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purpose

have you
discovered...

life

security

style

fulfillment

new life in christ

EVERYONE IS SEARCHING

If you evaluate a people's lifestyles, you will quickly see that they are on a SEARCH. In the heart of every person is a desire to find the KEY that unlocks a rich and satisfying LIFE. What are we searching for?

OUR SEARCH FOR LIFE

On the college campus, whether you are an athlete seeking a scholarship or starting position, or a serious student hoping to land the right job, or you are looking for the perfect relationship, or just trying to find the next party...

WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR LIFE

OUR DESIGN

God created man to find life in a personal relationship with him. All drives within man are ultimately designed to guide him to this life, finding purpose, security, and fulfillment.



Purpose: Finding satisfaction through achievement or success.

Security: Finding love and acceptance in relationships.

Fulfillment: Finding pleasure through one's lifestyle and experiences.

Jesus said in John 10:10, "I came that you might have life, and have it abundantly." That is what being a Christian is all about – **LIFE** – life eternal with your God and life here and now living out the very purpose for which you were created. God alone can give life because He created life, and He can give it abundantly beyond your wildest imagination.

To experience all that God has for you as a Christian you need to be growing in your relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Jesus also said in John 15:5, "I am the vine and you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in Him, he bears much fruit (life)."

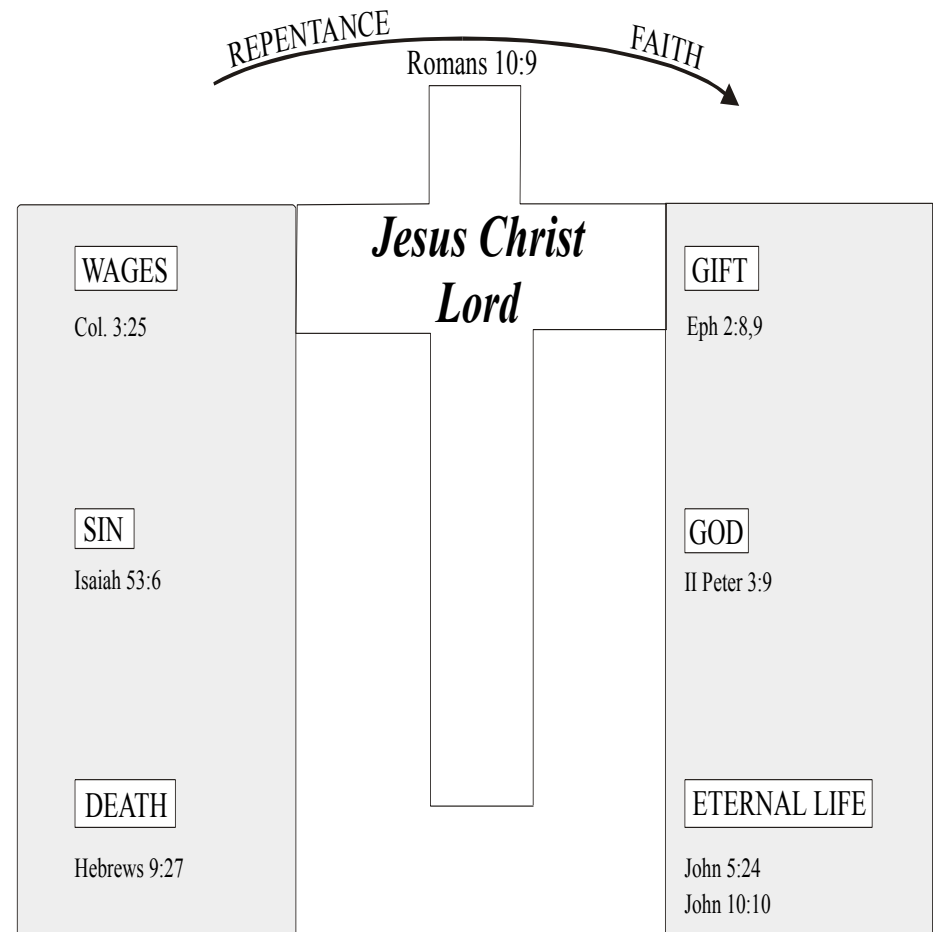
The term in the Bible for a follower of Christ is disciple. You will be learning the basic steps that get you started as a disciple of Christ. This material is best understood as an older disciple guides you through the Bible Studies. The studies have been designed with this type of dialogue in mind.

