we go to a place where we can no longer receive the love and blessings of God.

14. The Bible warns us that there is a punishment for sin.

Let's read **Romans 6:23. For the wages of sin is death.**

What is the wages (punishment) for sin? The punishment for sin is death.

15. What is the meaning of death? According to the Bible death has two meanings. First, there is physical death; this happens when the soul separates from the body. This physical death will surely come to every person.

Let's read **Hebrews 9:27. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.**

But physical death is not the end. The Bible warns us that the **SECOND DEATH** is awaiting sinners, and this second death means permanent separation from God in a place of eternal torment.

Let's read **Revelation 21:8**. **But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**

#### PERSONAL APPLICATION

16. The future looks very dark and fearful for sinners. Do you know how you may escape the second death? Do you know how can be sure of being with God in heaven someday? Our next lesson will show us how.

#### MEMORIZE

**Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23**

### Lesson 4

#### CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY

**GOD'S LAW DEMANDED** that we must be punished for our sins. This meant that we would be separated forever from God, unless a way was provided to pay for our sins. God provided the only way through His Son Jesus Christ.

1. Let's read again the story of the **Prodigal Son** from Luke 15:11-24.
2. The Prodigal Son was reduced to the level of pigs and worse than pigs – no one even gave him some of the pig food! Destruction and misery are the sure end of sin! In that condition, what thought entered the mind of the Prodigal Son? (Luke 15:17-19)
3. Like the Prodigal Son, we all have turned our backs on God and went far away from Him. We were deceived by the false promises of Satan. Christ said that Satan is a thief, and what can we expect a thief to do? Let's read John 10:10.
4. But the Prodigal Son repented. What is the meaning of repentance? If sin is turning our back on God and going away from Him, repentance is turning our face toward Him and walking back to Him. What is God's promise when we repent? Let's read Isaiah 55:7.
5. This is the Good News of the Bible – God will forgive us! No matter how big or how many our sins may be, God Himself provided **THE WAY** for us to be forgiven. What is the Way that God provided? Let's read John 14:6.
6. The law of God decreed: the punishment of sin is death (Let's read Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8). We are the sinners, and we are the ones that must die. Christ did not have any sin, and He did not deserve to die. But God gave Him as the Lamb of God who would die as our Substitute.

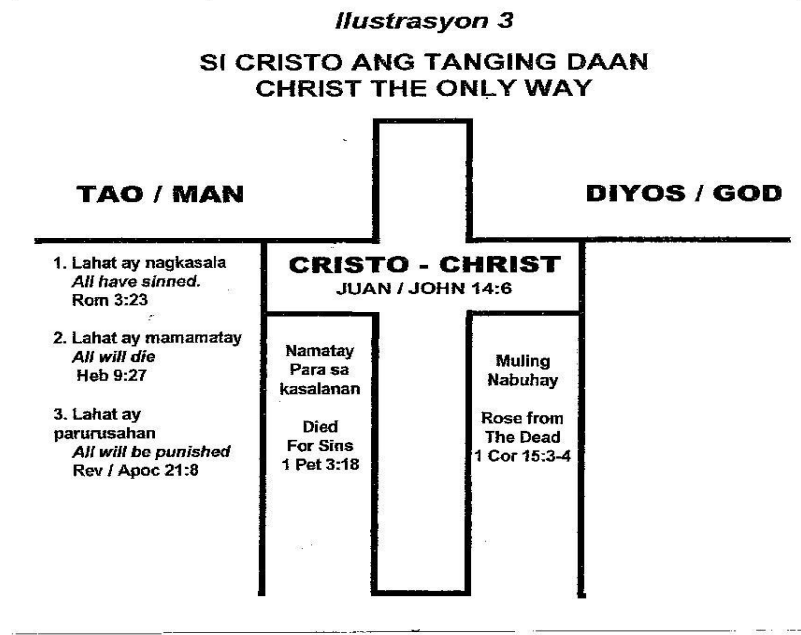
7. According to John 1:29, what was the purpose of Christ in coming to the world as the lamb of God?

8. The lamb is a young sheep. In the Old Testament God gave the lamb as a symbol of Jesus Christ. Please study Leviticus 4:32, 33, 35; please note the emphasized words:

*If he brings a **lamb** as his sin offering, he shall bring a female **without blemish**. Then **he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering**, and **slay it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering...** So the priest shall make **atonement for his sin** that he has committed, and it **shall be forgiven him**.*

- The lamb should be without \_\_\_\_\_
- The offerer must put his hand on the \_\_\_\_\_ of the lamb.
- Then the lamb will be killed as a sacrifice or atonement for \_\_\_\_\_
- Because of the sacrifice, what will God do to the sin of the offerer?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. When Christ came into the world, He became the Lamb of God. On the cross He took our place and there God laid upon Him all our sins, and He was the one who died as the payment for all our sins! (Let' read 1 Peter 3:18). But He did not remain dead. He rose again. (Let's read 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4.) Christ is alive today, and He is standing as THE ONLY WAY – the only Bridge – of man back to God. Please see the **Bridge Illustration 3**.



10. Many people think that they can build their own bridge through their own righteousness and good works.

- (a) What does the Bible say about human righteousness? Let’s read Isaiah 64:6.
- (b) Why are good works excluded as a way of salvation? Let’s read Ephesians 2:8, 9.

11. According to Hebrews 9:22, is remission (forgiveness) of sin possible without the shedding of blood? No, according to God’s plan, there is no forgiveness apart from the offering of a blood sacrifice. Good works are a bloodless sacrifice, and they are ineffective in securing forgiveness for us. This is why Christ came to die on the cross and to offer His own blood in order to obtain forgiveness of our sins.

- (a) According to Hebrews 9:11-12, what did Christ, our High Priest, bring as a sacrifice for sin into the heavenly sanctuary?
- (b) What does the blood of Christ do to our sins? Let’s read Hebrews 11:14 and 1 John 1:7.
- (c) According to Hebrews 10:19, what is the basis of our confidence in approaching the most holy God today?

**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

12. In blank space below, write the sins that the Holy Spirit is convicting you about at this time. You don’t need to show this to anyone; this is just between you and God. After making the list, confess these sins to God and ask His forgiveness and cleansing in the name of Christ. After confessing, write in big letters across your list this statement: “ALL PAID FOR BY THE BLOOD CHRIST”. Then say a prayer of thanks to Christ for His sacrifice that bought forgiveness for all your sins.

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**MEMORIZE**

**John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16**

**Lesson 5**

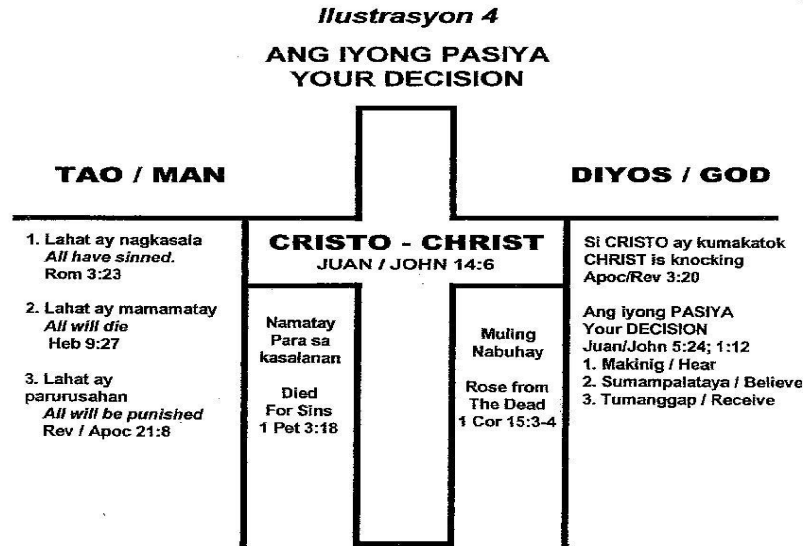
**YOUR DECISION**

GOD HAS PROVIDED THE WAY for us to return to Him. Christ, His Son, died on the cross to pay for all our sins. He rose again. He is alive today! And now He stands between God and man as the ONLY WAY – the true and living BRIDGE – back to God!

1. Let's read again the story of the **Prodigal Son** in Luke 15:11-24.

2. Luke 15:20 describes the decision made by the Prodigal Son, "So he got up and went to his father."

3. Something similar should happen to us. In the previous lesson we learned that the Way – the Bridge – back to God is finished and ready. (Please study the **Bridge Illustration 4.**) What steps should we take to cross the bridge and return to God?



4. Let's carefully study John 5:24.

(a) What two actions or steps are required of us in this verse?

(b) If we HEAR and BELIEVE, what three blessings shall we receive?

