

Nicholson

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Helping people become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ

Discovering NCC - Grow • 201

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WELCOME

Step 2: Getting Connected to Spiritual Growth Habits

What is *Discovering NCC • Grow 201*?

The first step, of course, is committing your whole life – body and soul, intellect and emotion, past, present and future – to Jesus Christ.

You can learn more about that in our *Discovering NCC • Enter 101* class. *Enter 101* also tells you about Nicholson Christian Church and how to become a part of our family here. If you haven't taken it yet, please consider taking it the next time it is offered.

Who should be in *Discovering NCC • Grow 201*?

Grow in NCC is intended for people who have already given their lives to Christ. We'll talk about the steps you need to take to grow and mature in Him.

ABOUT THIS CLASS

Purpose of This Class

"...that you may become mature Christians and may fulfill God's will for you."

"We are not meant to remain as children ... but to grow up in every way into Christ..." Ephesians 4:14-15

Focus of this Class

We will focus on the Four Basic Habits every Christian needs to develop in order to grow to spiritual maturity.

This class will:

- Equip you with the skills you need to begin these habits
- Explain the tools you need to continue these habits

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

What is Spiritual Maturity?

"...In the unity of common faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity - the measure of development which is meant by the 'fullness of Christ.'" Ephesians 4:13 (PH)

Spiritual maturity is becoming like Jesus

"For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him...should become like his Son..."
Romans 8:29(LB)

Facts about Spiritual Maturity

1. It is not automatic

"You have been Christians for a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead... you need someone to teach you...When a person is still living on milk, it shows he isn't very far along in the Christian life...He's still a baby Christian!" Hebrews 5:12-13 (LB)

2. It is a process

"Learn to be mature." Proverbs 8:5 (GN)

"Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18 (GN)

There are no shortcuts!

3. It takes discipline.

"Take the time and the trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit." 1 Timothy 4:7b (PH)

"Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." 1 Timothy 4:7b (NASB)

DISCIPLESHIP

Understanding Discipleship

1. Mature believers are called disciples.

2. I cannot be a disciple without being disciplined.

3. The more disciplined I become, the more mature - spiritually fit.

4. The marks of a disciple are obedience and sacrifice

Jesus said, "Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Luke 24:27

5. The marks of a disciple must be practiced daily.

Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23

- What is involved in "cross bearing"?

Deny oneself to give Christ first place in my life.

- What is involved in "following Jesus"?

Consider WWJD if he were in my place today.

Four Habits of a Disciple

How can I become a disciple?

Develop new habits_____.

"... You have put off the old self with its HABITS, and have put on the new self... which God is continually renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself." Colossians 3:9-10

1. Time with God's Word.

"If you continue in my Word, then you are my disciples indeed. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

2. Prayer

"If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it...in this way you become my disciples." John 15:7-8 (GN)

3. Tithing

"None of you can become my disciples unless he gives up all of his possessions." Luke 14:33 (JB)

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God first in your lives." Deut. 14:23 (LB)

4. Fellowship

"Love each other just as much as I love you. Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:34-35 (LB)

Definitions of "Habit" (Webster's II Dictionary):

"A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity, acquired through frequent repetition."

"An established disposition of the character."

Sow a thought, reap an act.

Sow an act, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny.

"A customary practice.

It is easier to start_____ good habits than to stop_____ bad habits.

The Goal of this Class

That I will commit myself to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.

"In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice andthe purposes of evil. So now give yourselves to the service of righteousness – for the purpose of becoming truly good.

Romans 6:19 (Ph)

HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN GOOD HABITS

Step 1: **Desire**

You must start with a strong desire. You must be internally motivated. External motivations don't last. If you start only half-heartedly, you will never make it to the success point.

Step 2: **Start**

Begin right now! Don't wait. Don't procrastinate. You don't slide into a new habit. "One of these days" never arrives. You must have a starting point. It's easier to break a bad habit today than it will be tomorrow!

"If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done." Ecclesiastes 11:4 (LB)

Step 3: **Commit**

Announce your intentions publicly. Make a covenant or resolution. The power of a vow is awesome. It is particularly powerful if you put your commitment in writing.

"Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them." Psalm 76:11

Step 4: **Persist**

Never allow an exception until the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Each lapse can be fatal. A single slip unwinds many turns at first. Continuity and success at the start are essential. Never be swayed by "just this once." The act of yielding weakens the will and reinforces your lack of self-control. It takes 3 weeks to become comfortable with a new habit and it takes another 3 to 4 weeks (doing it daily) for it to become a part of your life.

It takes 20 to 30 repetitions to learn something!