Each lesson addresses one of the major issues for a new follower of Christ and what the appropriate action points are for that particular area.

Lesson 1	Salvation - Getting Started
Lesson 2	A Relationship with God
Lesson 3	Overcoming Temptation
Lesson 4	Growing as a Disciple

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

ONE VERSE BRIDGE



What comes to your mind when you hear the word “saved” or “salvation”? What do you think the Bible means when it uses the term saved?

In the Indiana Jones trilogy, Harrison Ford was constantly in trouble. Time and again, when he was on the brink of being in a plane crash, being captured, being swept over a waterfall, or being shot, he somehow was always saved. **SAVED – DELIVERANCE FROM DANGER AND HARM.**

Where do you go to find the right clothes when you’ve been invited to a sorority “70’s Theme Party”? – Probably the **SALVATION Army**. Among other things, the Salvation Army takes discarded clothes and sells them at reasonable prices to people who find useful purposes for them and in turn takes the proceeds to help the homeless and poor. **SAVED – NOT WASTED, BUT RESCUED FOR A PURPOSE.**

American families discovered that 1,000s of children in Eastern Europe were being kept in horrific conditions in orphanages. Many American parents, longing to give a new life to children, have adopted these children and brought them to America. Can you imagine the perception of the children upon their arrival in their new homes? Imagine the thrill of being the child of a mother and father when you’ve always been an orphan. These children have been **SAVED!** **SAVED – FROM A LIFE OF ALONENESS AND SURVIVAL TO A RICH AND FULL LIFESTYLE IN A FAMILY.**

What does the Bible mean when it says new believers in Christ have been **SAVED**? Among other things, salvation in the Bible means:

- A. Salvation – Deliverance from danger and harm.
- B. Salvation – Rescued for a meaningful purpose.
- C. Salvation – Being placed in a new family with a new Father.

A. SAVED – We have been miraculously snatched from an un-

3. How have you seen your joy in God begin to express itself in your life?

4. Do you see the need to connect at a deep level with other followers of Christ to ensure maximum growth? What is your plan for this?



EVALUATING THIS STUDY

Having completed this study, take time to discuss:

1. What misconceptions about living a Christian life have been broken since you began the study?

2. What aspect(s) of this study have been most helpful to you?

1. Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:77 speak of the reason Jesus came to the earth. What does "saved" mean according to these verses?

2. Why do you think forgiveness of sin was the number one reason Jesus Christ came to live and die on this earth?

3. What does the Bible mean by "sin" and every person (except Jesus Christ) being a sinner?

4. Read Romans 10:9-10

a. How does someone receive the salvation offered through Jesus Christ?

b. Saved is a past tense form of the verb. Can someone know for sure that they have been saved, or can they only hope to be saved in the future?

B. SAVED – We were like discarded clothes. Now we have new LIFE.

1. Evaluating a Life Purpose.

a. What are the typical things college students live for?

b. If you were to describe your purpose before you received Christ, what would you say it was?

c. How does the typical student find a life purpose?

2. Jesus taught that man’s ultimate purpose was fulfilled when he found eternal life. According to John 17:3, what did Jesus say was the essence of eternal life, and thus man’s purpose?

3. Paul grew up as a hater of Jesus Christ. When God changed his life he found new purpose. What does Philippians 3:7-11 tell you about Paul’s new purpose?

C. SAVED - From aloneness and survival to a rich and full LIFE in our new family.

1. Matthew 7:9-11 tells about what kind of Father God is.
a. What do these verses tell you about God’s character?

b. What seems to be God’s attitude toward His children as seen in verses 7-12?

2. Read Ephesians 2:1-7. Make note of how the Bible compares your former life with your new life.

FORMER LIFE

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

3. Ephesians 2:6-7 sums up what God plans for us. What does God have planned for us from now on and for all eternity?

III. Keys to Growth (Developing a God-Centered Lifestyle)

God is interested in your whole life reflecting His greatness and in your experiencing His joy in everything you do. The Bible gives insight into the keys to developing a disciple’s **LIFE**.