- Regarding the PAST: We have crossed from . . . . . to . . . . .
- Regarding the FUTURE: We will not enter into . . . . .
- Regarding the PRESENT: We now have or possess . . . . .

5. Let's study John 1:12. According to this verse BELIEVING and ACCEPTING Christ must go together. Many people claim that they believe in Christ, but they refuse to receive Christ as King of their life. Let's use two examples.

**KING AND KINGDOM:** Our heart is like a kingdom; inside our heart there is a throne. Guess who sits as king on that throne? King "I" sits on the throne. If I truly receive Christ, am I ready to get off the throne in order to let Christ sit on the throne as King of my life?

**DRIVER AND CAR:** Our life is like a car. Guess who is the driver controlling the steering wheel? ME! As the driver, I will be obeyed wherever I want to take the car. If I truly receive

Christ, am I ready to turn the driver seat and steering wheel over to Him so that He will be the one to direct my life?

6. Many hold to the opinion that all people are children of God. Based John 1:12, who alone have the right to be called children of God?

7. What does Christ say about people who refuse to believe in Him; who is their father? Let's read John 8:44.

8. Let's carefully study Revelation 3:20.

(a) What is Christ doing at the door of our heart?

(b) What is He waiting for us to do?

(c) If we open our heart, what does He promise to do?

(d) Once Christ has come into our life, what will He do together with us?

9. In the Bible, eating together is a symbol of a permanent relationship that will no longer be broken or that will no longer end. The moment we receive Christ into our heart, He will come in and live permanently in our hearts. And He will share with us everything that will come to our life, and as for us we will share with Him His life and His blessings.

#### PERSONAL APPLICATION

10. Are you sure that you have received Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? When? If you are not sure, do you wish to make sure of this right now? Pray the prayer below.

*Lord Jesus, I want to make sure that You are truly in my heart. I admit that I am a sinner; please forgive me of all the sins I have committed against God. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins and that You rose again. I believe that You are alive today and that You are knocking at the door of my heart. Lord Jesus, I open my heart and receive You as my Lord and Savior. I surrender the throne and the steering wheel of my life to You. Help me to follow You beginning today. Amen.*

#### MEMORIZE

**John 1:12 Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12**

### Lesson 6

#### ASSURANCE OF FULL ACCEPTANCE

THROUGH CHRIST our right to be called as children of God is restored. The apostle John could hardly contain himself when he contemplated this tremendous gift. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1) This lesson will show us how to begin to enjoy the blessings of this special relationship.

1. Let's read again the story of the **Prodigal Son**.

2. When the Prodigal Son returned, his father showed his great love by giving his son what three gifts? (Luke 15:22)

3. These three gifts – new clothes, new ring, new sandals – have important meanings in the life of a Christian. Let's look at the first gift – new clothes.

4. After Adam and Eve sinned, what kind of clothes did they use to cover up their shame?

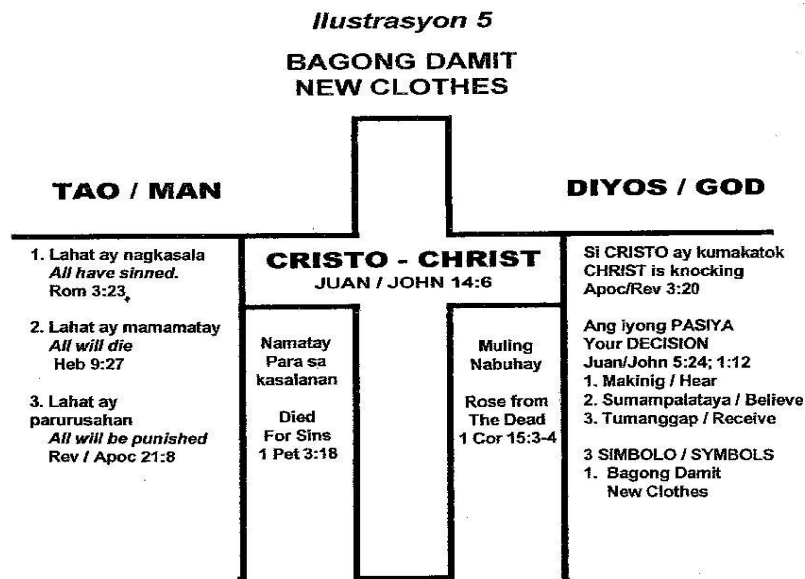
**Genesis 3:7: Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.**

5. How did God show Adam and Eve that clothes of their own making were not acceptable?

**Genesis 3:21: Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.**

6. Since the time of Adam and Eve, people have tried to present their own man-made clothes of good works and self-righteousness in order to earn God's acceptance. But just like the rotten and smelly clothes of the Prodigal Son, how does God look at human good works and human righteousness? (Isaiah 64:6)

**Isaiah 64:6: But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.**



7. The NEW CLOTHES were the father's gift to the Prodigal Son. (Please study **Bridge Illustraton 5**.) Before the Prodigal Son returned he did not say, "I need to buy new clothes and put them on so that my father will accept me." No; he returned and faced his father just as he was, dirty and smelly. In the same way with us today, when we return to God. God doesn't say to us, "Clean yourself first, put on clean clothes before I accept you." Instead, God is telling us, "Come now, just as you are; I Myself will clean you up; I Myself will give you new clothes." From the

Bible, let’s read Matthew 22:1-14. Why was one guest thrown out? Because he wore his own clothes and not the wedding garments that the king provided.

8. The garments that God gave to Adam and Eve, and the new clothes given by the father to his Prodigal Son symbolize the free gift of salvation and forgiveness that God gives based only on His grace and mercy. The clothes that God gives are none other than the perfect holiness and righteousness of Christ which He achieved when He lived His perfect human life on earth. When we believe in Christ, His perfect righteousness is put around us, and based on this righteousness alone God gives us the ASSURANCE OF UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE before Him. In the blank spaces below, copy these verses.

Ephesians 2:8-9 .....

Titus 3:5 .....

Philippians 3:9 .....

9. We repeat: We are saved and forgiven not because of our good works or because of our righteousness, but only by the grace of God. However, many people have this wrong idea. For example, during Good Friday many people whip themselves or even get nailed to a cross. If you ask them why they are punishing themselves they will answer, “To pay for my sins.” Wrong! And this is worse than wrong. It is an insult to Christ who died on the cross to pay for the sins of the whole world. If you say that you are paying for your sins by punishing yourself, it is as if you are telling Christ, “Lord, Your payment on the cross is not enough.” What does John 1:29 and Hebrews 10:10 say?

***John 1:29: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”***

***Hebrews 10:10: By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.***

10. Let’s study the example of the apostle Paul. From the Bible, let’s read Philippians 3:8-9 and 1 Corinthians 15:10.

(a) What were some qualities and accomplishments that the apostle Paul could boast of? (Philippians 3:4-6)

(b) Before God, however, what was the value of these qualities and accomplishments? (Philippians 3:7-8)

(c) Instead of trusting in his own righteousness and goodness, in whom did Paul trust in order to be accepted by God? (Philippians 3:9)

(d) In 1 Corinthians 15:10, the apostle Paul compared himself to the other apostles and said that he probably accomplished more in the work of missions than they did. But to whom did he give the glory?

**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

11. Let us always remember, from the beginning to the end of our Christian life, the ONLY BASIS of God’s acceptance of us is His grace and the righteousness of Christ alone, and never based on any good works or righteousness on our part.

12. Have you put on your NEW CLOTHES? Do you still trust in your own righteousness and good works? Or do you now trust in Christ’s righteousness alone?

**MEMORIZE**

**Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9**

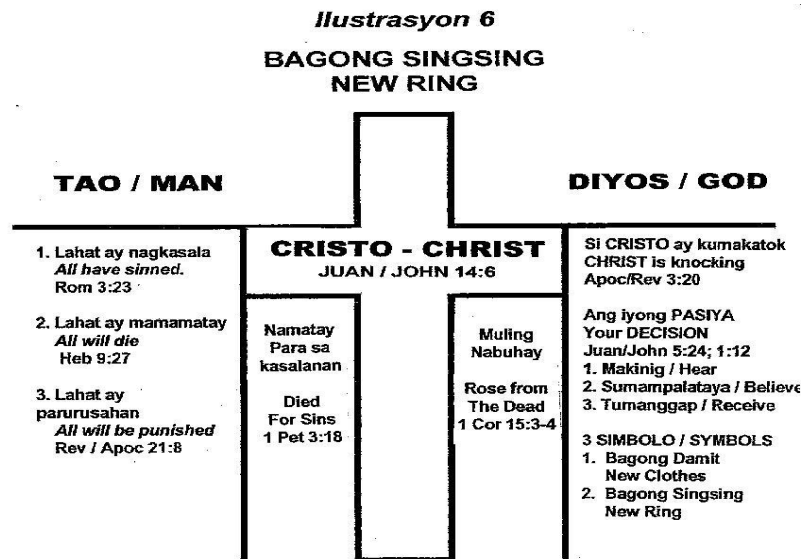
**Lesson 7**

**ASSURANCE OF BEING  
GOD’S CHILDREN**

BECAUSE OF SIN, Satan has brainwashed us and caused us to develop a slave mentality. The moment we are born again as Christians, the Holy Spirit imparts to us the assurance that we are children of God. “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.” (Romans 8:15-17)

1. Let’s read again the story of the **Prodigal Son**.

2. The father gave three gifts to his returning Prodigal Son – new clothes, new ring, new sandals. In the previous lesson we learned the meaning of the NEW CLOTHES in the Christian life. Now let’s talk about the meaning of the NEW RING. (Please study the **Bridge Illustration 6**.)