Step 5: **Do it!**

Whenever you feel the slightest urge or prompting to practice this new habit - DO IT THEN! Don't wait. Seize every opportunity to reinforce your habit. Those feelings will not last, so whenever you feel inclined to perform your new habit, do so!

Step 6: Be Accountable

Get a partner who will support you and encourage you. Find someone who is willing to hold you accountable and check up on you especially in the early days before the habit is firmly rooted in your life.

"Let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over each other, studying how we may stir up and stimulate each other to ... helpful deeds and noble activities." Hebrews 1:25 (Amp)

"Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (GN)

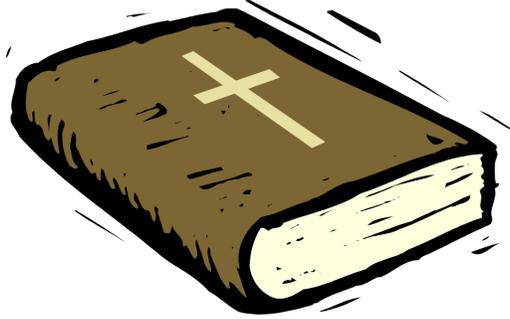
Step 7: Depend on God

Rely on God's power to help you establish the habit. Remember, Satan does not want you to develop habits that help you grow spiritually and make you like Christ, so he will do all he can to tempt you, cause you to slip, or discourage you. Pray!

"For the Spirit God has given us ...fills us with power, love and self-control." 2 Tim. 1:7 (GN)

"For it is God who is at work within you, giving you the will and the power to achieve his purpose."
Phil. 2:13 (Ph)

How To Get A "Grasp" On Your Bible



"The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (LB)

Six Ways to Get a Grasp On Your Bible

1. How to hear God's Word

"Faith comes from hearing the Word of God." Romans 10:17

Ways to Hear God's Word

- The Bible on tape
- Church services and studies
- Sermon tapes
- Radio/TV Teachers

Problem: We forget 90-95% % of what we hear after 72 hours.

How to Improve Your Hearing

- Be ready and eager to hear God.
Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Luke 8:8
"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psalm 119:103
- Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God (Luke 8:4-15)
 - ◆ *A Closed Mind:* Is fear, pride or bitterness preventing me from hearing God?
 - ◆ *A Superficial Mind:* Am I serious about wanting to hear God speak?
 - ◆ *A Preoccupied Mind:* Am I too busy with other things to concentrate on what God has to say?

"Consider carefully how you listen..." Luke 8:18

- Confess any sin in your life
".....Get rid of all moral filth and humbly accept the Word..." James 1:21
- Take notes on what you hear – Keep a Spiritual Notebook
"We must pay more careful attention to what we've heard, so that we do not drift away!"
Hebrews 2:1
- Act on what you hear!
"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says!" James 1:22

"Whoever...does not simply listen and then forget, but puts it into practice – that person will be blessed in what he does." James 1:25 (GN)

2. How to Read God's Word

"Happy is the one who reads this book....and obeys what is written in it!" Revelation 1:3 (GN)

How often should I read God's Word? daily

"(The Scriptures) shall be his constant companion. He must read from it every day of his life so that he will learn to respect the Lord his God by obeying all of his commands." Deuteronomy 17:19

Suggestions for Reading God's Word

- Read it systematically
- Use a Bible without notes
- Read it in different translations
- Read it aloud quietly to yourself
- Mark key verses
- Choose a reading plan and stick to it

If I read approximately 20-30 minutes a day I can read the Bible in one year.

Check out the *New Testament Reading Plan* and the *Bible Reading Plan* at the back of your book.

3. How to Study God's Word

"...(the Berean Christians) accepted the message eagerly and studied the Scriptures every day."

Acts 17:11 (Ph)

"Be a good workman...know what His Word says and means." 2 Timothy 2:15

The difference between reading and studying the Bible is that you review when you study.

The secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to ask the right questions.

1. make observations
2. ask questions
3. compare scriptures
4. slow down
5. Be persistent
6. Review

Bible Study Resources

- Study Bibles
- Bible Concordance
- Bible Encyclopedia
- Bible Handbooks
- Bible Dictionary
- Various translations
- Bible Commentaries
- Bible Atlas

All of these are available online or as computer programs.

4. How to Memorize God's Word

"Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart." Proverbs 7:2-3 (LB)

Benefits of Memorizing Scripture

a. It helps me resist temptation

"I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11

b. It helps me make wise decisions.

"Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105

c. It strengthens me when I'm under stress.

"...Your promises to me are my hope. They give me strength in all my troubles; how they refresh and revive me." Psalm 119:49 (LB)

d. It comforts me when I'm sad.

