

## Introduction

### Defining Biblical Hermeneutics

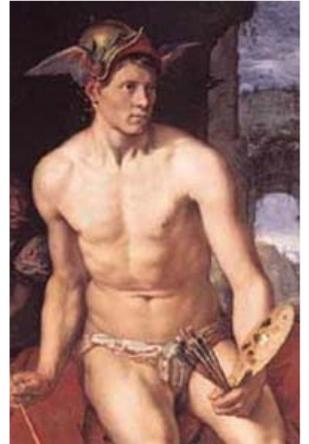
"Hermeneutics" is the art and science of reading.

Its root is from Hermes, the Greek god who understood and interpreted what other Greek gods wanted to say to humans.

Reading the Bible is called "biblical hermeneutics."

This series delves into the subject of biblical hermeneutics and highlights some methods and practical examples that may be worthwhile to add to your reading skills.

For those who desire more, there are biblical scholars who wrote wonderful books on this subject, and a list of books with their prefaces or forewords can be seen in the section Bible Hermeneutics.



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### Reading the Bible is Difficult

Reading the Bible is difficult for several reasons:

It is not a book that has a continuous historical story line from beginning to end.

It is a book written in several literary styles including poetry.

It was written in cultures and societies very different from today.

It is about an intangible subject - God and his plan for the spiritual condition of man.



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### Significant Differences

While the process of reading the Bible is, in many ways, like reading any book, there are several notable differences:

The Bible is the actual revelation of God of Himself to mankind.

The Bible is God's word for the redemption and encouragement of man's spiritual state.

The Bible is the principle means of comprehending the reality of God's love for man.

The Bible was not intended for entertainment or an intellectual exercise; it was intended to change lives.



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### A 3-Step Process

How well you read the Bible affects how well you understand it, and this affects how well you apply its truths and principles.

An example of a good reading method is this 3 step process:

**Observation** - what do I see?

**Interpretation** - what does it mean?

**Application** - how does it apply to my life?



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### The Importance of Observation

Observation is the gathering of evidence.

Interpretation is your understanding of the evidence.

There are 2 important aspects to note here:

1. Interpretation arises from the evidence,
2. The more evidence you gather,  
The easier it is to comprehend

not visa versa.

what is going on.



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### How to Improve Your Accuracy of Interpretation

You'll discover that **the more you observe,**

**the less you'll need to interpret,**

and **the more accurately you'll be able to apply** the biblical truth to your life.

Of course it's OK not to understand everything you read in the Bible.

But a good Bible study method will certainly help you improve your ability of comprehension and markedly improve the accuracy of your interpretation.



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## Observation

### Define Words and Terms

Let's start with **observation** - what do you see? One skill is to examine, instead of presume, what the words or terms mean.

Does the root word help shed light on understanding the term?

For those who desire more, consider a deeper Bible study by examining the Hebrew or Greek term, which the Bible translation is based on,

to understand the term within the context of the author and his period of time.

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### Identify the Parts of Speech

Another important skill is identifying the parts of speech of a sentence or passage.

What is the function of the term?

Is it a verb?

How about a conjunction?

Or a preposition?

There are nine parts of speech:

nouns, pronouns, verbs,

adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions,

prepositions, interjections, and articles.

Understanding the combination of parts of speech that make up a sentence will most certainly help you understand what the author is saying.

For those who desire more, consider a deeper Bible study by examining the parts of speech in the Hebrew or Greek text, which the Bible translation is based on, to understand the subtle nuances of the author.

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### Break Down the Sentence Structure

Equally important is the skill of observing the structure of the sentence.

What is its subject?

What are its predicates?

What is its syntax?

Is there any significance to the order of thought?

For those who desire more, consider a deeper study into Hebrew and Greek syntax.

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ob ser va tion (ōb zər vā'shən)

1. An act of recognizing or noting some fact or occurrence.

2. An act of seeing or fixing the mind on something.

**Content words** - words that have meaning.  
nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

**Function words** - words that explain or create grammatical or structural relationships into which content words fit.  
pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, interrogatives

Simple    Complex    Compound  
Compound-Complex

A sentence may be one of 4 kinds, depending upon the number and type(s) of clauses it contains.

Understanding the clauses will help you figure out the sentence!

## Grasp the Figures of Speech

The Bible is full of imagery and figurative speech. Enhance your reading experience by creating mental images!

Reading imaginatively, yet with common sense, will help you understand the beauty of the author's writing.

Read with all of your senses!

Can you smell what the author smells?

Can you see what the author sees?

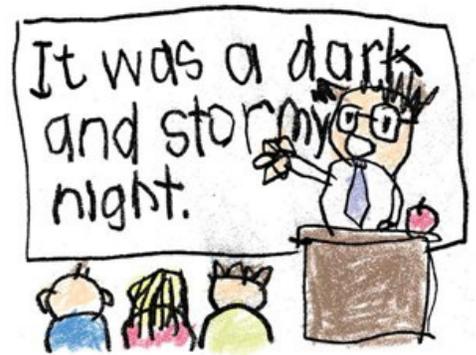
Can you hear what the author hears?

Can you sense what the author touches?

Can you empathize with the author's emotion?

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## Recognize the Literary Style

As you will discover, there are many aspects of observation that are necessary for a successful Bible study method. In one instance, it may be a microscopic study of a specific word. In another, your skills may require a more global perspective such as recognizing the literary genre / style of the passage.

In identifying the literary genre, you'll be able to better understand the author's purpose, thought, and emphasis.

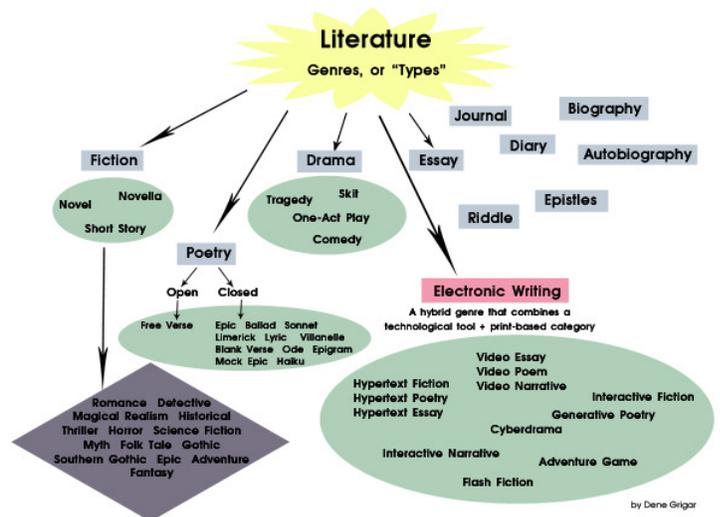
Did the author write a legal document?

Is the biblical passage poetic?

Was it written in a narrative, biographical, or historical style?

Did the author write a parable?

Was the literature prophetic or apocalyptic?



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## Question the Author

Great readers can identify and determine what is important to the author. One strategy that can improve your observation skill is asking the author questions. This can help you focus on the elements of a story or passage.

**Who** was involved?

**What** was the problem, objective, or key events?

**Where** and **when** did the event occur?

**Why** did this happen? What is the reason why this mattered?



Sometimes breaking up and rearranging the text allows you to see patterns and enhance your ability to see the detail. Instead of trying to understand the Text, try to make the Text more understandable!

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## Interpretation

### Interpretation within Context

The next step in a good Bible study method is **interpretation**. This asks the question, "what does it mean?"

This is where you draw inferences. Here you combine your background knowledge and information from the Bible to interpret and draw conclusions.

It requires you to use some prior knowledge and is the process of building new knowledge. Gaining new comprehension of the biblical text builds upon your prior knowledge of the Bible and enables you to better comprehend the Text.

You will see this when you read a familiar biblical passage and discover a new insight or meaning that you didn't discover earlier.