**ASSURANCE OF ACCESS**

3. The RING symbolizes the position and authority of a son. Included in the meaning of the ring is the ASSURANCE OF ACCESS or approach to God. From the Bible, let’s read Ephesians 2:13, 17-18 and Hebrews 10:19-22.

(a) According to Ephesians 2:13, 17-18, when we were still not Christians, we were far away from God; but what did Christ do for us? As a result, what privilege do we now possess? (Ephesians 2:18)

(b) According to Hebrews 10:19-22, what is the basis of our freedom to draw near to God today?

4. Because we wear the RING, what invitation should we always take advantage of?

Matthew 11:28 .....

Hebrews 4:16 .....

**ASSURANCE OF PROVISION AND ANSWERED PRAYERS**

5. The second meaning of the RING is a twin truth: ASSURANCE OF PROVISION AND ANSWERED PRAYER.

(a) Because God is our Father and we are His children, what does God promise regarding our needs? (Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:19)

(b) What means did God give in order for us to obtain from Him the provision for our daily needs? (Matthew 7:7-11; John 16:24; Philippians 4:6-7)

(c) When we are faced with needs or problem or danger, let us remember our RING, which assures us that God will supply our needs and He will answer our prayer. In the blank space below, copy Romans 8:32.

.....

**ASSURANCE OF VICTORY**

6. The third meaning of the RING is ASSURANCE OF VICTORY over Satan and over temptations. Don’t be scared, but you must realize that since you received Christ as Lord and Savior, Satan really got angry. Let’s read 1 Peter 5:8-10.

(a) What should we remember about Satan’s character? (1 Peter 5:8)

(b) What should be our attitude and action toward Satan? (1 Peter 5:9)

(c) What can we confidently expect from God? (1 Peter 5:10)

7. According to 1 Corinthians 10:13:

(a) Are the temptations that come to us different from temptations that come to other people?

.....

(b) What does God assure us regarding the intensity of the temptations that He will allow to come to us?

.....

(c) What can we be sure of that God will give together with the temptation?

.....

**ASSURANCE OF RELATIONSHIP**

8. The RING symbolizes many other truths. We will mention one more meaning: the RING gives ASSURANCE OF RELATIONSHIP. What do we usually think of when we talk about the ring? Don't we usually think of the ring as a symbol of the love relationship between the bride and the groom? In the Christian life, the ring reminds us of the love relationship between God and us. The ring gives us the assurance that God's love for us will never fail or end or change. For this reason, the ring also challenges us to love God in return and to love others as well.

9. What can we be sure of about God's love?

(a) Jeremiah 31:3 .....

(b) John 13:1 .....

(c) Romans 8:38-39 .....

(d) Hebrews 13:5 .....

10. Because of God's love to us, what should be the result in our lives?

(a) 1 John 4:19. ....

(b) 1 John 3:16-18 .....

(c) John 13:34-35 .....

11. Because of our love-relationship with Christ, what should be our motive and reason for obeying His commandments? (John 14:21-24; 15:9-10 .....

12. The church in Ephesus was active in service and faithful to the truth (let's read Revelation 2:1-3).

(a) However, what important thing did they neglect? (Revelation 2:4-5)

(b) What is the thing that we should maintain and nurture in our relationship with the Lord? (Mark 12:29-30)

**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

13. This is the challenge of the NEW RING that God gave to us: Will we obey and serve Christ because of the reward or praise that we hope to receive from people? Or shall we obey and serve Christ only because we love Him?

MEMORIZE

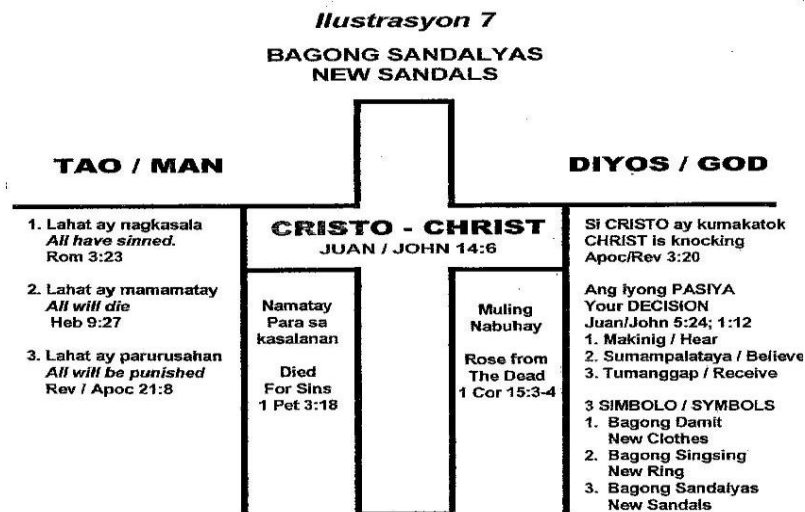
**Mark 12:30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. Mark 12:30**

**Lesson 8**

**THE WALK OF THE CHILD OF GOD**

WHAT A GREAT privilege for us to be called children of God. But the Bible also reminds us that with the privilege comes a big responsibility, that we should walk worthy of our high position. The apostle Paul reminded Christians, even while he was suffering in prison, “As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” (Ephesians 4:1)

1. Let’s read one more time the story of the **Prodigal Son**.
2. The father gave three gifts to his Prodigal Son. We have already seen the meaning of the **NEW CLOTHES** and the **NEW RING** in the Christian life. Now, we will study the meaning of the **NEW SANDALS**. (Please study the *Bridge Illustration 7*.)
3. In our life as children of God, the **SANDALS** represent the new life and new walk of a Christian. Let’s read 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:17-24.
4. As a Christian your new life and new walk includes **FOUR BASIC HABITS** that you need to practice regularly.



**WORD OF GOD**

5. A Christian needs to have a regular intake of God’s Word. From the verses below, what are the uses of God’s Word in your life as a Christian?

- (a) 1 Peter 2:2 .....
- (b) Matthew 4:4 .....
- (c) Acts 20:32 .....
- (d) Ephesians 6:17 .....
- (e) Psalm 119:105 .....

6. According to Christ, what is one mark of His true disciple? (John 8:31)

.....

7. What good example should we follow from the Berean Christians? (Acts 17:11)

.....

**PRAYER**

8. The second BASIC HABIT of a Christian is prayer. God speaks to us through the Bible; and we speak to God through prayer. From the verses below, what are the uses of prayer?

- (a) John 16:24 .....
- (b) Luke 18:1 .....
- (c) Philippians 4:6-7 .....
- (d) Psalm 95:6-7 .....
- (e) Psalm 107:1 .....

9. According to the example given to us by the Lord, what things should we include in our prayer? (Matthew 6:9-13)

.....

**FELLOWSHIP**

10. As Christians, we are members together in the Family of God. According to Christ, what is another mark of His true disciple? (John 13:34-35; 15:12)

.....

11. What habit should Christians not neglect? (Hebrews 10:24-25)

.....

12. What things did the early Christians do when they were together in fellowship? (Acts 2:41-47)

.....

**WITNESSING**

13. There are many people who still do not know Christ. They are like the Prodigal Son who need to return to God. We need to tell them about Christ; we need to invite them to attend church, or a Bible study like this one. This is called WITNESSING. What do the verses below tell us about the habit of witnessing?

(a) Mark 5:19 .....

(b) Acts 1:8 .....

**PERSONAL APPLICATION**

14. How do you maintain these FOUR BASIC HABITS of a Christian: **Word of God, Prayer, Fellowship, Witnessing?** Follow these simple suggestions:

(a) WORD OF GOD: Read one chapter a day from your Bible. Start reading from the Gospel of John.