"Your words are what sustain me...They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me."

Jeremiah 15:16 (LB)

e. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15

When to memorize a Verse

- During your quiet time
- While exercising
- While waiting (spare moments)
- At bedtime (Psalm 63:6)

How to memorize a Verse

- Pick a verse that speaks to you.
- Say the reference before and after the verse.
- Say the verse aloud many times.
- Read the verse aloud many times.
- Break the verse into natural phrases.
- Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
- Write down the verse and erase a word at a time.
- Write the verse on a flash card.
- Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
- Display your verses in prominent places.
- Always memorize the verse word perfect.
- Put the verse to music. Write a song!
- Get a partner so you can check each other.

Start with 2 new verses a week.

Three keys to memorizing:

Repetition

Repetition

Repetition

We remember what matters

We remember what we care about

"The law you gave me means more to me than all the money in the world." Psalm 119:72 (GN)

Check out the Scripture Memorization Course at the back of this book.

5. How to Meditate on God's Word

"(Those) who are always meditating on His Laws...are like trees along a river bank bearing fruit ...they will never wither and what they do prospers." Psalm 1:2-3 (LB)

- Meditation is contemplating/ thinking about a Bible verse in order to discover how I can apply its truth to my own life.
- Worry is fruitless thought - opposite of mediation.

Why Mediate on Scripture?

a. It is the key to becoming like Christ.

"... Your life is shaped by your thoughts." Proverbs 4:23 (GN)

"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2

"As we....contemplate the Lord's glory, we are being transformed into His likeness..."

1 Corinthians 3:18

b. It is the key to answered prayer.

"If you live your life in Me, and my words live in your hearts, you can ask for whatever you like, and it will come true to you." John 15:7 (Ph)

c. It is the key to successful living.

"...Meditate on (the Word) day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Joshua 1:8

Six Way to Mediate on a Verse

- *Picture it!* Visualize the scene in your mind.
- *Pronounce it!* Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
- *Paraphrase it!* Rewrite the verse in your own words.
- *Personalize it!* Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your name.
- *Pray it!* Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
- *Probe it!* Ask the following 9 questions (S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S.)

S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. Questions

Is there any:

- SIN to confess ?
- PROMISE to claim ?
- ATTITUDE to change ?
- COMMAND to obey ?
- EXAMPLE to follow ?
- PRAYER to pray ?
- ERROR to avoid ?
- TRUTH to believe ?
- SOMETHING to praise God for ?

6. How to Apply God's Word

"Do not fool yourselves by just listening to the Word. Instead, put it into practice." James 1:22

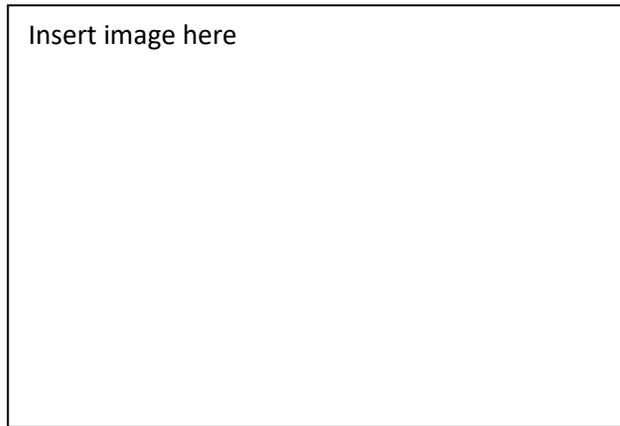
"...Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:19

- Ask: What did it mean to the original hearers?
- Ask: What is the underlying timeless principle?
- Ask: Where or how could I practice the principle?
- Write out a sentence that describes a project or action you will take to apply the truth.

Habit 1

A Daily Time With God



"The one who looks steadily at God's perfect law... and makes that law his HABIT - not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice, will be happy in all that he does."

James 1:25 (Ph)

The Importance of a Daily Quiet Time

DEFINITION: A quiet time is a daily time I set aside to be alone with God to get to know Him through the Bible and prayer.

Your time alone with God should be the top priority in your schedule for 5 reasons:

1. We were created to have fellowship with God.

"So God created man in his own image..." Genesis 1:27, 2:7, 3:8

"Look! I've been standing at the door and constantly knocking. If anyone....opens the door, I will come in and fellowship with him and he with me." Revelation 3:20

2. Jesus gave His Life to make a relationship with God possible.

"God...has invited you into this wonderful friendship with his Son, Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. 1:9 (LB)

3. Personal time alone with God was Jesus' regular activity.

Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed: Mark 1:35, Luke 22:39, Luke 5:16

4. Every person who has been effective in living for God developed this habit.

Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, etc.