And you monitor your interpretation and comprehension here by asking if it makes sense or not.



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### Understand the Cultural Context

Perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to understanding the Bible is the presuppositions you may bring to the Text.

Be careful of bringing your socio-cultural perceptions, because it will alter the context and meaning of the Text.

The writers of the Bible wrote from and to an audience with a cultural experience much different from our own; as much as two to several thousand years in difference!

Take the time to learn about the society and culture that the Bible was addressing.



Sheep herding in Israel - 1890s

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### Learn the Histo-Geographical Context

Just as important as learning about the cultural context, understanding the historical and geographical context can bring much clarity to the passage.

Great civilizations with significant geo-political influences rose and fell during the period that the Bible was written.

Get the big picture.

What role did geography play?

What was happening politically during that time?



The ruins of ancient Jericho - 1890s

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## Develop the Theological Context

God has a purpose and meaning, and our objective is to discover that. The challenge is to develop the skill to interpret God's objective meaning without our subjective bias!

Be mindful of the theological context. As you develop your theology, are your views consistent within the context of the Bible?

Do other passages backup your theological interpretation?

What do you do when it clashes with cultural norms?



The western wall of the Second Temple  
Jerusalem 1890s

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## Application

### Softening Your Heart

The last step of a good Bible study method is **application**.

How does this apply to your life?

What will you do with this information?

This process begins with the condition of your heart.

What quality of relationship do you seek with God?

How does the passage help you improve your personal qualities?



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### Working with the Text

Application causes us to focus on the essential aspects of the biblical text.

Finding key words and phrases that capture the gist of what we've read remind us of the lesson that God is teaching us.

But don't make the mistake of substituting interpretation for application!



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## Transforming Your Mind

"He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding." (Prov 15:32)

Don't stop the process of God led self improvement.

Will it be rationalization or repentance?

*Let the Word work by changing your thoughts, priorities, and moral standard!*



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## Discipling Your Life

The pursuit of holiness challenges old thoughts, old perspectives, and old habits.

Sometimes a friend is just enough to help us overcome our moments of weakness.

One method of achieving success is to ask a friend to help you be accountable to the goals you have set for yourself.

A good friend isn't one who helps you feel good when you fail.

A good friend is one who encourages you as you confront your trials, but doesn't sugarcoat the discomfort of failure.

Small consistent changes equate to huge leaps over time.

Study consistently and remind yourself what God would like for you!

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## Loving Your Neighbor

Applying biblical principles go far beyond your own personal life.

What lessons can you learn to improve your relationships with:

your parents?

your children?

your siblings?

your family, clan or tribe?

your spouse?

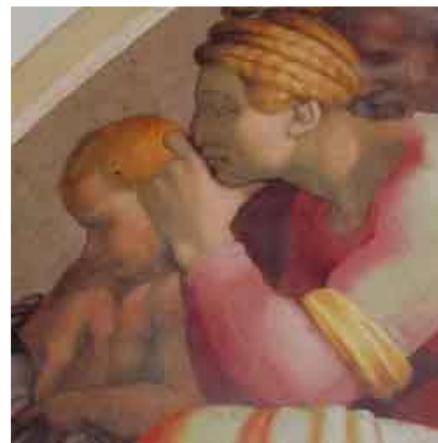
your friends?

What role does God have for you in the lives of others?

God's second greatest command is love your neighbor as yourself.

Only after you realize and understand God's love for you can you truly love others!

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## Discipleship

### The Two Greatest Commandments

Living by the Word of God is largely directed towards personal holiness and Christian living.

This is consistent with what Jesus identifies as the 2 greatest commands to man:

One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'

This is the great and foremost commandment.

The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" (Matthew 22:35-39)

And this reflects the vertical and horizontal relationships that God intended for human beings.

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### The Great Commission

However there was a command that Jesus made just prior to His Ascension. His last words clearly highlighted its importance and reflect the second greatest command:

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

For many Christians, this command to "make disciples" is understood to mean "evangelize." But disciple making is an encompassing application of Bible knowledge and wisdom that goes far beyond the individual's pursuit of personal holiness and Christian living...

Obedient Christian living requires both **training** (discipleship) and **outreach** (evangelism).

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## Disciple Making

is more than weekly fellowship.  
is more than weekly Bible study.

views learning as a means, not an end.  
is commanded by God (Matthew 28:18-20).

must be transferable (2 Timothy 2:2).  
will stretch your thinking and obedience (1 Peter 3:15).

should be considered ordinary, not extraordinary (Jude 3).



### Disciple Making

affirms one's faith

shows how one grows in faith

encourages others to assist others with their faith (or lack of)

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## Disciple Making

The following series on disciple making is from *Essentials*, which is part of the program Transferable Cross Training (TCT) developed by Dr. Karl Payne. The purpose of TCT is to help equip men and women to be effective disciple makers. The materials are field tested with various proof verses that can be memorized, and each lesson is focused on transferability. It is our desire is for those who accept the challenge of discipleship that, with or without a Bible and notes in hand, each individual who has taken the time to master the concepts and principles in this series will have confidence to comfortably and biblically respond to common questions and comments from friends or enemies of Christ. By God's grace we can make a difference in eternity by being actively involved in the most important job assignment entrusted to mankind. For more information about TCT or obtaining the booklet series, see [www.KarlPayne.org](http://www.KarlPayne.org)

Please remember that the uniqueness of this discipleship series is its simple transferability. It is the expressed desire of the author that students actually use these materials after completing each booklet, by sharing them with others in a manner consistent with 2 Timothy 2:2.

### About Karl Payne

I grew up in a home that would have been considered moral and ethical, but not religious. Both of my parents were teachers. Dad was a Mathematics / Science specialist for the Sacramento City School District and my mom taught grade school. My Dad would occasionally pray for our food, but we did not read the Bible or discuss religious topics. I decided my first Sunday of seventh grade that I had no real interest in church or Sunday school and informed my parents that I would no longer attend either. I assumed I was a Christian because I had been baptized as a child at my mom's request, but my primary interests were baseball, football and music.

On June 17th, 1970 I became a Christian while attending a youth retreat sponsored by Young Life, a Christian ministry focused upon reaching high school students. The two biggest hurdles I faced in that decision both related to honest assumptions. My first assumption related to what I had understood it meant to be a Christian. I assumed that I was a Christian because I had been baptized. Christians get baptized, I had been baptized, therefore, I was a Christian. I also thought that heaven, if it was real, was attained by being a nice person. I reasoned that since on a moral and ethical scale which had the Pope on one end and Hitler on the other, that my live style was closer to the Pope's than Hitler's, thus making me a shoe in for heaven if God was fair.

## **About Karl Payne (continues)**

The second assumption I had made related to education. In eighth grade my science teacher told our class that "religious people were mental cripples who needed a crutch to get through life." I was very impressed by this teacher and took to heart what he said. In the eleventh grade, my physiology teacher told our class that "educated people believed in evolution." As I grew older my education had become more important to me. As a result of several teacher's comments I assumed that it was not possible to think deeply and still be a Christian. Religion in my mind was therefore something for nice people who were not too concerned about an academic education. My first assumption was to confuse churchianity with Christianity. Churchianity represents men and women making their best efforts to reach up to God and receive His approval, based upon their individual efforts to be found worthy in His eyes. Biblical Christianity is a message explaining how God has chosen to reach down to mankind through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, providing salvation by His grace as a free gift to all who believe, in spite of our unworthiness. Religion is essentially a message of man reaching up to God. Christianity is a message detailing how God has reached down to man. Religion exalts man. Christianity exalts God. I had received just enough religious training to confuse religion with Christianity and had rejected an honest consideration of Christianity in the process. My second assumption was to confuse naturalism, dialectical materialism and the suppositional baggage assumed to be true by both philosophical world views, with actual empirical data and good science, which provides conclusions based upon testing, observation and repetition rather than wishful thinking and naturalist / atheistic suppositional indoctrination.