(b) PRAYER: After reading your Bible, pray. Use the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:9-11 as a guide. In your prayer include the following:

- *Begin your prayer with Worship:* “Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be Your name.”
- *Renew your Commitment:* “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”
- *Ask God to supply your needs and the needs of your loved ones and friends:* “Give us this day our daily bread.”
- *Ask God to forgive your sins; at the same time forgive those who sinned against you:* “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”
- *Ask God for protection from Satan and from temptations:* “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”
- *Close your prayer with worship:* “For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.”

(c) FELLOWSHIP: Continue attending your cell group Bible study once a week. Start attending church regularly. If you don’t have a church, go with your Bible study leader to his church.

(d) WITNESS: One effective way to witness to your friends is to invite them to attend Bible study with you. You can also share with your friend this Bible study on the Prodigal Son.

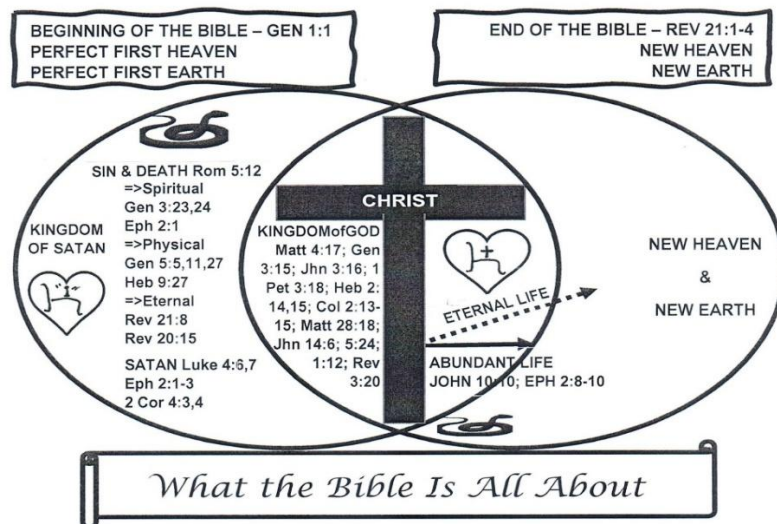
**MEMORIZE**

**John 8:31** To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teachings, you are really My disciples.” John 8:31

**Lesson 9**

**WHAT THE BIBLE IS ABOUT**

**LESSON AIM:** *To discover God’s plan for salvation as revealed in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.*



**NOTE TO TEACER:**

This is a long lesson, and you may wish to discuss this in 2 or 3 meetings, depending on the wishes of your class.

**PART ONE: PERFECT BEGINNING**

The Bible is the story of the progressive unfolding of God’s plan of salvation. When we open the Bible to the very first chapter of the very first book, we read of a perfect creation, a perfect heaven and earth.

***“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good”*** (Genesis 1:1, 31).

But when we turn to Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we read this:

***“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away”*** (Revelation 21:1).

The stark contrast between these two statements at the beginning and the end of the Bible causes us to wonder and ask: “What happened?”

What made it necessary for God to create a new heaven and a new earth? What happened to the original perfect heaven and earth? (Please see diagram above.)

The story of the Bible is the story of the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation. It is the story of how God set about to restore what was damaged and lost. It is the story of how this salvation required a tremendous cost, and how, because of His great love, God willingly paid the cost.

The account of creation tells us that in the beginning, God brought into existence everything by His Word. He spoke, “Let there be!” and there they were – the vast expanse of space containing countless planets, stars and galaxies; the earth and all the creatures that would inhabit its land masses and rivers and oceans and surrounding atmosphere.

But in bringing forth the crowning glory of His creation, God did not only speak; He bent down to mold humanity with His own hands.

Genesis 1:26-28:

***26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”***

Genesis 2:7, 8, 9, 16, 17, 21, 22:

***7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being . . . 8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil . . . 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall***

*surely die.” . . . <sup>21</sup> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

#### RULERS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Adam and Eve were created to rule God’s creation, therefore God created them in His image and imparted to them qualities that were over and above the rest of creation.

- **SPIRITUAL COMPONENT.** Adam and Eve had physical bodies with material characteristics like the rest of creation. God also imparted to them a spiritual component, which the Bible would later define as soul and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- **MORAL SENSE.** Furthermore, Adam and Eve were given a moral faculty, free will, along with the faculties of mind and emotion. Heavenly bodies automatically followed laws that kept them in their fixed orbits; animals and plants were dictated upon by natural instincts. Humans were different in that they could make choices. Free will was necessary for them not be robots but free agents, who could relate to God in a fellowship of love and partnership. In a sense, we might say that God took a tremendous risk; free will enabled humans to say yes or no to God Himself. In fact, as we read in Genesis 2:16,17, God gave them from the very beginning the opportunity to exercise their freedom to choose.
- **PERFECT ENVIRONMENT.** God placed Adam and Eve in a perfect environment in the Garden of Eden where all their needs were supplied. The different trees in the garden represented their various needs and God’s provision to meet those needs – physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual and eternal. Let’s read Genesis 2:8-9.
  1. For *physical needs* God provided trees for food.
  2. For *intellectual needs* God provided beautiful trees, representing everything in nature that people can admire, think about and study and which gave satisfaction to their feelings and emotions.
  3. For *moral needs* God provided the tree of knowledge of good and evil, so people can exercise their power of choice.
  4. For their *spiritual need* and the *need for eternal significance* God gave the tree of life that promised eternal life. Isn’t this absolutely amazing? The same Creator, who designed us to have different kinds of needs, also created simultaneously all the things that would satisfy those needs correspondingly!

5. Humans also had the *need for love, companionship and relationship*. How did God provide for this need? Let's read Genesis 2:18, 21-25. God provided for the need for love, companionship and relationship through marriage and the family and society.
- MANDATE TO RULE. Thus equipped with mind, emotion and will and soul and spirit, God gave humans the mandate to rule over creation.

This is the picture given by the Bible of the beginning. We see Adam and Eve, two perfect humans, placed in a perfect environment and given a perfect assignment. From the beginning humans had a perfect relationship with God as His vicereagents of His perfect creation.

## PART TWO: TROUBLE IN PARADISE

It did not take long before trouble entered Paradise when the Tempter, in the form of a serpent, came into the Garden. The Bible identifies this Tempter in Revelation 12:9:

*"... the great dragon ... that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world...."*

How did trouble begin in Paradise? Let's read Genesis 3:1-8:

*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"*

*<sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup> but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "*

*<sup>4</sup> Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

*<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.*

*<sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the <sup>l</sup>d cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

Many people ask, "Why did God plant the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil only to forbid Adam and Eve from eating of its fruit? Why did God allow Satan to tempt Eve?"

We must admit that our human minds will never fathom God's reason for these things. Suffice it to remind ourselves that God did not create robots; He gave Adam and Eve the gift of free will, the freedom and ability to choose. Free will is not really free without the opportunity to choose one way or the other.

Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, and by their disobedience sin entered the human race and human history.

What exactly was wrong with eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? We discover what's wrong when we examine the nature of Satan's temptation; he said, "When you eat of this forbidden fruit, you will become like God, knowing good and evil."

Well, first of all, eating of the forbidden fruit was wrong because they were directly disobeying a clear prohibition by God. But more serious than just disobeying a clear command, Adam and Eve chose to take for themselves the authority to decide what was good and evil for themselves, instead of looking to God to guide them with His Word. Only God had the right to define good and evil. Instead, Adam and Eve grabbed that right for themselves; in that sense, they have become like God. More precisely, they became a god to themselves, with the power to define what is good or evil.

To use an illustration:

In the heart of Adam and Eve there is a throne; only God deserves to sit on that throne as Creator, Owner, and King of their lives. When they ate of the forbidden fruit, they kicked God out of the throne and installed their SELF as god and king on the throne of their heart. This is the root meaning of sin, spelled "S – I – N" (with the big proud letter "I" in the middle), declaring:

"I am the King/Queen of my life, and I decide what to do, when and where and why and how to do it, and I don't care what God or others will say; and I don't care whether or not other people are hurt as long as I'm happy."

Sin is rebellion against God and declaring independence from God. And this rebellious, independent, self-centered attitude was passed on by Adam and Eve to all their descendants, including you and me.