5. You cannot be a fulfilled Christian without it!

"Man cannot live by bread alone, but on every word that God speaks." Matthew 4:4 (GN)

"...I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:13 (NAS)

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your Word." Psalm 119:9

The Purpose of Quiet Daily Time

1. To give devotion to God.

God DESERVES our devotion! (Revelation 4:11)

God DERSIRES our devotion! (John 4:23)

"Give to the Lord the glory due to his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness."

Psalm 29:2

"(Hezekiah) was successful, because everything he did...he did in a spirit of complete devotion to his God."

2 Chronicles 31:21 (GN)

2. To get direction from God.

"Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk." Psalm 25:4

Two Things To Do In A Quiet Time

a. Consider your way

"Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established." Proverbs 4:26(KJV)

b. Commit your day:

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths." Proverbs 3:6(KJV)

"Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will."

Psalm 37:5 (LB)

3. To gain delight in God.

"Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:4 (KJV)

"...(God's) presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure." Psalm 16:11 (GN)

Fact: The better I get to know Christ, the more Joy I receive.

The objective of your Quiet Time is not to study about Christ, but to actually spend time with Him!

4. To grow and become more _____ like God.

"For as you know him better and better, God will give you, through his great power, everything you need for living a truly good life...He has promised to save us...and to give us his own character!"

2 Peter 1:3-4 (LB)

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the lord, who is the Spirit." 2 Cor. 3:18

"When the council saw the boldness of Peter and John...they were amazed and realized what being with Jesus had done for them." Acts 4:13 (LB)

How to Begin a Daily Quiet Time

1. Select a Specific Time

The best time to have a quiet time is when I am at my best.

Reasons for considering an early morning quiet time:

- The example of Bible Characters.
(Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Job, Hezekiah, David, Jesus, etc.)
- It seems logical to begin the day with it.
"The best time to tune your instrument is before you play the concert, not after!"
- It demonstrates that meeting with God is your first priority.
You give him the first part of your day.
- You are more likely to be rested, your mind is less cluttered, and it's often the quietest time!

Whatever time you set, stay committed to it.

How Long Should a Quiet Time Be?

- Start with 15 minutes and let it grow.
- Don't watch the clock!
- Emphasize quality, not quantity!

2. Choose a Special Place

"Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives ...to pray." Luke 22:39 (GN)

Choose a place where you will have solitude.

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went to a solitary place, where he prayed." Mark 1:35

3. Gather the Resources You'll Need

- A Bible - one with readable print.
- A Notebook - to write down what God says to you and to keep your prayer list.
- A Songbook - if you worship through singing

4. Begin with the Right Attitudes

- *Peaceful*
"Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10
- *Open to the Spirit*
"Open my eyes to see wonderful things in your Word." Psalm 119:18 (LB)
- *Obedient*
"Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know...." John 7:17 (GN)

5. Follow a Simple Plan

Don't waste your quiet time wondering what to do.

Don't have a plan so complex that it distracts you.

Try the plan on the following page

15 Minutes with God

(A Plan to Get You Started)

1 minute

Be still and quiet! Prepare your heart. Take a few deep breaths and wait on God.

4 minutes

(See the section on "How to Read God's Word.")

Begin reading where you left off the day before. Read until you feel God has told you something. Then stop and think about it.

4 minutes

(See the section on "How to Meditate on God's Word.")

Use one of the methods of meditation described earlier. Think about what the passage means to your life. Write down your thoughts. Part of reflecting is memorizing verses that speak to you in a special way.

(See the section on "How to Memorize God's Word.")

2 minutes

(See the section on "How to Apply God's Word.")

Write out a personal application statement that is practical, passable and measurable. Demonstrate on paper that you have thought through the passage and its implications of your life.

4 minutes

(See the section on "Habit 2: Prayer.")

Conclude your Quiet Time by talking to God about what He has shown you and making requests from your prayer list.

How to Overcome Problems with Your Quiet Time

1. The Problem of Discipline

Your first problem in establishing a quiet time will face you the moment you wake up each morning. Am I going to get out of bed? (The Battle of the Blankets)

Suggestions

- a. Go to bed early.
- b. Get up rested.
- c. Be aware of quiet time obstacles and distractions.
- d. Fall asleep thinking about positive things.

2. The Problem of Distractions

Satan will try to use anything to get your mind to wander during a quiet time.

Suggestions

- a. Get out of yourself.
- b. Get thoroughly focused on God.
- c. Read and pray aloud.
- d. Have a list during your prayer time.
- e. Keep a note pad nearby.