On the 17th of June, 1970 at 8:00 P.M., I listened to a gentleman clearly explain that God's plan is that I have eternal life (John 3:16, John 10:10, Romans 5:1), but that my problem with sin (to miss the mark in word, thought or deed) had separated me from Him (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23). This sounded more like bad news to me than good news. He went on to say that God had provided a remedy for my sin by sending His only son Jesus Christ to die on a cross as a payment for my penalty (2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 2:4-10, 1 Timothy 2:5, Romans 5:8, John 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9), but that it was absolutely necessary for me to respond to His remedy for the remedy to be effective (John 1:12, Romans 10:9-10, Revelation 3:20). I bowed my head in that room and quietly asked Jesus Christ to become my Savior and Lord. Jesus came into my life and has made me a new person, from the inside out (2 Corinthians 5:17). That was nearly thirty-one years ago. Knowing Jesus is more than religious activism or academic curiosity. It is a real relationship. Spiritual maturity is a process (1 John 2:12-14) that should continue to develop and grow as long as we are alive.

God used a Campus Crusade for Christ high school ministry to teach me that aggressive, reproductive Christianity (2 Timothy 2:2) should be considered normal Christianity. Sincerity is necessary for Christian living, but it is not sufficient for impacting our world for Christ (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, 2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15). He has used several godly men, seminary and nearly twenty-five years of serving in church ministry to teach me that making disciples means far more than leading people to Christ and asking them to pray and read their Bibles. It is impossible to give what you do not have or share what you do not know. When people tell me that their Christian faith is boring, what they are really telling me is that they do not pray, they do not study and they do not give away what they have been given. The Christian life is an adventure that is exciting to live and share. To judge Christianity by people who sit on their hands, criticize others and turn a living faith into dead religion is to misrepresent Biblical Christianity. Christianity was never meant to be lived as a passive spectator sport.

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## **Disciple Makers: Impact Players for Christ (K. Payne)**

The New Testament gives us a blueprint for the dynamic ministry of evangelism and discipleship. As obedient followers of Jesus Christ, evangelism and discipleship are not an option. We must obediently participate in the process of systematically sharing the things we have learned with those who will also faithfully carry this message to others.

## **Disciple Makers: Impact Players for Christ** (K. Payne) (continues)

2 Timothy 2:2 clearly explains this principle:

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Timothy is given 3 commands: **1.** Listen and learn, **2.** Locate faithful men, **3.** Teach these faithful men so they can train others to reproduce the same process.

Notice the 3 levels of human interactions: **1.** Paul discipled Timothy, **2.** Timothy discipled faithful men, **3.** Faithful men discipled other faithful men.

Matthew 28:18-20 illustrates the priority of emphasizing both evangelism and discipleship and not allowing one to be developed or maintained at the expense of the other. There are at least two triads contained within these verses which relate directly to disciple making. Can you identify and explain them? (hint: Note the relationship between each verse. Don't ignore the participles.)

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

There are 3 Greek participles that help you understand Jesus' command to "make disciples":

As you go - make disciples

As you baptize - make disciples

As you teach - make disciples

There are 3 assurances that Jesus provides you that go along with His command to "make disciples":

1. I have the authority to give you a job because all authority is mine in heaven or on earth.
2. Since I have all authority, I have a job to give you - "make disciples."
3. I will always be with you as you go about making disciples.

1 Peter 3:15 is helpful in understanding the priority of the concept of reproductive discipleship:

"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;"

There are 3 priorities to achieve.

1. Set apart Christ as Lord.

Sanctifying Christ as Lord is a dedication. One measure of your success of sanctifying the Lord is asking this question, "If you have friends who have a question about God, are you their first or last option?"

2. Be prepared to answer reasonable questions.

Providing reasonable answers for reasonable questions is an action.

3. Give answers that are gentle, powerful and controlled.

Giving answers that are gentle, powerful and controlled describes an attitude. It should not come as a surprise that the people who ought to be ready to give answers for the faith they say they have are the same individuals who have consciously made Christ Lord of their lives.

## **Disciple Makers: Impact Players for Christ** (K. Payne) (continues)

Notice the difference between simply discipling a student verses discipling a student to disciple others. For essentially the same amount of effort, your ministry can either be one of addition or of multiplication. Let's do the math:

### ADDITION

1 person won to Christ every week for 16 years = 832

1 person won to Christ every day for 16 years = 5,840

### MULTIPLICATION

1 person won and disciplined for 6 months = 2

2 more people won and disciplined over the next 6 months = 4

### THE DIVIDEND OF DISCIPLESHIP

Year 1 = 4

Year 2 = 16

Year 4 = 256

Year 16 = 4,294,961,296 (approximately the world's population in 1982)

It is easy to understand why a ministry of multiplication is a better investment of a person's time, talent, energy and effort than a ministry of addition.

## **REMEMBER**

- Discipleship is a biblical command, not just a good idea.
- The two triads contained within Matthew 28:18-20
- The triad contained within 2 Timothy 2:2
- The triad within 1 Peter 3:15
- Teachers share content. Trainers share their lives; the trainers job is not done until the student can reproduce. We need more trainers; discipleship is not convenient.

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## **Three Types of People: Impact Players for Christ** (K. Payne)

The primary purpose of this lesson is two-fold:

1. We must learn how to identify the three types of people we will be in contact with on a daily basis.
2. We must have relevant, contextual, biblical messages ready for each of these people if we hope to be used by God through divine appointments and opportunities.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14 - 3:3, Paul states that there are ultimately three types of individuals in the world.

The first person is the **natural** man without Christ (1 Cor 2:14).

**Life** is controlled by daily circumstances.

**Christ** is outside of their life.

**Self** or the big "I" runs their life.

The second person is the growing Christian (1 Cor 2:15-16).

**Life** and daily circumstances are under the powerful caring hands of Christ.

**Christ** is in their life and willfully given complete control.

**Self** purposefully subjugated to Christ and His will.

### **Three Types of People: Impact Players for Christ** (K. Payne) (continues)

The third person is the carnal or worldly Christian (1 Cor 3:1-3).

**Life** is controlled by daily circumstances.

**Christ** is in their life, but not give willful control.

**Self** has been allowed to usurp Christ's rightful position in controlling their life through disobedience (sin).

Notice 1 Corinthians 3:1-3:

"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"

Paul's frustration is with the carnal Christian who has made the conscious decision to remain a spiritual baby. The Greek word "sarkinois" in verse 1 ("flesh") refers to the new Christian who, as a spiritual child, requires milk. In contrast, the Greek word "sarkikoi" in verse 3 ("fleshly") refers to the adult Christian who chooses to live like a child.

The natural person and the carnal or worldly Christian have very similar life experiences. The key difference between the growing Christian and the carnal or worldly Christian is that the former is willing to confess sin daily, keeping life's circumstances under God's control. The latter is not willing to do so. We have to decide daily where we are and where we want our life to be. If we desire change, God has made provision for this to be accomplished.

The **Natural man needs the gospel**. Can you clearly share the gospel?

The **Growing Christian needs systematic discipleship training**. Have you been systematically trained as a disciple of Christ? You cannot clearly share what you have not clearly learned. Are you able to train someone else who wants to serve Christ? You cannot give what you do not have.

The **Carnal Christian needs to get up off the ground and begin to grow again**. He needs to confront the issue(s) that have been allowed to marginalize his relationship with God and daily testimony. He does not need to hear the gospel again, and he is not ready to be systematically trained for service.

Be bold for Christ; fear is not an acceptable reason for failing to take advantage of divine appointments. Study, learn and prepare; sloth is not an acceptable reason for failing to live as a one hundred percent committed Christian, in a world of fifty percent chameleons. We have been called by God to be active soldiers standing for Christ, not idle spectators intimidated by man.

#### KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Which person do you think represents your life at this time?
2. Which person do you want your life to represent?

#### REMEMBER

- God prepares the heart, you prepare a message. If they are not ready to receive the message, build a bridge.
- Non-Christians are going to hell. They need your involvement.
- Growing Christians need encouragement to press on and not grow weary in doing good. They are friend, not foe.
- Carnal Christians are stuck in the middle of the road. They no longer have lasting pleasure in their sin, but they do not enjoy their walk with God. They are family, not enemies.
- Lifelines represent life styles. The life style of the non-Christian and the carnal Christian are very similar.
- It is possible to fool men about the condition of our heart and soul. It is not possible to fool God!

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple5.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple5.aspx)

## **Salvation: Steps to Peace with God** (K. Payne)

The message of God's salvation can be presented in 4 points: Plan, Problem, Remedy and Response.

**God's Plan:** Peace and Life. God has provided a plan for your life. There is a problem that keeps one from experiencing His plan.

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," (Romans 5:1)

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

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)

**Man's Problem:** Separation. The Greek word for "sin" refers to "missing the mark" like an archer missing the target. Man's sin separates him from God and prevents him from experiencing God's plan.

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

**God's Remedy:** The Cross. Jesus' death paid the penalty of man's sin so that man can experience God's plan.

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," (1 Timothy 2:5)

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" (John 14:6)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

**Man's Response:** Receive Christ

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name," (John 1:12)

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

## REMEMBER

- Frame the salvation question using a square or rectangle. Keep the message simple, two "P's" and two "R's" and stay on target. The first "P" and the first "R" belong to God. The second "P" and second "R" belong to man.
- Sin can be explained by "the archer" illustration.
- Christ as God's remedy for sin can be explained by "the bridge over the chasm" illustration.
- Personal faith or trust in Christ can be explained by "the tight rope walker" illustration.
- Our job is to explain the Gospel to non-Christians as clearly as we know how, for their benefit.
- Man must respond to God's remedy to overcome man's problem to experience God's plan.
- Our motive for sharing with those who do not know Jesus Christ personally is not just to relieve our guilt, or show off our spiritual insight, but to be a help to others.

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple6.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple6.aspx)

## **Assurance** (K. Payne)

Have you ever had this thought or encountered this question:

"I don't feel that God is in my heart as I used to."

"I'm not worthy."

"Have I committed an unforgivable sin?"

"Sometimes I feel real spiritual and other times real dry."

Doubts like this can prevent one from a sustainable growing life with Christ. What distinguishes the growing Christian from the carnal Christian is the motivation of their spiritual walk; one is motivated by God's promise and the other by their performance.

Let's illustrate this issue by examining a "spiritual" train.

Caboose - Coal Car - Engine

The Engine is symbolic of the **fact** of God's word.

The Coal Car is symbolic of your **faith** in the fact of God's word.

The Caboose is symbolic of how you **feel** about your faith.

When coal is fed into the engine, the train runs. This represents the growing Christian's faith life.

When coal is fed into the caboose, the train stops. This represents the carnal Christian's faith life.

The caboose is not needed, because it is not the object of your faith.

The engine is necessary, because it is the object of your faith.

"I realize there is a plan, a problem, a remedy and a response that must be acknowledged and acted upon for salvation from the wages of sin. But how can I know Jesus will really become my Savior? I don't deserve to be accepted and loved by God. How can I know for sure He came into my life?"

You're right - nobody deserves salvation. But the good news is that God's promised salvation is a free gift based on God's promise, not a reward based upon man's performance.

"For it is by grace you are saved, through faith - and this not of yourself, it is a gift of God - not of works, so that one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

"God made Him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Is it really possible to know we have salvation and will go to heaven if we were to die tonight?

"For the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life, he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **in order that you may know** that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:11-13)

**Yes, it is possible to know you have eternal life.**

Who are the ones who know they have eternal life?

Those who have the Son.

Who are the ones who know they have the Son?

Those, who upon hearing Jesus knocking at the door of their heart, respond by receiving Him as their Lord and Savior (Revelation 3:20).

## **Assurance** (K. Payne) (continues)

How do I know He really came into my life?

Jesus said He was the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). Since Jesus is the truth, He must always keep His promises. A Christian's salvation is as certain as Jesus' ability to keep His promises.

Did you ask Jesus to forgive you of your sin problem and become your savior, because you heard Him knocking at your heart? Then what do you know He had to do? (He had to forgive your sin and come into your life.) Who do you know you now have in your heart, based upon His promise? Jesus Christ! Since 1 John 5:12 declares that "He who has the Son has life, " you can know for certain that you have eternal life, because Jesus cannot lie.

### REMEMBER

- Think of COP - context, options, promise:
- The context of verse 11 in 1 John 5:11-13 involves eternal life.
- According to verse 12, there are only two options concerning man's eternal destiny. Either you have the Son and Eternal Life, or you do not.
- God's promise in verse 13 is that those believing in Jesus Christ can know they have eternal life.
- The million dollar question is: Do I have the Son? If I have the Son, then I have eternal life (v. 13).
- Jesus promises to come into the heart and life the one who hears Him knocking and invites Him into their heart.
- Because Jesus is the truth (John 14:16), and it is impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2), He must keep His promise.
- The train diagram clearly illustrates the relationships between the fact of God and His Word, our faith in the fact of God and His Word and our feelings about the fact of God and His Word.
- Our salvation is based upon the certainty of God's promise, not our daily performance of feelings.

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple7.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple7.aspx)

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## **Forgiveness** (K. Payne)

"I believe that God did love me once, but could He still love me now? After all I've been doing He must hate me."

Anyone who knows Christ as Savior knows just how bad you can feel when sin occurs. The real issue concerning sin is not how it makes us feel, but rather, knowing what God promises in His Word concerning how we should respond when we do miss the mark. What does Scripture tell a Christian about struggles with sin after he or she has been truly born again?

"8) If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and truth is not in us. 9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10) If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." (1 John 1:8-10)

1 John 1:8-9 reveals three ways that Christians can deal with sin. Think of this like an oreo cookie.

verse 8 (the dark side of the cookie): one may deny the existence of sin.

verse 9 (the white center of the cookie): one may confess and receive forgiveness.

verse 10 (the dark side of the cookie): one may deny the commission of sin and portray God as a liar.

Everyone sins, even sincere Christians. However, growing Christians consistently make a volitional, conscious decision to **deal** with their sin (1 John 1:9), whereas carnal or worldly Christians are typically just as conscious and consistent in their volitional attempt to **deny** their sin (1 John 1:8, 10).

The word "confess" means to agree with God that I was wrong and His way is right. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to cleanse... Confession implies that I am not only sorry the sin occurred, I don't want it to happen again. What should I do when I sin - any sin - no matter how big or small? I need to confess that sin as soon as possible. The word "all" is also extremely important in this verse. God has promised to forgive **all** sin that is confessed.

## **Forgiveness** (K. Payne) (continues)

There is a distinction between "biblical confession" and "confession."

Biblical confession - I agree that God's way is the right way and I need to change and go His way.

False confession - I'm sorry that you caught me. My way is still the right way.

Should I confess the same sin over and over to show God I mean it?

No! Why would you ask God to forgive something that is no longer there?

If we confess our sin, He is faithful and righteous to cleanse us... It's gone in God's eyes - you're clean - let it go.

A simple exercise to illustrate God's forgiveness:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you of all the sins between you and your Heavenly Father.
2. List the sin(s) that you are convicted of and write them on a piece of paper.
3. Confess each sin - agree with God that it is wrong and make a conscious decision to do things God's way.
4. Write or recite 1 John 1:9 across the list (your guarantee, explain sale, receipt).
5. Thank God for His promises - you confessed - He cleansed.
6. If you need to apologize or make restitution - do it.