What were the results of sin? The immediate results included the following:

- **SHAME & PRETENCE BEFORE OTHERS.** Adam and Eve saw their nakedness and began to make coverings for themselves to hide their shame from one another. Bible scholars believe that before they committed sin, a cloud of glory from God covered Adam and Eve like a garment in such a way that they could be totally transparent and totally accepting of each other because they had nothing to hide. The moment they ate of the forbidden fruit, that glorious covering vanished, along with their sense of mutual transparency and acceptance, leaving them with the feeling of shame and the need for covering. From that point on, all honesty disappeared and pretense took its place.
- **GUILT & ALIENATION TOWARD GOD.** After Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, they started running away and hiding from God, and all their descendants have been fugitives from God ever since.
- **SUFFERING, DECAY, & DEATH.** Through their sin, Adam and Eve brought into the world suffering, decay, and death. Many say, “But Adam and Eve stayed alive after they ate of the forbidden fruit.” Let me ask you: “When you cut off a branch from a tree, do the leaves on that branch still look alive, fresh and green?” Yes; but you know that the branch is already dead because it’s no longer connected to the source of life. The same thing happened to Adam and Eve. Physically, they remained very much alive after they committed sin. But the punishment of death had been immediately imposed on them. The Bible tells us that death is experienced in several stages:

**STAGE 1: SPIRITUAL DEATH.** Adam and Eve became spiritually separated from God the moment they sinned. And all their descendants are born spiritually separated from God. Ephesians 2:1 describes this condition of spiritual death: *“And you ... were dead in trespasses and sins”*.

**STAGE 2: PHYSICAL DEATH.** Physical death happens when the soul/spirit leaves the body; the soul/spirit returns to God to face judgment, and the body returns to the dust from which it was originally taken. Adam and Eve eventually died physically. And every human being born into this world will die physically

without exception. Someone commented, “The chance of death for every person is still 100%.” Sadly, according to the Bible, physical death is not the end.

**STAGE 3: ETERNAL DEATH.** Revelation 21:8 tells us, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” The second or eternal death is that condition wherein the soul/spirit of a person (who died without receiving forgiveness of his/her sins) will be cast into the place of eternal suffering, eternally separated from God. God’s plan of salvation was implemented to provide a way for people to receive forgiveness of sins in order to be spiritually reconnected with God and eventually receive bodily resurrection and be saved from eternal death.

- **SATAN BECAME THE RULER OF THIS WORLD.** Adam and Eve were originally installed as rulers of all creation under God. The moment they sinned they lost their position of authority and Satan usurped that position, so much so that he could even boast about this to Jesus, the Son of God:

*<sup>5</sup> Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. <sup>6</sup> And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. <sup>7</sup> Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours” (Luke 4:5-7).*

Jesus did not contradict the claim of Satan. In fact, three times He referred to the devil as the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

The whole world is under the control of Satan and he manipulates people through sin, using three the main avenues of lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These were the same three avenues that he used with Adam and Eve and Jesus:

*<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever (1 John 2:15-17).*

Even worse, Satan maintains his hold on people by blinding their minds so they will not see their only way of escape through Jesus Christ:

***<sup>3</sup> But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).***

Satan has never changed his strategy or tactics. He continues to offer the kingdoms of this world to people – satisfaction of their physical and emotional passions, satisfaction of their greed for possessions, and satisfaction of their hunger and thirst for power and position. What people do not realize is that obtaining the wealth, fame and power in this world will cost them their most precious possession, their soul. In the end, they will realize too late that they have sold their soul to the devil. But the devil did not lie to them; just like he said to Jesus, the devil continues to tell people very frankly:

***“All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”***

No wonder, when you talk to people about God or Christ or the Bible, they will say, “Sorry, I have no time for that.” Why? Because they are worshiping the devil. But someone would protest, “No, I don’t worship the devil.” The truth is, the devil is happy enough that you have no time to worship God, no time to follow Christ, no time to listen to His Word the Bible, because, in effect, when you don’t worship God you are actually worshiping Satan. And Satan will keep you busy in acquiring all the wealth and fame and power in the world in order to prevent you from having time for God.

Please study carefully the diagram above; notice that Satan, the Serpent, is ruling on top of the world of sinners.

### **PART THREE: GOD PROMISED THE COMING MESSIAH**

The sin of Adam and Eve plunged the world into the darkness of sin. But in the midst of that tragic darkness, God immediately caused the light of His promise to shine. This promise came in the form of God’s curse upon Satan in Genesis 3:15:

***“And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her Seed;  
He shall bruise your head,  
And you shall bruise His heel.”***

God’s promised the coming of “the Seed (or Son) of the woman, who would eventually defeat Satan. Later on, the prophets of Israel would call Him the Messiah, the Lord’s Chosen or Anointed One, who would bring salvation to Israel and to the world. The

Messiah would engage Satan in a do-or-die conflict. In their mortal combat, Satan will succeed in crushing the heel of the Son, but the Son will triumph by crushing the head of Satan. The Messiah would solve the problem of sin and all its results; He would deliver the world from the dominion of Satan.

Adam, the first representative head of humanity, failed and lost his position of authority. The Messiah, the second representative head, would achieve complete victory over Satan and would regain all that Adam lost, including the position as ruler of all God's creation. Who was this Son of the Woman? This was Jesus, the Son of God, who humbled Himself and came down from heaven in order to be born as a human being through the miracle of virgin birth.

- God's angel announced the manner of His birth to the virgin Mary. Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they officially got married and came to live together, Mary conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's read Matthew 1:18-23:

*<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup> But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."*

*<sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

- The moment Satan saw that the promised Son of the Woman was born in the city of Bethlehem, he immediately plotted to kill Him. Satan incited Herod, the king of the Jews at that time, to kill all the children ages two downwards to make sure the baby Jesus would not escape. However, before Herod's soldiers were able to start the massacre God had already warned Joseph to take the child Jesus and His mother and flee to Egypt, where they hid for a time until the death of Herod. After some time, Joseph received instruction from God to return to the land of Israel and settle in a little town called Nazareth. There Jesus grew as a normal obedient son of Mary and Joseph for thirty years. Luke 2:51-52 summarizes those years in two verses:

*<sup>51</sup> Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

- After thirty quiet years in Nazareth, God's hour struck! The moment had come to begin the assault on the strongholds of Satan. God called Jesus to begin His public ministry, beginning with His baptism through John the Baptist. Let's read Mark 1:9-13:

*<sup>9</sup> It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

<sup>12</sup> Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

- At His baptism, God put His seal of approval on the perfect life of Jesus during the thirty silent years by anointing Him with the Holy Spirit and by publicly declaring, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately after His baptism the Holy Spirit drove Jesus to the wilderness to meet Satan in open combat for forty days and nights, without taking any food or water. During the thirty silent years, Jesus certainly was attacked by the usual temptations of everyday existence; Jesus overcame all those temptations. However, during the forty days and nights in the wilderness, the temptations piled upon Him with greater intensity. Satan threw at Jesus all the tactics and strategems that he had used successfully against people since the time of Adam and Eve. But by using the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, Jesus routed all the Tempter's attacks (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13 cp. Ephesians 6:17).

Hebrews 4:15-16 summarizes the overwhelming victory of Jesus over all temptations and the reason why He had to undergo this terrible ordeal:

*"<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*

Jesus overcame all temptations for our sake. In the Garden of Eden, the first human representative head, Adam, failed miserably under temptation and passed on to all his descendants his guilt and all the destructive results of his failure. In contrast, here in the wilderness, the second human representative head, Jesus, triumphed convincingly and He now passes on to us, who believe in Him, all the precious fruits of His victory (Romans 5:12-21).

#### **PART FOUR: THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!**

Emerging victorious from his battle with Satan, Jesus began His campaign to save humanity and to reclaim the throne that Adam had lost to the enemy. The inaugural proclamation of Jesus is very significant:

***Mark 1:14-15: <sup>14</sup> Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”***

With this proclamation, the kingdom of God, under the generalship of Jesus, began the invasion against the kingdom of Satan.

Please study again our diagram. Note the two circles. The first circle represents the world under the dominion of Satan, the Serpent. As earlier explained, because of Adam’s sin Satan was able to usurp (forcibly and deceitfully take over) the dominion over the earth, which originally belonged to humans. The second circle represents the kingdom of God. Note the overlap between the two circles. This overlap means that with the coming of Jesus, the kingdom of God has invaded the kingdom of Satan; this is the meaning of “The kingdom of God is at hand”. Now, the peoples of the world have to make a choice between the two kings and the two kingdoms; this is the meaning of “Repent”:

- Will people continue to remain under the kingdom of Satan?
- Or will people renounce their former allegiance to Satan and transfer their allegiance to Jesus? To repent means to reject Satan and to accept and follow Jesus as the new King of one’s life.

To “believe in the gospel” means to put one’s confidence in the good news that Jesus has provided the way for former rebels to receive full amnesty for their treason against God and to be welcomed back again as full citizens of the kingdom of God.