3. The Problem of Dryness

Sometimes you will feel like you're not getting anything out of your quiet time. (The Battle of the Blahs)

Never judge your quiet time by your feelings.

Possible Causes of Spiritual Dryness

1. Your physical condition.
2. Disobedience to God.
3. Rushing your Quiet Time.
4. Getting in a rut.
5. Not sharing insights with others.

4. The Problem of Diligence

Your greatest problem will be your struggle to stay consistent. Satan fights nothing harder than your personal Quiet Time.

Suggestions

- a. Make a covenant or vow to God.
- b. Schedule it on your daily calendar.
- c. Be prepared for Satan's excuses.
- d. Leave your Bible open to the passage for the next day.

What If I Miss A Day?

- Don't despair
- Don't condemn yourself
- Don't give up

It takes 3 weeks for you to become familiar with a new task.

It takes another 3-4 weeks for it to become a comfortable habit.

"Let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up." Galatians 6:9 (LB)

Habit 2

Prayer

Talking With God

"Base your happiness on your hope in Christ. When trials come, endure them patiently; steadfastly maintain the HABIT of prayer."

Romans 12:12 (Ph)

1. Approach Prayer with the Right Attitude

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer: Matthew 6:5-8

Be authentic

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men." (vs. 5)

- Don't try to impress God
- Don't try to impress People

Be focused on pleasing God

"But when you pray go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (vs.6)

Be conversational with God

"Don't recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only by repeating them again and again. Remember, your Father knows exactly what you need before you ask Him!" (vs. 7-8)

2. Use the Model Jesus Gave Us

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer: Matthew 6: 9-15:

<p>"Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be your name...."</p>	<p>Praise: I begin by <u> <i>Giving Praise</i> </u></p> <p><u>Two Kinds of Praise</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ADORATION - Praising God for <i>who he is</i> 2. THANKSGIVING - Praising God for <i>what he has done</i> <p><i>"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name." (Psalm 100:4)</i></p> <p><u>ADORATION</u></p> <p>As you read your Bible, make a list of God's character qualities that you discover and review them when you pray</p> <p>Examples: God is patient; God is forgiving; God knows everything; God is loving</p> <p>KEY: God's <u> <i>holiness</i> </u> is the basis for our boldness in making requests in prayer. God answers the prayers that acknowledge who he is!</p> <p>Remind yourself and affirm the promises God has made that are contained in the meaning of his names.</p> <p><u>THANKSGIVING</u></p> <p>Make a list of all that you are thankful for and review them when you pray.</p>									
<p>"Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven..."</p>	<p>PURPOSE: I commit myself to <u> <i>God's will, not mine</i> </u></p> <p>Pray for God's will to be done:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>in my life</td> <td>in my family</td> <td>in my church</td> </tr> <tr> <td>in my ministry</td> <td>in my job</td> <td>in my future</td> </tr> <tr> <td>in the city</td> <td>in the nation</td> <td>in the world</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>"Offer yourself as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Romans 12:2 (GN)</p>	in my life	in my family	in my church	in my ministry	in my job	in my future	in the city	in the nation	in the world
in my life	in my family	in my church								
in my ministry	in my job	in my future								
in the city	in the nation	in the world								

<p>"Give us today our daily bread..."</p>	<p>PROVISION: I ask God to: <u>provide</u></p> <p>What needs can I pray about?</p> <p>"God will supply all your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us." Philippians 4:19</p> <p>"Since God did not spare even his own Son for us, but gave him up for us, won't he also surely give us everything else?" Romans 8:32</p> <p>Key: <u>ask</u></p> <p>Write down your requests, with a promise you are claiming from the Bible, and expect an answer!</p> <p>"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Phil. 4:6</p>
<p>"Forgive us our debts..."</p>	<p>PARDON: I ask God to <u>forgive</u></p> <p><u>4 Steps to Forgiveness</u></p> <p>1. Ask the Holy Spirit to <u>find</u> every sin. <i>"Examine me O God, and know my mind; test me and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me."</i> Psalm 139:23-24</p> <p>2. Confess each sin <u>openly</u> <i>"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you."</i> Proverbs 28:13</p> <p>3. Make <u>reconciliation</u> to others when necessary. <i>"When you remember your brother has something against you... go at once to make peace with him, then come back and offer your gift to God."</i> Matthew 5:23-24 (GN)</p> <p>4. By faith, <u>accept</u> God's forgiveness. <i>"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness."</i> 1 John 1:9</p>