## REMEMBER

- Two options - We can deny our sin (1 John 1:8, 10) or deal with it (1 John 1:9).
  - Two words:
    - "Confess" - I agree with God. He is right, I am wrong.
    - "All" - God has promised to forgive all my sin. As long as I have breath, God must still have a plan for me.
  - The cookie illustration.
  - The previous lesson's train illustration. The ultimate basis for the forgiveness of our sin is the character of God and the fact of His Word, not our performance or subjective feeling.
  - Because God is truth (John 14:6) and God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), He must keep His promise to forgive and cleanse. Therefore, confidently thank God that through confession, you are forgiven and cleansed.
- [www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple8.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple8.aspx)

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## **Vain Regrets** (K. Payne)

How many times have you found yourself ruining the present because of something you did in the past? This struggle is with "vain regrets."

Why are they vain regrets? Because it is vain to think you can change the past. It can't be done. The past is history. Common sense should tell us that to destroy a second day because of yesterday's mistakes is shortsighted. It's bad enough we allowed yesterday to be lost.

The Apostle Paul referred to this problem:

"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it [perfection in this life] yet. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

### **Vain Regrets** (K. Payne) (continues)

What did Paul have to forget? Plenty! Remember, he was the religious zealot who had taken it upon himself to imprison or destroy every Christian and Christian Church with whom he came in contact. After scattering the Christians in Jerusalem he had even been given permission to hunt them down in other cities. After becoming a Christian, how do you think he felt about his past actions? Guilt ridden, I'm sure. But Paul realized his past was just that - past (no matter how often he may have wished it was not true). If you cannot undo, redo or change the past, even if you wish you could, then why allow something you cannot change to control the present and future? Common sense says let it go.

The Apostle Peter, for all his early success preaching, had some days I'm sure he wished he could do over. I wonder how he felt the night he denied Christ three times. Think about it - the leader of the twelve, a man who lived with Jesus for three and one half years, a leader of leaders. But what happened that night when a teenage slave girl asked him if he was a follower of Christ? He denied he knew Christ with cursing. I am sure he wished he could relive that night. But he could not. Did Jesus forgive him? Did He still allow Peter to be involved in significant ministry? Yes He did!

Speaking of the guilt incurred from sin, have you thought how King David (a man after God's own heart) must have felt before, during and after his escalating failures of adultery, cover-up and murder? I wonder if David ever wished he could turn back the clock, or at the very least have willingly confessed his sins rather than have God send a prophet to expose his hypocrisy? Psalm 51 is a beautiful, but painful, testimony of David finally turning his heart back to God.

Remember that God will always forgive and cleanse us when we confess our sin. He has promised to do so in 1 John 1:9. Take a minute and read Psalm 32:5-6. God's willingness to forgive our sin when we confess it is not just a New Testament revelation. David clearly understood this concept and promise. If God is willing to forgive and move on, we are foolish if we don't.

To continue to relive the forgiven past is not only a waste of time, it is insulting to God. He has promised to forgive and cleanse us when we confess our sin. To live in the past may be human, but it also denies, doubts, or forgets that God always keeps His promises.

Do you have anything that would be harder for you to put behind and forget than Paul did after he participated in killing Christians, than Peter did after denying Christ in His hour of greatest need or King David did after committing adultery with a trusted friend's wife and then ordering a murder in a bungled attempt to cover-up his sin? If Paul, Peter and David could accept God's forgiveness and forget, so can you. If God was still willing to use them in active ministry, there is still hope for you too.

*Forgetting what lies behind, I press forward...*

### **REMEMBER**

- The previous lesson on "Forgiveness" is designed to answer the "how" question. It deals with the basic mechanics of how a Believer should respond to sin.
- This lesson on "Vain Regrets" is designed to answer the "why" question. It deals with the loss of hope. "How could God possibly forgive me, much less still love me, after what I have done?"
- People struggling with vain regrets have lost hope. They need to change the tape of failure that plays non-stop in their mind. Use God's recorded dealings with Paul, Peter and King David to illustrate His willingness to cleanse, forgive and sustain sinners in divine service.
- If God can forgive Paul, Peter and King David, He can forgive me and you. If He is willing to put them into His service after their failures, there is still hope for us.
- It is foolish to allow yesterday's failure to ruin another day. God has cleansed you - let it go!

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple9.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple9.aspx)

## **Accusations** (K. Payne)

Accusation by Satan and his followers often follows the vain regret of a forgiven sin, because the enemy wants the Christian to think that God's forgiveness of their sin was incomplete or that there was something they failed to do.

Demonic forces do not want a Christian to resolve their vain regrets for several reasons:

If the enemy can't have you, they will attempt to prevent you from serving God.

The enemy will attempt to remind you of your past problems and failures.

The enemy will attempt to get you to focus on yourself - not others.

The enemy will attempt to always remind you that something was left undone.

"I understand the foolishness of allowing vain regrets to dominate my life. But what do I do when I still feel guilty about my past, even after I have asked forgiveness and put the situation behind me?"

Accusation is a problem with which many sincere Believers struggle. Let's do some evaluating.

If the Holy Spirit has convicted you of sin, and you have confessed it, you are forgiven and cleansed. Would the Holy Spirit reconvict you of that same sin? No, of course not. That particular sin is no longer there; it's been forgiven and cleansed! So who would be trying to throw forgiven sin back in your face and make you feel guilty and unproductive for God and His work?

Ephesians 6:16 clearly states that Satan, or one of his demonic archers; shoot arrows, tipped with fire, at Christians. Flaming arrows, which are not immediately extinguished, can burn even a born again, blood bought, pew throwing, praise singing, Scripture quoting Christian.

"Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:13-17)

Revelation 12:10 says that one of Satan's key attacks against the brethren is accusation. He is even called "The Accuser". (I believe that the accusation of Revelation 12:10 and the flaming arrows of Ephesians 6:16 are often one and the same thing.)

"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:9-10)

How does demonic accusation typically play out in the theater of your mind?

ACCUSATIONS: ACT 1 - SCENE 1

ACCUSER: You sinned - you are feeling so bad today, you must have done something wrong.

BELIEVER: Oh no. God, forgive me. I'm sorry. I'm not sure what I did, but it must have been something bad or why would I be under such conviction?

ACCUSER: You really think God will hear an insincere prayer like that? Confess your sin and pray again. You forgot to begin, "Our Father" and did not end "in Jesus' name."

BELIEVER: God, please forgive me. I really am sorry for my sin and for praying so insincerely.

**Accusations** (K. Payne) (continues)

ACCUSER: Didn't God hear you the first time? Confess your unbelief as sin.

BELIEVER: Father, forgive me for my unbelief. I'm so sorry I doubted your promises.

ACCUSER: Aren't you supposed to redeem the time? You wasted it. People are going to hell while you waste time.

BELIEVER: God, forgive me for wasting your time and sending people to hell.

ACCUSER: You're a loser and a terrible Christian. Do God a favor and quit. You are such a miserable example of being a Christian. Why don't you give up and die?

BELIEVER: God, I feel like a loser. Everything I do goes wrong. Sometimes I think it might be easier if I could just die.

ACCUSER: Isn't God in control of all things? Why do you go through such mental anguish when most of your friends seem to enjoy their Christian life? If God really loved you wouldn't He put a stop to this? Either God does not love you, or you are not really a Christian.

BELIEVER: God why don't You stop this if You are all-powerful? Don't You love me? You are not fair.

ACCUSER: Do you think a true Christian would attack the only one who loved them enough to die for them? You are not a Christian. Either you never were or you have fallen from grace.