You see, because of sin all humanity had become slaves of Satan. But humanity’s need was not only how to be delivered from Satan’s bondage. Humanity’s greater need was how their rebellion against God was to be forgiven. How was God going to provide this forgiveness? From the human perspective, God seemed to be “caught between the horns of a dilemma” (to use an old expression). God was caught between the demands of His love and the demands of His justice.

On the one hand, God’s love moved Him to rescue humanity. On the other hand, God’s justice demanded that every human being must be punished to the full extent of God’s law. In the words of the apostle Paul, “How could God be just and at the same time be the justifier of the ungodly”? (Romans 3:26).

How God reconciled His love and His justice was a mystery deeply embedded in His plan of salvation.

As Jesus pressed His assault against the enemy kingdom, Satan and all his hosts of demons and evil spirits tried to oppose Him at every turn. But every time there was an encounter between Jesus and evil spirits, they immediately realized they were totally powerless to resist. The Messiah always cast out the evil forces and delivered the victims from their clutches. This is how Acts 10:36-38 describes the earthly ministry of Jesus:

***<sup>36</sup> The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—<sup>37</sup> that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.***

Satan knew his only hope was to kill Jesus before Jesus could crush his head. Satan used jealousy to inflame the hatred of the Jewish religious and political leaders against Jesus. And using greed, masquerading as concern for the poor, he gained entry into the heart of Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, causing him to sell his master for thirty pieces of silver. With the help of Judas, the murderous Jewish leaders implemented their plot to arrest Jesus on trumped-up charges and they successfully manipulated the justice system to condemn Jesus to die by crucifixion.

But unbeknownst even to angels and Satan and evil spirits and humans, God was actually working out His secret plan. In the coming of Jesus the love of God reached its fullest expression in His determined pursuit to restore humanity to Himself. The joining of deity and humanity in the incarnation of Jesus was the closest that God could come to humanity. In Jesus God was giving Himself totally to humanity while at the same time God was taking humanity back to Himself.

Since the Garden of Eden, God has been relentlessly pursuing humanity, while humanity was relentlessly fleeing deity. In the joining of deity and humanity in the incarnation of Jesus and in His decision to live as a human among humans, God had in a real sense caught up with fugitive humanity and boxed him into a corner. God and humanity were finally face to face, with God offering Himself completely in love to the fugitive.

And what does the fugitive do? Instead of surrendering himself to the arms of divine love, he allies himself with God's enemy and kills the only Person who truly loves him! When utmost love encounters utmost hate, hate plunges the dagger deep into the heart of love. The creature kills his Creator, humanity murders his God!

There in that act of murdering the Son of God, sin achieves its fullest expression. And what does God do? Instead of pulverizing the murderer, God offers His own Son on the altar of His divine justice as the atoning sacrifice for all the sins of humanity. Having satisfied the demands of His justice, He turns to the murderer and offers him complete forgiveness and total acceptance.

Watching from the sidelines, Satan is totally blindsided. He has been jealous of humanity all along, while at the same time feeling thoroughly frustrated by his inability to hit back

at God Himself. He had thought that by getting God to become so angry as to destroy sinning humanity, he would gain a measure of satisfaction in seeing God's plan for humanity derailed, if not defeated.

But, no! Just when Satan expected the full force of God's wrath to fall on humanity, God deflects His wrath instead toward His own Son and pours upon His Son the full fury of divine judgment. With the cup of justice completely emptied, God now stretches out His hands of forgiveness to offending humanity!

Satan thought he had the last laugh when he succeeded in getting Jesus nailed to the cross. Now his laughter reverberated like echoes bouncing between heaven and earth taunting and mocking him as the eternal loser.

At the resurrection of Jesus, God stripped Satan of all his powers while at the same time investing Jesus with all the authority and power in heaven and on earth, far above all rule and authority and might and dominion and above every name that can be named in this age and in that which is to come, declaring Him Lord and Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords.

And in the name of Jesus, God now proclaims complete amnesty and release and restoration to all of Satan's former slaves. The condition is easy and simple – that they repent (renounce their former allegiance to Satan and sin) and believe in (pledge their allegiance to) Jesus as Savior and Lord of their lives.

It was on the morning of the resurrection that Satan realized that in killing the Son of the Woman physically, he succeeded only in bruising his heels. To the contrary, through that same death followed by His resurrection the Son crushed Satan's head, defeating him totally once and forever. Thus the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 was finally fulfilled. The author of Hebrews describes this powerfully:

Hebrews 2:14-15: ***<sup>14</sup> Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.***

Now, please note in the diagram the picture of the two hearts. The sinner (the heart on the left hand side) is under bondage to Satan only because SIN (represented by the big, proud letter "I") is reigning as king/queen in his/her heart.

The moment the sinner repents, the moment he/she accepts Jesus as Savior and Lord of his/her life, that very moment he/she will be delivered from Satan's bondage and snatched from the kingdom of Satan and transferred into the kingdom of God (the heart on the right hand side, under the cross).

The transfer from Satan's bondage to the freedom in Jesus is offered in the proclamation: "Repent and believe in the good news!"

## CORE GOSPEL TRUTHS

The core truths of the good news (gospel) are presented in the following verses:

John 3:16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

1 Peter 3:18: *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring <sup>ll</sup>us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.*

I Corinthians 15:3-4: <sup>3</sup> *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*

Colossians 2:13-15: <sup>13</sup> *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, <sup>14</sup> having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

This passage in Colossians pointedly clarifies the two works of Jesus as Savior: (1) first, by His death He made possible the wiping away of all sins (forgiveness); (2) second, He defeated Satan and all his army of principalities and powers.

Matthew 28:18: <sup>18</sup> *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*

John 14:6: *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*

John 5:24: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”*

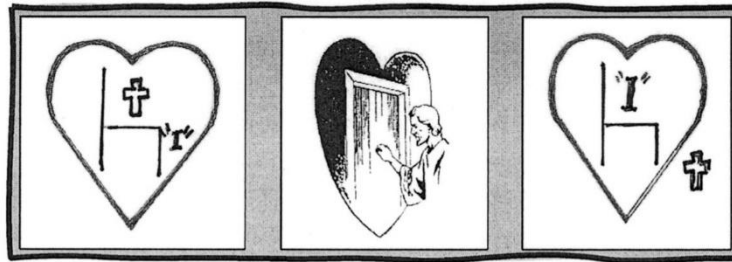
John 1:12-13: <sup>12</sup> *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the <sup>le</sup>right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

John 10:10-11: <sup>10</sup> *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. <sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”*

Ephesians 2:8-10: <sup>8</sup> *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,* <sup>9</sup> *not of works, lest anyone should boast.* <sup>10</sup> *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Revelation 3:20: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

### PART FIVE: TIME TO CHOOSE



Christ is knocking.

Which heart do you choose your life to be?

- The heart with CHRIST on the throne, and your “I” (SELF) surrendered to Him?
- The heart with your “I” (SELF) on the throne, and with CHRIST outside?

If you choose CHRIST to be on the throne of your life, pray this sincerely from your heart:

***“Lord God in heaven, thank You that You love me and You want to give me eternal life and abundant life. I admit that I am a sinner. Forgive me of all my sins. Lord Jesus, I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. I believe that You rose again to be the Only Way to God the Father. I now open the door of my heart and I receive You as my Savior and Lord. I now surrender to You the throne of my life. Take full control of my life and help me to follow You from now on. This is my prayer in Jesus’ name. Amen.”***

Did you pray sincerely to receive Christ as your Savior and Lord?

If you did, what does Christ promise? Let’s read Revelation 3:20 again:

Revelation 3:20: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

- If you hear Christ’s voice and open your heart, what two things will happen?

- Two things:
  - (1) First, Christ will come in your heart.
  - (2) Second, Christ and you will dine (eat) together.

You may ask, what does eating with Christ mean?

In the Bible, to eat together means to have a permanent relationship with one another. In other words, if you sincerely receive Christ as Savior and Lord in your heart, He guarantees that He will come in to sin on the throne of your life. He will establish a permanent relationship with you that will last throughout this life; and after this life, He will take you to be with Him forever in heaven, in the eternal kingdom of God.

- This is a good time to pray a prayer to thank Christ. Pray sincerely:

***Lord Jesus Christ, You see my heart; I have sincerely received You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, that You have come into my heart, and You have given me a personal relationship with You, which begins in this life and which will continue in the eternal kingdom of God. In Your name, I pray. Amen.***

## WHAT NEXT?

Please look again at our diagram (above). Note the two arrows on the right hand side of the cross.

- The arrow with the dashed line represents eternal life, which means that the person who has received Jesus as Savior and Lord is assured of living someday with God forever in the new heaven and new earth in the eternal kingdom of God.
- The arrow with the solid line represents the ABUNDANT LIFE that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, promises in this present life to you who have received Him as your Savior and Lord. To be assured of ETERNAL LIFE and heaven in the future is great.