A. Identify the key to growth and resulting benefit mentioned in the following verses.

KEY

RESULT / BENEFIT

Philippians 4:6-7 –

1 Peter 2:2 –

John 14:21 –

B. According to the following verses, what role should other disciples play in your growth as a disciple?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 - “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

Hebrews 3:13 - “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.”

C. Can a disciple grow as God intends on his own? Why or why not? (Explain your answer.)

B. Read Hebrews 12:5-7.

1. How does God respond to one of His own when they are not growing as they should?
2. What do the references to “being a son” and “being loved” tell you about God’s motive in disciplining us?

II. Characteristics of Growth

A. In Study #1, we looked at Paul’s new purpose – Salvation gives him a relationship with God. Review Philippians 3:7-14.

1. What did Paul lose and gain? (verses 7-8)

Loss: _____

Gain: _____

2. What was his goal? (verse 10)
3. Now that he knows and believes Christ, how does Paul approach his relationship to Him? (verses 12-14)

B. Colossians 1:9-12 is a prayer Paul offers for these new disciples.

1. What does he envision their God-centered lifestyle to look like? (v. 9-10)
2. What results does He ask God to bring about in their experience? (v. 11-12)

SUMMARY – EVALUATION – REFLECTIONS

1. What aspects of this study did you find especially helpful and why?
2. What questions about salvation do you still want answered?

I. ARE YOU SUCCESSFUL?

A lot of people these days are fed up with competition. Oh sure, there are plenty of sports crazed people living from game to game, but recently there has emerged a large group of creative people who would rather take a different route toward fun or recreation. This explains why sports such as mountain biking, rock climbing and skate boarding have exploded in popularity. These sports are all challenging, full of X-treme excitement – but they are different than most sports – nobody keeps score. Without a score there is no winner or loser. There is no in or out. There is no acceptance or rejection.

Without getting too psyched up and psyched out, it does seem that most students are searching to redefine what success means to them. Outwardly, the obvious success measurements still remain – Acheivement, Pleasure, and/or Acceptance. But can anyone be sure they are actually successful? How do you measure success? Success is ultimately measured by the end goal and what is done to attain it.

In the first study, you saw how God measured success – His end goal is that you find new **LIFE** (salvation **from** empty pursuits that will only leave you hopeless and salvation **in** a relationship with Him). What He did to attain this gift for you was to send His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for your sin.

A relationship with God is the reason you were created. What does it matter what else you accomplish? If you fail to discover and fulfill your God-given purpose, you fail in this life.

For Discussion:

What was your success measurement before you received Christ? (What were your end goals and how did you seek to attain them?)



This diagram shows that Real Life is found in a relationship with Jesus Christ. Receiving Christ happens when God draws a person to Christ. This involves turning from sin and self (repentance) and trusting in Christ alone for the new **LIFE** He offers (Faith). That's Salvation! The inner circle represents the new beginning. But that's not the total picture. God has designed your NEW **LIFE** to be a growing experience of Purpose, Security, and Fulfillment (The expanding arrows represent this). As God increases as the center of your life, your experience of Purpose, Security, and Fulfillment will increase.

I. God's Commitment to Your Growth

A. Read 2 Peter 3:18 and Ephesians 4:15.

2 Peter 3:18 – "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

Ephes. 4:15 – "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ."

1. Is growth optional for a disciple of Jesus Christ?

2. How does God describe our growth experience? What is growth in its essence?

B. Read I Peter 4:1-5.

1. What is different about your new lifestyle?
2. How may your friends respond to these new changes?

C. What things need to change in your environment to keep you from being pulled down spiritually?

A PERSONAL STORY

A student in Brazil named Larena has gotten the message. Below is a quote from her, just a few weeks after she became a follower of Christ.

"God has completely changed my heart, my desires. God's way is the best and his plan for me brings so much more satisfaction than my old way of life. I used to think surrendering my life to Christ would make me like a slave, I would have to give up everything I enjoyed doing and live a hard life. But I realized I was really a slave to sin; and since I have given my life to Christ, I am free to enjoy the life God intended for me—the abundant life he spoke of in the Bible."