On and on it goes. The longer it goes the worse you feel. Conviction of unconfessed sin needs to be confessed. but endless accusations and reminders of previously confessed sin need to be rejected, resisted and finally ignored (James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8-9)

True guilt confessed brings cleansing and freedom because of God's total and complete forgiveness. False guilt (demonic accusations) always brings escalating feelings of frustration, depression and hopelessness, because the Christian has been led to believe that God's forgiveness is not total and complete.

How do you tell the difference between conviction from God and accusation from demons?

The intent of the Holy Spirit, when it convicts you of a sin, is to change behavior and make you better for God's service.

The intent of demonic accusation is to produce false guilt and remind you why you are unfit for God's service.

The following four suggestions can be a great help as you learn to become more discerning at distinguishing the difference between God's conviction and demonic accusation.

Know Scripture - Voices, thoughts, impressions and ideas that contradict Scripture are not from God.

Specific or General - The Holy Spirit convicts Christians of specific sin, seeking to restore our fellowship with God. Demonic archers accuse in generalities and dredge up forgiven failures from our past, hoping to destroy our active fellowship with God.

Listen for pronouns - Demons typically accuse Christians using second person singular (you) or first person plural (we - when there are more), pronouns.

Pray offensively - Most Christians have learned to pray defensively (Psalm 27). The Bible is replete with examples of offensive prayer as well (Psalm 35:1-8). Defensive prayers assume we must just hang on and endure the firestorm. Offensive prayers ask God to attack the attackers.

## **Accusations** (K. Payne) (continues)

### REMEMBER

- Four suggestions to help distinguish between God's conviction and demonic accusation:
- Know Scripture
- Specific sin or generalities
- Listen for pronouns
- Pray offensively

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple10.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple10.aspx)

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## **Trials: Divine Payback, Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones** (K. Payne)

It is sometimes difficult to live with trials, but even harder to grow in Christian maturity without them. Here are several simple, biblical principles to remember before, during and after you find yourself facing a trial or testing time from God.

### 1. **God's Purpose:**

God's purpose when we face any trial from Him is to give us endurance, to make our faith and character stronger.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." (James 1:2-4)

Key words to contrast:

**Consider / Count:** The way we approach our trials is ultimately our own decision. "You" are the key to determining whether your trials are viewed as stepping-stones or stumbling blocks.

**Joy / Happiness:** Joy refers to internal contentment regardless of external circumstances. Happiness is an emotional response because of external circumstances. God commands us to consider trials as joy, not happiness.

**When / If:** Trials are not optional, they are coming! Presenting trials as divine payback for disobedience or something that can be avoided is simply wrong, even if the one attempting to make that case is sincere.

**Various:** Trials are used to complete and mature us, so that we can be used as an instrument in God's hand to serve Him in a variety of circumstances. As such, our trials are as varied as the service and circumstances God is preparing us to face. God does know what is around the corner, even if we do not.

**Knowing / Hoping:** There is a difference in knowing there is a light at the end of the tunnel and only hoping that to be the case. God's promise that our trials will make us stronger and always work for our good, regardless of the circumstances, should impact the way we approach life; mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

**Endurance:** God's ultimate purpose for allowing us to endure trials is to make us stronger. Should trials, therefore, be considered positive or negative?

### 2. **God's Promise:**

God has promised that as He uses trials to make our faith and character stronger. He will also work the circumstances for our good.

"And we know that He causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Notice that the ultimate basis for knowing that God intends trials for our benefit is rooted in the same promise He made for our salvation. Trials are not based on our human performance but on His promise.

## **Trials: Divine Payback, Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones** (K. Payne) (continues)

### **3. God's Protection:**

God has provided every needed protection for us as we face our trials.

"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

### **4. God's Plan:**

God has a plan prepared to allow our trials, successfully endured, to become a positive benefit, not only to each of us individually, but also to others.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

## **REMEMBER**

- Trials are allowed by God and designed for our strengthening and growth, not our destruction.
- Trials **approve** us as well as **improve** us. If we could not handle the situation God would not allow it to touch us. He has promised to protect us, and always provide an honorable way of escape through the testing process.
- Trials are under God's timing, direction and control. They prepare us for the privilege of sharing with others the same comfort God has given to us. God is greater than our circumstances.
- Trials are an opportunity to **respond** supernaturally rather than **react** naturally.

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple11.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple11.aspx)

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## **Loving People That Don't Seem Lovable** (K. Payne)

Do you have a family member that you don't like and don't love? How about someone who has moral values you find repulsive? And of course it's easy to hate someone who has done something personally against you or a criminal.

Yet Jesus said the way the world would know we are His disciples is by our love for one another. What do you do when you know there is someone (Christian or not) that you not only do not love, you don't even like them?

Here are some ideas:

### **1. God's Command:**

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for them who persecute you." (Matthew 5:43-44)

Since God gave us this two-fold command, it must be according to His will.

### **2. God's Promise:**

"And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (1 John 5:14-15)

God will always answer prayers that are according to His will, because He has promised to do so, and He cannot violate His character.

### **3. Man's Response:**

By faith ask God to give you a genuine love and concern for this person(s). Remember, obedience to God's commands is supposed to take priority over our personal feelings.

The ability to love is not dependent on you, but His promise to work through you.

## **Loving People That Don't Seem Lovable** (K. Payne) (continues)

Pray consistently for the well being of the individual(s). Consistent and genuine prayer will help enable you to develop sacrificial Christian love for people who are not lovable.

### **4. Man's Assurance:**

"yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured that what He (God) has promised, He (God) was also able to perform." (Romans 4:20-21)

Sarai looked inwardly, focusing upon her own circumstances and resources - she laughed. Abraham looked up to the One who made the promise, understanding that when God makes a promise, He always keeps it, regardless of the circumstances or resources - he believed.

### **5. Man's Personal Accountability:**

We are responsible for our own actions and responses regardless of how others respond to us.

"If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." (Romans 12:18)

## **REMEMBER**

- Two commands - love and pray. (Matthew 5:43-44)
- Two illustrations - one vertical and one horizontal. (Matthew 5:45-46)
- Two kinds of prayer - prayers that we know are according to God's expressed will (1 John 5:14-15) and "God willing" prayers that may or may not be according to God's will. (James 4:13-16)
- Obedience to God's expressed will must always take priority over subjective feelings.

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## **The Filling of the Holy Spirit** (K. Payne)

God commands us to walk filled with the Holy Spirit - Ephesians 5:17-18. What is the filling of the Holy Spirit and why is it so important?

"So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:17-18)

The word translated "filled" in this verse has a variety of meanings, including: to fill, to complete, to fully possess, to fully influence and to control. As wine can control, fill or possess a drunk, so the Spirit of God should control, fill or possess a Christian. The results of this controlling, filling, or possessing should be just as obvious, although in this immediate parallelism, one response represents a negative tragedy and the other a positive triumph.

All true believers have been baptized and sealed by the Holy Spirit at the the time of conversion (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:9 Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 4:30). These two events occur simultaneously and are dependent upon God's work for us whether we are conscious of it or not. It only happens once.

We are promised that when we walk controlled by the Holy Spirit, we can expect consistent victory over the flesh (Galatians 5:16). Christians are in a daily battle between the Spirit and the flesh (Galatians 5:17). When we fail to walk controlled by the Spirit, we can expect to exhibit the fruit of being controlled by the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). When we walk controlled by the Spirit we can expect to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

16) But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

17) For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

18) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

## **The Filling of the Holy Spirit** (K. Payne) (continues)

19) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:16-23)

The man without the Spirit cannot understand the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). It is impossible to grow spiritually apart from the illuminating, teaching, comforting, correcting, convicting working of the Holy Spirit who lives within us (1 Corinthians 2:6-16, John 14:15-17, 25-26; John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20).