Your ABUNDANT LIFE with Christ begins now. With Christ on the throne of your life, and with you totally surrendered to His kingdom and to His will, this is His promise in Matthew 6:33:

***<sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.***

This is the meaning of “eating with Jesus”. Throughout your earthly journey, Jesus will share His bread with you. And what is His bread? His bread consists

of all the blessings and provisions He will supply for all that you need. This does not mean that He will make you healthy, wealthy and prosperous in this world. This does not mean you will not suffer the trials and temptations that come to all who still live in this sin-cursed world.

Rather, Jesus promises that He will always be with you in every situation in life, and He will supply all that you need (not what you want), He will not deny anything that you need in order for you to fulfill His purpose for your life.

### HEAVEN CAN WAIT

Yes, the Lord Jesus saved you for a great purpose.

This is why He prayed that God should not take Christians to heaven right away. Did you know that? Lord Jesus does not want you go to heaven right away. In fact, He prayed to the Father to keep and protect Christians here on earth, because He has a great plan for them on this planet. The prayer of Jesus included all future believers, and that includes you!

On the night before His arrest, and looking beyond the cross to His eventual resurrection and return to heaven, He prayed this prayer for His disciples (which includes you):

***“<sup>15</sup> I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.<sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world”*** (John 17:15-18).

The Lord Jesus did not want His disciples to go to heaven immediately. He wanted them to remain on earth because He had a great mission for them to do in the world. That mission is to go and tell the whole world that Satan and sin have been defeated, and that the WAY OR BRIDGE BACK TO GOD has been established! That WAY is no other than Jesus Christ Himself!

You and I and all who believe in the Lord Jesus today are given the same mission. Fulfilling that mission is part of the ABUNDANT LIFE that He gives us. This mission is usually called the GREAT COMMISSION as given in Matthew 28:18-20:

***<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”***

Christ has saved us in order to become soldiers in His GREAT COMMISSION ARMY. The Great Commission involves EVANGELISM and DISCIPLESHIP.

1. **EVANGELISM** is helping people to know Christ and to have a personal relationship with Him.
2. **DISCIPLESHIP** is teaching and training people to become CHRIST-LIKE, to obey all that Christ commanded (in the Bible, God's Word), and to apply His commands in their daily life.

### WHAT ABOUT SATAN?

Finally, please note in our diagram (above) that the Serpent, Satan, has been cast down at the foot of the cross.

This means that Satan is a defeated enemy, already a permanently defeated foe. However, God has a special mission from God as well. God allows Satan and his evil hosts to continue operating at the present time. This is the reason: God is using Satan and his demons to test people. Someone said, "Satan is prowling around like a lion in this world, but God has already pulled out all his teeth." The Lord Jesus has stripped Satan of all his powers, except for one. Satan's only remaining weapon is lies and deceptions.

This is why God has given us the most powerful, undefeatable weapon against Satan: GOD'S TRUTH. For those who know the truth in Jesus, Satan's lies will no longer have any effect. God's TRUTH will defeat all of Satan's lies and deceptions.

This is why it is absolutely important for all disciples of the Lord Jesus to KNOW THE TRUTH revealed in the Bible, God's Word. Not only to know but to MASTER God's Word. As you master God's Word, you will discover the complete victory of Christ. And you will know and enjoy all that God has prepared for you in this life, and in the world to come!

*John 8:31-32: <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

### THAT'S WHAT THE BIBLE IS ALL ABOUT

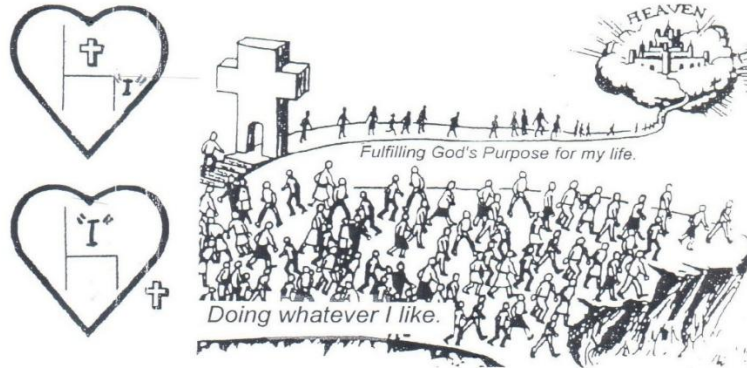
The Bible BEGINS with the creation of the original perfect heaven and earth. Sin entered and destroyed that perfect creation. The Bible ENDS with the creation of a new heaven and a new earth.

And in between the beginning and the end, the Bible tells the story of how God is forming a perfect family for Himself through His plan of salvation in His own Son Jesus

Christ. This family will spend eternity with God forever in the new heaven and new earth.

### A PERSONAL QUESTION

This reminds of the personal question we asked earlier.



Which heart do you choose your life to be?

- THE SELF-CONTROLLED HEART, with your big, proud “I” sitting as the BOSS of your life? If you are this kind of heart, the Bible warns you in Revelation 21:8:

Revelation 21:8: ***But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.***

- THE CHRIST-CONTROLLED HEART, with Jesus reigning as the KING of your life? If you are this kind of heart, praise God! The new heaven and new earth await you where you will enjoy love, joy and peace forever and ever with God!

Revelation 21:1-7: ***Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”***

***<sup>5</sup> Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”***

*<sup>6</sup> And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. <sup>7</sup> He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

## INVITATION

We invite you to join us for regular Bible study, in order to know more of God's Word, to be assured of your relationship with Christ, and to discover the full blessing of abundant life in Christ.

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Day & Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person & Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX A

### HOW TO TEACH THIS BOOK:

**T – R – U – M – P – S**  
*Bible Study For Everyone!*

### **LEADER'S GUIDE**

You do not need a special training to lead this Bible study. The series is designed following the

**T – R – U – M – P – S** strategy:

- Together
- Read
- Understand
- Memorize
- Pray
- Share.

Follow this SCHEDULE for your Bible study:

(1) BEGIN with fellowship time.

WELCOME everybody to the Bible study. If there is a newcomer, ask everyone to introduce themselves again, their name, where they live, and who invited them

to this study. After the welcome time, SING three or four lively praise songs. Then have an OPENING PRAYER by the leader or by someone he/she requests.

(2) LEAD the study,

following the **T – R – U – M – P – S** outline:

- **Together** – Everybody should have a copy of this Bible study book, because the plan is to do the activities TOGETHER as a group.
- **Read** – Going in a clockwise direction (from right to left) assign each member to read sections or verses of the lesson.
- **Understand** – After each section or verse is read, ask if someone has a question or comment.
  - (a) **RELEVANT QUESTION/COMMENT:** If the question is relevant to the topic, answer the question briefly or appreciate the comment, then move on to read the next section or verse. If the question is not directly related to the topic, you may answer briefly and then tell the questioner that you will talk to him/her longer after the study.
  - (b) **DIFFICULT QUESTION:** If the question is difficult and you are not ready to give a good answer at the moment, frankly tell the questioner that you are not able to give an answer at this time, and that you promise to do research on it and will try and give him/her an answer at the next meeting. **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to research the question, ask the help of your pastor or a more knowledgeable Christian.
- **Memorize** – At the end of the lesson, spend about 5 minutes memorizing the new verse. (Below we will describe one method of memorizing a verse.)
- **Pray** – After memorizing the verse, divide the group into prayer partners of two or three. Let the prayer partners give brief testimonies of answered prayers and share new prayer requests, and then spend about 10 minutes praying.
- **Share** – After the prayer session, ask everybody to give the name of one **PROSPECT** (relative, friend, neighbor, co-worker) that they will invite to Bible study next week. Everybody should write down the names of the prospects for the week and pray daily that God will enable them to come to the Bible study.

## APPENDIX B

### *NewLife Series*

EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, MISSIONS

English, Tagalog & Cebuano Versions.  
(Available FREE E-COPY of the series from [pastorbien@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbien@gmail.com).)

By Pastor Bien Llobrera

## OVERVIEW

### YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Welcome to your life-long spiritual journey as a disciple! A true born-again believer is called to be a disciple. A disciple is a learner, a student, an apprentice, a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, who says to you and to all who believe in Him, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

To guide you in your spiritual journey we have provided this manual called NewLife Discipleship Series. Here you will get an overview of the entire course.

A manual is a brief guidebook that's easily carried in one's hand. This discipleship manual is not only a book that you carry in your hand. This manual will put on your palms and fingers important discipleship truths, taught through hand illustrations, that will equip you to participate in the greatest work -- becoming a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and helping others to do the same.