<p>"...as we also forgive our debtors."</p>	<p>PEOPLE: I pray for <u>others</u></p> <p>Make a list of people you want to pray for. You might pray for different people on different days of the week.</p>
<p>"And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."</p>	<p>PROTECTION: I ask for <u>protection</u></p> <p>Believers face a spiritual battle every day. Satan wants to defeat you through temptation and fear. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face every situation during the day.</p> <p><i>"The Spirit who is in you is more powerful than the spirit who is in those who belong to the world." 1 John 4:4 (GN)</i></p>

Other Models

A -- duration

C--onfession

T--hanksgiving

S-- upplication

C--onfess

H--onor

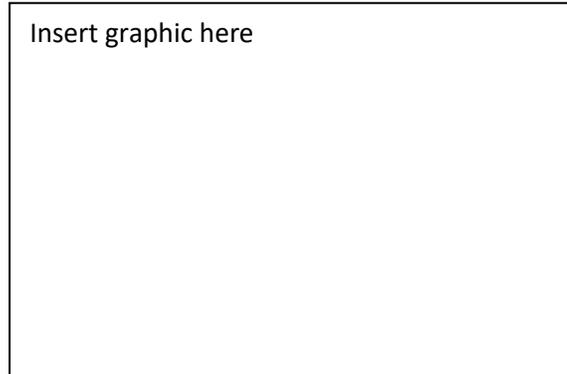
A--sk

T -- hanks

Habit 3

Tithing

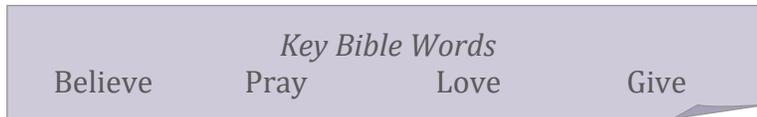
Honoring God with My Giving



*On the first day of each week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering.
The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn.*

1 Corinthians 16:2 (LB)

Why God Wants Me To Give



"Just as you excel in everything else...in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness... see that you also excel in the grace of giving." 2 Corinthians 8:7

Why God Wants Me to Give: Seven Benefits to My Life

1. Giving makes me like God.
"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son...." John 3:16
2. Giving draws me closer to God.
"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Matthew 6:21
3. Giving is the antidote to selfishness.
"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant, nor to put hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to be generous and willing to share. In this way they may take hold of the life that is truly LIFE!" 1 Timothy 6:17-19
4. Giving strengthens faith.
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of your income, and he will fill your barns to overflowing. " Proverbs 3:5,9
5. Giving is an investment in eternity.
"...Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity. "
Timothy 6:18-19 (LB)
6. Giving blesses me when I give.
"A generous man himself will be blessed." Proverbs 22:9

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Proverbs 22:9
"Good will come to him who is generous..." Psalm 112:5
7. Giving makes me happier.
Jesus said, "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." Acts 20:35
"The people rejoiced... for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord." Proverbs 11:25

What the Bible Teaches About Tithing

What is Tithing?

"Tithe" means "a tenth part."

Is there a Difference Between a "Tithe" and an "Offering"?

A tithe is giving regularly of my income.

An offering is anything I give in addition to my tithe.

Why Should I Tithe? Eight Reasons from God's Word

1. Because God commands it.
"A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy." Leviticus 27:30
2. Because Jesus also commanded it.
"...you give a tenth...But you have neglected the more important matters of the law..You should practice the latter, without neglecting the former." Matthew 23:23
3. Tithing demonstrates that God has control of life.
"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God first in your life." Deuteronomy 14:23
4. Tithing reminds me that wealth was given to me by God!
"Always remember it is the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce wealth." Deut. 8:18
5. Tithing expresses my gratitude to God.
"How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" Psalm 116:12

"Each of you should bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you."
Deuteronomy 16:17
6. God says that refusing to tithe is stealing from Him!
God says, "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' God says in tithes and offerings...Bring your whole tithe to My house." Malachi 3:8-10

7. Tithing gives God a chance to prove **he is faithful** and wants to bless you!
"Bring your whole tithe to My storehouse. Test me in this," says the Lord, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you won't have room enough for it! I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will be protected from plagues." Malachi 3:10

8. Tithing proves that I **love God**
Jesus said, "If you really love me, do what I command." John 14:15

"...I want you to be leaders also in the spirit of cheerful giving... This is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond mere words." 2 Corinthians 8:7b-8(LB)

What Should I Tithe?

The **first** part of what I earn, not the **last**
"Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income." Proverbs 3:9-10

Where Should I Give My Tithe?

Where I **am part of a church community**
"Bring your whole tithe into My storehouse..." Malachi 3:10

When Should I Tithe?

"On the first day of every week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." 1 Corinthians 16:2 (LB)

How to Remember

- Put it in your check register/ledger book/financial software first!
- Write out all your weekly checks.
- Teach your children to tithe.