The Holy Spirit is to a Christian what a combustible engine is to a car. You can sit in the garage and look the part sitting on blocks, but you will never move forward because there is no source of power. Too many religious people sit motionless on blocks in their churches, never moving forward because they do not belong to Christ and therefore do not have the Holy Spirit Rom.8:9. How important is it to walk filled/controlled by the Holy Spirit? How important is it to continue growing spiritually 1 Corinthians 3:1-3?

"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

Here are some main points to keep in mind:

### **1. God's Command:**

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18)

Since God has given the command we can safely assume this is according to His will.

### **2. God's Promise:**

"And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (1 John 5:14-15)

### **3. Man's Response:**

By faith in God and His work, ask God to fill and control your life, knowing that God always answers prayers that are according to His will. Appropriately these truths by faith in God and His unchanging character.

### **4. Man's Assurance:**

"And Abraham being fully assured that what He [God] has promised, He [God] was also able to perform." (Romans 4:21)

Remember the same thing Abraham did when he was told he would have a son through Sarah after he and his wife were too old to have children. God can always be trusted to keep His promises. The confident assurance Christians can have regarding the filling and controlling of the Holy Spirit should ultimately be grounded upon God's promise rather than man's performance. Is it God's will that Christians walk filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit according to Ephesians 5:18? Has God promised to always answer prayers that are according to His will according to 1 John 5:14-

## **The Filling of the Holy Spirit** (K. Payne) (continues)

15? It's time to walk by faith, not by sight, remembering that faith is supposed to trump feelings if or when our faith and feelings are on a collision course. Salvation from sin, assurance of salvation, forgiveness of sins, trials always working for the good, loving the unlovable and the filling of the Holy Spirit are all ultimately based upon the fact of God's word and His ability to always keep His promises, regardless of our personal performance or subjective feelings.

What are the evidences of a life controlled by the Holy Spirit?

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23)

What are the evidences of a life controlled by the flesh?

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:16-21)

What keeps a Christian from being controlled by the Holy Spirit?

1. Unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18)
2. Selfish motive (James 4:3)
3. Indulging the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17)
4. Loving this world more than God (James 4:4, 1 John 2:15-17)
5. Biblical illiteracy and man made theology (2 Timothy 2:15)

## REMEMBER

- The filling (controlling) of the Holy Spirit and the baptism of the Holy Spirit describe different events, and should not be used as synonymous terms.
- All true Christians have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 12:13, Romans 8:9, Ephesians 1:13-14). The baptism of the Holy Spirit only happens once in the life of each believer.
- All true Christians do not walk filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit on a moment-by-moment or daily basis (Acts 2:3; 4:8, 31; 13:9, 52; Galatians 5:16-17; Ephesians 5:18). The filling of the Holy Spirit happens numerous times in the life of each believer.
- Specific New Testament evidences that help distinguish the difference between being filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit or being controlled by the flesh are outlined in Galatians 5:19-23.
- The filling (controlling) of the Holy Spirit, like salvation, assurance, forgiveness and loving our enemies, ultimately depends upon God's ability to always keep His promises, not our less than perfect performance.

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## **Warfare** (K. Payne)

The battle is on and the spiritual battle is real. Unfortunately, most Christians are losing more battles than they are winning. The victories do not have to go to the opposition, but they will continue to do so until believers learn how to fight biblically.

Who are our enemies?

The **World**: Sociological Opposition (1 John 2:15-17, James 4:4)

The **Flesh**: Physiological Opposition (Romans 7:15-25, Galatians 5:17)

The **Devil**: Supernatural Opposition (James 4:7-10, 1 Peter 5:8-9)

## **Warfare** (K. Payne) (continues)

How do they attack Christians?

The **World**: is an organized system in opposition and rebellion against God. 1 John 2:16 characterizes the world as: the lust of the flesh (physical desires), the lust of the eye (beautiful externals) and the boastful pride of life (selfish ambition).

The **Flesh**: is represented as an old nature, the old man or the old self within each individual, including Christians, which is an opposition and rebellion against God. Galatians 5: 19-21, Colossians 3:5-8, and Mark 7:21-23 provide a partial list of areas that the flesh can easily inflame in this battle.

The **Devil**: is a real enemy, according to Jesus and the Bible, who is in opposition and rebellion against God. His primary attack against Christians seems to be through debilitating accusations. These accusations are usually mental attacks, in the mind, and are carried out by demonic spirits who faithfully serve the devil. Revelation 12:10 mentions this type of opposition. It is possible that the flaming arrows targeted at Christians which are mentioned in Ephesians 6:16 could also represent demonic accusation.

The Christian's defense against the world, the flesh and the devil.

The **World**: 1 John 2:17 indicates that we are to evaluate alluring temptation and say "no". The external things of God should not be sacrificed for the temporal things of this world. Christians do not have to pretend that the tinsel and trappings of this world are not appealing. Sometimes the things of this world have the appearance of great value. Looks, however, are often deceiving; just ask Adam and Eve. The real issue is not how this world looks, but whether or not the temporal pleasures of this world are worth the eternal price tag that accompanies them.

The **Flesh**: Galatians 5:16 and Ephesians 5:18 indicate that if we walk controlled by the Spirit we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Ephesians 4:20-24 and Romans 12:1-2 state that victory over our old nature or self is possible through consistently renewing our mind. We replace or substitute our old wrong way of thinking with new Christ-like thinking contained in the Bible. Lastly, 2 Timothy 2:22 declares that in some situations involving the flesh the faithful believer should simply run.

The **Devil**: Scripture like James 4:7-8 and 1 Peter 5:8-9 indicate that the Christian is to firmly resist the attacks of the devil. Jesus' example in Matthew 4:1-11 shows that He used scripture against the devil in confronting him. Boldly resisting and fearfully running are two very different responses. Christians are commanded to resist, not run from this defeated enemy. Perfect love is supposed to cast out fear.

## **Problem**

The world, flesh and the devil are real opponents who attack Christians in different manners. Since Christians are to defend themselves in diverse manners according to which enemy they are confronting, it becomes extremely important that a Christian knows which enemy he is dealing with so that he knows which defense system to activate. If the Christian does not know how to correctly identify his enemies as they attack, will he stand firm in his resistance (devil defense), be filled with the Spirit, renew his mind or run (flesh defense), or evaluate the situation and say no (world defense)?

Sadly, most Christians do not understand warfare. They do not understand the defense systems at their disposal. Therefore, too many Christians lose more battles than they win, and end up blaming God for their failures. The real truth of the matter is that the defense system will work just as they have been designed to do. But they must be aimed at the right enemy to be effective. The real problem is not with the system; it is with the operator.

The battle is on and the battle is real. The victories likewise are real and so are the casualties. Christian, are you winning more battles than you are losing? Do you understand the opposition? Do you understand your defense systems? Are you blaming God for your defeats? Is it time to study God's Word so you can fight your opposition biblically? Sincerity is not enough.

## Warfare (K. Payne) (continues)

### REMEMBER

- Distinctions:
  - Demons accuse, Holy Spirit convicts.
  - Demons accuse with generalities, Holy Spirit convicts on specific sin.
- Pronouns are important (Demons accuse with pronouns).
- Offensive prayer works.
- You must know the Word if you hope to use it in battle.
- According to Ephesians 6:16, being on the receiving end of fiery arrows from demonic archers is a non-negotiable part of Christian living. Debilitating, deadly, demoralizing accusation is a daily reminder that we live on a battlefield and that spiritual warfare is real. However, allowing those arrows of accusation to hit and burn is an option or choice believers can accept or deflect, depending upon their response.
- Although demons have great strength, wisdom and cunning, according to Luke 10:18-20, Christians have been delegated authority through the Lord Jesus Christ over them and protection from them. Demons are not colleagues or spiritual equals, they are losers, and should be approached and treated as such.