In the Bible, God often refers to His hands. The Lord Jesus gives the most beautiful reference to the divine hands: ***"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; 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"*** (John 10:27-29, NIV).

What a wonderful promise! In the almighty hands of the Father and the Son we Christians are safe and secure – forever! Our salvation does not depend on our holding on to God. Our salvation is securely grounded on the truth that God holds on to us with a grip that won't let go.

Does this mean that we fold our hands and do nothing but wait for heaven? Unfortunately, many Christians hold this wrong idea in their minds.

To the contrary, because we are secure in God's hands we should work vigorously with our hands! Paul captures this graphically in Philippians 3:12: ***"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me."***

Christ took hold of us – grasped us with His hands – for a purpose. Now, we are challenged to take hold of – to grasp with our hands – Christ's purpose until it is perfectly fulfilled in our lives.

To take hold of Christ's purpose, the Christian must have strong hands. This discipleship training manual will strengthen your spiritual hands at every stage of your Christian growth. The goal is two-fold:

- (1) First, you must complete the NewLife Course, Books 1-14;
- (2) Second, you must be trained and equipped to teach this same course to others.

## STAGES OF GROWTH

There are three stages of Christian growth, according to 1 John 2:12-14:

*"I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one."*

Children, young men, fathers. In more general terms, every Christian goes through three spiritual stages: BABY, YOUTH, and PARENT. This discipleship training manual will teach and train Christians to strengthen and use their spiritual hands during each of these stages. Hence, the outline of this course is as follows:



**SPIRITUAL BABY**

### BOOK ONE

#### BABY RIGHT HAND: THE GOSPEL

1. Thumb: God's Love
  2. Pointing Finger: Man's Problem
  3. Middle Finger: Christ is the Answer
  4. Ring Finger: Christ's Invitation
  5. Little Finger: Man's Decision
  6. Palm: The Christian's Assurance
- Plus:

EVANGELISTIC BIBLE STUDIES  
FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

### BOOK TWO

#### BABY LEFT HAND: NEEDS OF A SPIRITUAL BABY

1. Thumb: Prayer - I

2. Pointing Finger: Word of God - I
3. Middle Finger: Forgiveness
4. Ring Finger: Family of God
5. Little Finger: Testimony
6. Palm: Indwelling Holy Spirit



**SPIRITUAL YOUTH**

**BOOK THREE**

**YOUTH LEFT HAND: NEEDS OF A SPIRITUAL YOUTH**

1. Thumb: Prayer - II
2. Pointing Finger: Word of God - II
3. Middle Finger: Cross
4. Ring Finger: Body of Christ
5. Little Finger: Witnessing
6. Palm: Holy Spirit-Filled Life

**BOOK FOUR**

**BAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

**NOTE:**

1. People, previously baptized at another church, who have joined our church are still required to complete Book 4.
2. New believers must complete this course in preparation for baptism.

The Importance of B-A-P-T-I-S-M

**Believe**

**Accept**

**Prove**

**Testify**

**Instruct**

**Stewardship**

**Membership**

**BOOK FIVE**

**BASIC BIBLE TRUTHS**

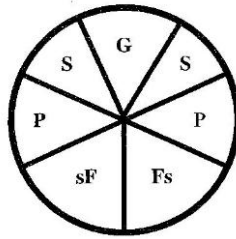
1. Palm: TRUTHS ABOUT THE BIBLE
2. Thumb: TRUTHS ABOUT GOD
3. Pointing Finger: TRUTHS ABOUT CREATION
4. Middle Finger: TRUTHS ABOUT SIN AND SALVATION
5. Ring Finger: TRUTHS ABOUT THE CHURCH
6. Little Finger: TRUTHS ABOUT LAST THINGS

Plus: Bible Survey: Old & New Testaments

**NOTE: AFTER COMPLETING BOOK 5, INSERT SEPARATE STUDIES**

**BOOK SIX-A:  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**CHI UPSILON  
DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING FOR YOUTH**



When a person receives Christ as Savior and Lord, this commitment is symbolized by superimposing the letters CHI (X) and UPSILON (Y) on the circle of life; this divides the circle of life into *SEVEN AREAS*. These seven areas are represented by the letters G – S – P – FS – SF – P – S:

- GOD
- SELF
- PARENTS
- FRRIENDS
- SPECIAL FRRIEND
- PURPOSE
- SUCCESS

NOTE: The BOOK 6-A, CHI UPSILON course may be given as a “stand alone” special Bible study for youth, as an evangelistic/discipleship course, as often as you can gather a group of youth (numbering 7-15, or more). Identify each group as “Batch 1”, “Batch 2”, etc. The idea is that batch graduates will recruit other youth to form a new batch; graduates will also serve as assistants in the training of the new batch. Graduates will be encouraged to join a cell group where they can begin their discipleship training to study NewLife Books 1-14; unless they were already in such a cell group before attending the CHI UPSILON special course.

**BOOK SIX-B:  
FOR MARRIED COUPLES & ENGAGED SINGLES  
F. A. C. T. S. OF LASTING LOVE & MARRIAGE**

Book 6-B is designed for:  
Couples Bible Study;  
Engaged Singles Bible Study;  
Pre-Marital Counseling.

F. A. C. T. S. is an acronym for the following important ingredients or components of a lasting love and marriage:

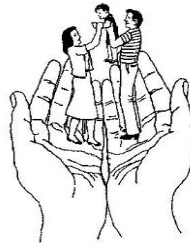
- Foundation
- Acceptance

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Satisfaction and Success

NOTE: Similar to the CHI UPSILON course, Book 6-B, F. A. C. T. S. OF LASTING LOVE AND MARRIAGE, may be given as a “stand alone” special Bible study for married couples and singles in committed relationship, as an evangelistic/discipleship course, as often as you can gather a group of couples (numbering 5-8 couples, or more). Identify each group as “Batch 1”, “Batch 2”, etc. The idea is that batch graduates will recruit other couples to form a new batch; graduates will also serve as assistants in the training of the new batch. Graduates will be encouraged to join a cell group where they can begin their discipleship training to study NewLife Books 1-14; unless they were already in such a cell group before attending the F. A. C. T. S. special course.

**BOOK SEVEN  
YOUTH RIGHT HAND: KEYS TO VICTORY**

1. Thumb: Body
2. Pointing Finger: Mind
3. Middle Finger: Emotion
4. Ring Finger: Will
5. Little Finger: Armor of God
6. Palm: The Exchanged Life



**SPIRITUAL PARENT**

**BOOK EIGHT  
DISCIPLEMAKING: FILIPINO CONTEXT**

Filipino Personality Hand  
The Filipino Heart  
Palm: Family  
Thumb: “Utang na Loob”  
Pointing Finger: Social Acceptance  
Middle Finger: Social Mobility  
Ring Finger: Benefactor-Hero Complex  
Little Finger: Closeness to God

Character Hand  
Thumb: Self-Image (Pls see Book 6-A, Lesson 2)  
Pointing Finger: Parents ((Pls see Book 6-A, Lesson 3)  
Middle Finger: Friends (Pls see Book 6-A, Lesson 4)  
Ring finger: Love, Courtship, Marriage, Christian Family  
Little Finger: Time, Work, Money  
Palm: Success, Life Goals, Convictions  
Special Article  
Homosexuality: A Bible Perspective

**BOOK NINE**

**PARENT LEFT HAND: NEEDS OF A SPIRITUAL PARENT**

1. Thumb: Prayer - III
2. Pointing Finger: Word – III (See **Book 5**)
3. Middle Finger: Stewardship
4. Ring Finger: Bride of Christ
5. Little Finger: World Mission
6. Palm: Gifts of the Holy Spirit (See **Book 12**)

**BOOK TEN**

**PARENT RIGHT HAND: FOUNDATIONS FOR MINISTRY**

1. Thumb: The Spirit in Ministry
2. Pointing Finger: The Word in Ministry
3. Middle Finger: Prayer in Ministry
4. Ring Finger: Modeling in Ministry
5. Little Finger: Trials in Ministry
6. Palm: Goal & Process of Ministry

**BOOK ELEVEN**

**THE BOOK OF ROMANS**

**BOOK TWELVE**

**36 FOUNDATIONAL SALVATION TRUTHS**

**BOOK THIRTEEN**

**SPIRITUAL GIFTS:**

**DISCOVERING, DEVELOPING, DEPLOYING**

1. Four Wonderful Truths
2. What are Spiritual Gifts?
3. Gifts for Serving
4. Gifts for Teaching
5. Gifts for Leading
6. Basic Ministries
7. Developing and Deploying your Gifts
8. Affirming Your Gifts and Ministry

**BOOK FOURTEEN**

**NEWLIFE CHURCH PLANTING STRATEGY**