Giving with the Right Attitudes

Give **proportionally**

"For if the willingness is there, your gift is acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have." 2 Corinthians 9:12

Give **cheerfully**

"...for God loves a cheerful giver!" 2 Corinthians 9:7

Give **generously**

"They gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service..." 2 Corinthians 8:3-4

Give **expecting a blessing**

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and whoever sows generously will reap generously." 2 Corinthians 9:6

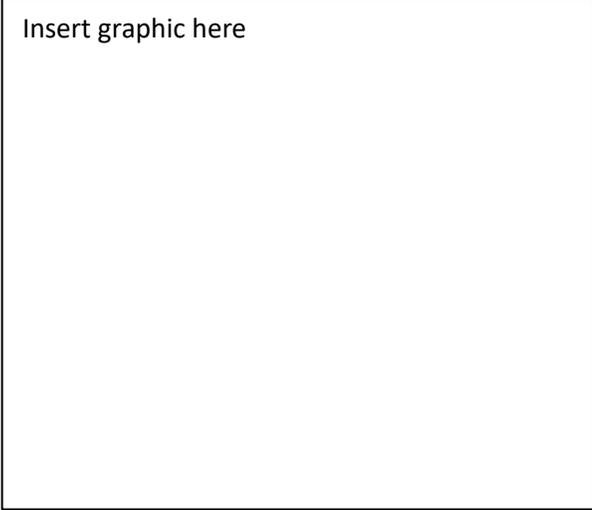
*The Key to Giving:
"...they first gave themselves to the Lord..."*

Habit 4

Fellowship

Participating in God's Family

Insert graphic here



"Let us not give up the HABIT of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another."

Hebrews 10:25 (GN)

Why is Fellowship So Important?

1. I belong _____ in God's family of believers.

"Let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:10

"You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

"So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others!" Romans 12:5

2. I need other believers _____ to grow spiritually.

"Let us think of one another and how we can encourage each other to love and to good deeds." Heb. 10:24

"Two are better off than one...If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it's just too bad, because there is no one to help him...Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break." Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10, 12 (GN)

The Christian who is not committed to a group of other believers for praying, sharing, and serving, so that he is known, as he knows others, is not an obedient Christian. He is not in the will of God. However vocal he may be in his theology, he is not obeying the Lord.

- Dr. Ray Ortland

3. I need other believers _____ to grow spiritually.

"People learn from one another just as iron sharpens iron." Proverbs 27:17 (GN)

*"Every day...keep encouraging one another so that none of you are hardened by the glamour of sin."
Hebrews 3:13 (JB)*

"Brothers, if someone is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6: 1-2

4. Christ is present when we fellowship together.

"For whenever two or three have come together in my name, I am there, right among them!" Matt. 18:30

5. There is power when people pray together.

"Whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in Heaven." Matthew 18:19 (GN)

6. Fellowship is a benefit to the world.

Jesus said, "My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind...so the world will believe that you sent me." John 17:21 (LB)

7. I am uniquely valuable to every other Christian.

"God has given you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other." 1 Peter 4:10 (LB)

"There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it." I Corinthians 12:5,27 (LB)

Some "One Anothers" of Fellowship
(Partial List - There are 58 in the New Testament)

• Serve One Another	Galatians 5:13
• Accept One Another	Romans 15:7
• Forgive One Another	Colossians 3:13
• Greet One Another	Romans 16:6
• Bear One Another's Burdens	Galatians 6:2
• Be devoted to One Another	Romans 12:10
• Honor One Another	Romans 12:10
• Teach One Another	Romans 15:14
• Submit to One Another	Ephesians 5:21
• Encourage One Another	1 Thessalonians 5:11

How Can a Growing Church Maintain Close Friendships?

Every member needs to be part of a smaller community.

"(They met) day after day in the Temple courts and from house to house." Acts 5:42

What is the Purpose of Community Groups?

<i>"They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching..."</i>	1. Bible Study
<i>"...and to fellowship..."</i>	2. Fellowship
<i>"...and to the breaking of bread..."</i>	3. Communion
<i>"...and to prayer..."</i>	4. Prayer
<i>"...they gave to anyone as he had a need..."</i>	5. Support
<i>"...they ate together with glad and sincere hearts..."</i>	6. Social Gathering
<i>"...praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."</i>	7. Praising/Singing
<i>"And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."</i>	8. Outreach