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## Christian Liberty (K. Payne)

Contrast the following verses:

"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:32)

"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13)

Where is the balance between these two statements? **Biblical truth has set you free to enjoy liberty.** Authentic biblical freedom and Christian liberty should always be motivated by love, and display concern for others.

The words "legalism" and "license" are often tossed around in relation to competing Christian views on how believer's should or should not exercise their freedom in Christ. Where is the biblical line between legalism being used as a blanket to smother true freedoms and license being self-indulgently abused as a veiled religious synonym for feeding the flesh?

Are there questions that can be asked, and principles that can be applied, which are biblically based, that can help a Christian successfully maneuver through the areas often referred to in Christian areas as "gray"? The simple answer to this question is "yes", there are both questions and principles that can help us navigate through this potential spiritual mine field.

Exercising our Christian liberties can be difficult at times.

"I'm free, I have liberty to... "

"I'm free, I have liberty not to... "

Here are six questions to ask yourself if "liberty" is an issue and you want to handle it maturely.

Is the activity in question:

1. Beneficial or enslaving?

"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything." (1 Corinthians 6:12)

## **Christian Liberty** (K. Payne) (continues)

### 2. Hindering the spiritual growth of another?

"Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, that I might not cause my brother to stumble." (1 Corinthians 8:13)

### 3. Hindering my own spiritual growth?

"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lust." (Romans 13:14)

### 4. Does it edify?

"All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify." (1 Corinthians 10:23)

### 5. Is it legal?

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." (Romans 13:1-2)

### 6. Has Scripture addressed the issue in specific point or principle? Have you checked?

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of Truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

### 7. Is my motivation selfless or selfish?

"I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense. It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles." (Romans 14:14-21)

Paul concludes his remarks to the Galatians on this subject by stating:

"For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another." (Galatians 5:14-15)

The Scriptures, inspired by God, are as relevant today as they were more than two thousand years ago. **Liberty that is not motivated by sacrificial love is license.**

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## **Financial Giving** (K. Payne)

Money. Sometimes we even cringe at the sound of the word being spoken in our churches...

"Oh no, they are going to pressure me for money. Why did I bring my friend to church this weekend? He is going to think my church is just like the ones the media makes fun of who soak their members and use guilt to manipulate them in the process."

"If you give God 10%, He will multiply your financial investment 100%, because you just can't out-give God and He has promised to bless your finances if you truly love Him."

## **Financial Giving** (K. Payne) (continues)

"If you don't give, God won't bless you. If you are having financial shortfalls, it is because you have robbed God in the past, and He is getting even."

But should we cringe? The Bible has more to say about money and our responsibility to be good stewards with our financial resources than it does about either heaven or hell.

With so many individuals, institutions, charities, alumni groups and ministry organizations asking for financial support are there biblical principles that can help a sincere Christian approach this topic biblically, thoughtfully and confidently? God loves a cheerful giver, but all too often financial giving can appear to be motivated through emotional manipulation, obligation or guilt.

The following six principles on biblical stewardship should help a person think through this very important subject. The basic outline for this lesson has been adapted from a sermon by Dr. David Jeremiah.

Biblical giving involves:

1. **PRIOR CONSECRATION** (2 Corinthians 8:5)

By giving your life and daily devotion to Christ before you consider giving your money to another, you avoid the trap of fruitless attempts to buy God's favor.

2. **PROPER MOTIVATION** (2 Corinthians 8:3, 2 Corinthians 9:7)

Giving should be the purposed overflow of a cheerful heart from one's own accord, not the results of begrudged obligation or insecurity.

3. **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** (2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Corinthians 8:9-12, 2 Corinthians 9:1-5, Matthew 25:14-30)

Christians will give an account to God concerning how we invest that which He has entrusted to us.

4. **PROPORTIONATE RETURN** (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8:12, 2 Corinthians 9:6, Mark 12:41-44)

As God has prospered... Our financial stewardship depends upon what we have, not what we do not possess. Equal sacrifice is closer to God's heart as a standard for giving than equal amounts. Sow sparing -reap sparing.

5. **PLANNED GIVING** (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

Paul instructed the Corinthians to plan their personal giving and set it aside on the first day of the week (Sunday). By planning our giving we avoid the pressures of being emotionally manipulated.

6. **PRIORITY DISTRIBUTION** (Galatians 6:10)

There are so many out-stretched hands and impassioned pleas for help. Priority ought to be given first to the household of faith before it goes to individuals and causes outside the faith. The biblical pattern, from the book of Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37 through Paul's epistles, seems to be that the local church was the collection site for giving and the leadership was responsible for its distribution.

Although this principle does not eliminate planned giving to organizations and causes outside the local church, our planned giving should not be at the expense of our local church. Private agendas and familiarity can represent twin challenges to biblical stewardship. Both can steal the joy of cheerful giving if we allow them to do so.

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## **Prayer** (K. Payne)

What is prayer?

**Talking with God.**

**Prayer** (K. Payne) (continues)

Who can participate in prayer?

**All true Christians.** (Ephesians 2:17-19, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 2:5, 9)

How should we approach prayer?

**Boldly, confidently and specifically.** (Ephesians 3:11-12, Hebrews 4:14-16)

Why should we pray?

**It is a privilege and responsibility Jesus Christ has commanded his followers to do.** (Matthew 7:7-8, John 16:24)

What is the scope of concerns we can pray about?

**If something is large enough to be concerned about, it is also big enough to pray about.** (John 14:12-14)

What conditions must we meet if we expect our prayers to be answered?

1. **We must abide in Jesus Christ and His Word.** (Matthew 7:7-8)

2. **We must pray according to God's will.** (1 John 5:14-15)

3. **We must ask with the right motives.** (James 4:2-3)

How can we be confident we are praying according to God's will?

**By serious reading and study of God's will revealed in his Word, the Bible.** (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Timothy 2:15)

What will hinder our prayers?

1. **Selfish, self-serving motives.** (James 4:3)

2. **Unconfessed known sin.** (Psalm 66:18)

3. **Complacency - failure to discern or care about the needs of others.** (James 4:2)

4. **Poor marital relations.** (1 Peter 3:7)

What should motivate us in our prayers?

1. **We should desire to see our faith increased through God's answer.**

2. **We should desire to see God receive the glory and the credit for the answer.**

How will God answer our prayers?

If **"yes:"**

The situation will increase your faith and I will receive both the glory and the credit.

If **"not at this time:"**

I will answer even better later (right request, wrong time).

If **"no:"**

This prayer request is not in your best interest and I've promised to always work for your good (Romans 8:28). Or you need to reexamine your motives - they are wrong.

**Prayer** (K. Payne) (continues)

Why don't we pray as we sometimes ought to?

1. **We are afraid God cannot or will not answer our prayers.**
2. **We don't think we really need God's help in the situation.**
3. **We forget that God has promised to answer us.**
4. **We become so busy with ministry opportunities that there is no time left to pray.**

What might I include in my prayer (ACTS)?

1. **ADORATION** to God for who He is; praying to the Father through the Son.
2. **CONFESSION** of sin.
3. **THANKSGIVING** for His present provisions and future answers.
4. **SUPPLICATION** of specific requests for yourself and others.

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**Conclusion**

**Applying the Bible to Your Life Appropriately**

Learn, Serve, Reproduce

The purpose of Bible study is for:

- Life long pursuit of personal holiness

The pursuit begins with you and God. Know **what** you believe and **why** you believe.

- Effective Christian living

Effective Christian living keeps its priorities straight and focuses on relationships. Your life **represents your principles** and is **a testimony of your faith in Jesus Christ**.

- Reproductive disciple making

Think of others. Teach and train others reasonable answers to reasonable questions. This is the basis of evangelism and discipleship. Start with your family, your friends, your church, your world.

*"...so also faith without works is dead," (James 2:26)*

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system\\_skillbuilder/disciple18.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/5system_skillbuilder/disciple18.aspx)