TOOLS

New Testament Reading Plan Through the New Testament in 30 Days

1. Matthew 1-9
2. Matthew 10-15
3. Matthew 16-22
4. Matthew 23-26
5. Mark 1-8
6. Mark 9-16
7. Luke 1-6
8. Luke 7-11
9. Luke 12-18
10. Luke 19-24
11. John 1-7
12. John 8-13
13. John 14-22
14. Acts 1-7
15. Acts 8-14
16. Acts 15-21
17. Acts 22-28
18. Romans 1-8
19. Romans 9-16
20. 1 Corinthians 1-9
21. 1 Corinthians 10-16
22. 2 Corinthians 1-13
23. Galatians - Ephesians
24. Philippians - 2 Thessalonians
25. 1 Timothy - Philemon
26. Hebrews
27. James - 2 Peter
28. 1 John - 3 John
29. Revelation 1-11
30. Revelation 12-22

Through The Bible In A Year

There are several reading plans which will take you through the entire Bible in one year. Most people can read through the Bible in one year if they spend only 20 to 30 minutes a day reading God's Word.

Can you imagine reading the Bible 30 or 40 times during your life? Many people read a book a week that is as long as the Bible is. And did you know that there are more words in the Sunday Kentucky Enquirer than there are in the Bible?

Scripture Memory Course

The following verses suggest a "balance" in Scripture Memory. The verses selected are key verses in understanding the foundation of the Christian Life and Christian Growth. Do not feel tied down to this suggested list. This is only a tool to lead you in your understanding of the importance of memorizing "key" verses.

Live the New Life

Christ the Center	2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20
Obedience to Christ	Rom. 12:1; John 14:21
The Word	2 Tim 3:16; Josh. 1:8
Prayer	John 15:7; Phil 4:6-7
Fellowship	Matt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24
Witnessing	Matt. 4:19; Rom. 1:16

Proclaim Christ

All Have Sinned	Rom. 3:23; Isa. 53:6
Sin's Penalty	Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27
Christ Paid the Penalty	Rom. 5:8; 1 Pet. 3:18
Salvation Not by Works	Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
Must Receive Christ	John 1:12; Rev 3:20
Assurance of Salvation	1 John 5:13; John 5:24

Rely on God's Resources

His Spirit	1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:12
His Strength	Isa. 41:10; Phil. 4:13
His Faithfulness	Lam. 3:22; Num. 23:19
His Peace	Isa. 26:3; 1 Peter 5:7
His Provision	Rom. 3:23; Phil 4:19
His Help in Temptation	Heb. 2:18; Ps. 119: 9, 11

Be Christ's Disciple

Put Christ First	Matt 6:33; Luke 9:23
Separate From the World	1 John 2:15-16; Rom. 12:2
Be Steadfast	1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:3
Serve Others	Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 4:5
Give Generously	Prov. 3:9-10; 2 Cor. 9:6-7
Develop World Vision	Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20

Grow in Christ's Likeness

Love	John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:18
Humility	Phil. 2:3-4; 1 Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Eph. 5:3; 1 Peter 2:11
Honesty	Lev. 19:11; Acts 24:16
Faith	Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:20-21
Good Works	Gal. 6:9-10; Matt. 5:16

Prayer Guide #1

Character Traits of God

Trait	Reference
Faithful	2 Corinthians 1:20
Righteous	2 Timothy 4:8
The Light	John 8:12

Prayer Guide #2

The Names of God

Did you know that God has several names? These different names for God are given in the Bible, and each name describes a facet of his character. You can take each of these 8 names and focus individually on what God is really like! Pray the names of God as affirmations and praise!

8 Hebrew Names of God

Declaration of Who God is

Jehovah-Shammah - "*God is Present with Me*" (Ezekiel 48:35)

You are here! I am never alone!

Jehovah - Rohi - "*God is my Shepherd*" (Psalm 23:1)

You lead me and feed me and protect me!

Jehovah - Jireh - "*God is my Provider*" (Genesis 22:14)

You see what I need before I even ask!

Jehovah - Rophe - "*God is my Healer*" (Exodus 15:26)

You can heal my body, emotions, and relationships!

Jehovah - Tsidkenu - "*God is my Righteousness*" (Jeremiah 23:6)

You accept me and forgive me because of Jesus!

Jehovah - M'Kiddish - "*God is My Sanctification*" (Leviticus 20:8)

You make me holy and like Jesus!

Jehovah - Shalom - "*God is My Peace*" (Judges 6:24)

You give me peace in spite of circumstances

Jehovah - Nissi - "*God is My Banner*" (Exodus 17:15)

You are my victory in conflict and confrontation!

Think on the implications of these names.

You'll have plenty to praise God for!

Prayer Guide #5

People I'm Praying For

Family:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Christian Friends:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Friends I'd like to see become Christians:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Spiritual Leaders:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Government Leaders:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Others:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____