II. SUCCESS AS A CHRISTIAN IS NOT TRYING TO BE RELIGIOUS BECAUSE CHRISTIANITY IS NOT A RELIGION!

I guess most people would say that Christianity is one of many religions. (I'm sure it is taught this way in your school's comparative religion and sociology classes.) But the essence of Christianity is totally the opposite of the essence of all religions.

Religion by definition, includes these descriptions:

- 1) Man's search for God and eternal life.
- 2) A set of moral beliefs and laws to follow.
- 3) Man's works/efforts that constitute a moral lifestyle.

Look up the following verses to see how Christianity differs from religion:

- A. Read Colossians 1:19-22 to see how Christianity is uniquely different.
 1. Who is the seeker in your salvation experience?
 2. What does "reconciled" mean?

Share your stories of how God sought you out and pointed out your need for Christ.

- B. How does man obtain eternal life according to Jesus in John 10:27-28?
- C. Christianity has moral beliefs as well. What is the purpose of God's laws?
 1. John 5:39-40 –
 2. Galatians 3:21-24 –

D. Where do works fit in to our pursuit of God?

1. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. If works of faith do not save us, what is the place of works?
2. Are works an overflow of your relationship with God or efforts to gain a relationship with God? Explain what you think.

III. **FINALLY SUCCESSFUL, FINALLY SATISFIED!**

You were brought to God to find the satisfying life for which your heart longs. Though you never found **eternal purpose, ultimate security, or lasting fulfillment** apart from God, your relationship with God is where you will find full joy and hope. That is God's definition of success.

John 15:9-15 summarizes our experience in Christ.

- A. What is the compelling motive to be in our experience? (v.9)
- B. How does Jesus describe growing in this relationship? (v.10)
- C. What is the result we should experience from this relationship? (v.11)

IV. **ESTABLISHING A PATTERN OF TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

Definition - Time Alone with God (TAWG) is having fellowship with God and developing your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This practice is also called Quiet Time or Devotional Time. Set a time and place to meet God each day.

- A. Identifying that our hearts long to be satisfied
- B. Unmasking sin's alluring and deceptive power (Sin makes promises it cannot ultimately deliver on)
- C. Cultivating, by faith, a heart that is finding its satisfaction in God Himself
- D. Examining your external environment to identify sources of temptation

IV. **Cultivating a Satisfied Heart**

Instead of thinking that your desires are enemies that must be tamed to grow as a Christian, you must see that your desires are the means for your growth in Christ. Growing as a Christian is finding more and more of your satisfaction in your relationship with God. A good defense against sin is a powerful offense!

- A. Read Hebrews 11:24-26 – What motivated Moses to say no to this promise of sin and yes to a life of sacrificial love?
- B. Read II Peter 1:2-4 – How do we experience the power to living godly lives and escape corruption?

V. **Examining Your Environment**

- A. The lifestyle you were living before receiving Christ was sending a deceptive message to you. You must identify the situations and maybe even people that allure you with misleading promises of sin that will never satisfy. Think through your external influences and ask God to show you what adjustments you need to make to protect your heart from environments that will deceive you and ultimately trap you. Share your observations with one another.

B. Jeremiah 2:11-13

How We Sin

Why We Sin

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

C. After studying these verses, define sin as it is described here.

D. What were the old things you looked to for purpose, security, and fulfillment?

E. James 1:13-15 explains the source of temptation.

1. Where must you fight to win the battle over sin?

2. Why does James say that the ultimate fruit of sin is death?

Dr. John Piper defines sin as "What we do when our heart is not satisfied with God." "We sin because it holds out some promise of happiness." (from Future Grace)

III. Battling Sin

You must fight sin at the heart level and not simply at the behavior level. This involves 4 things. (We've already looked at the first two)

Guide for Each Day

1. Write out the passage at the top of the page.
2. Circle 5 words or phrases that you think are the most important to the passage and define the words.
3. In 1 to 2 sentences summarize what you think the passage is saying.
4. Write 1 or 2 sentences that explain what truth you need to believe and what application you need to make.
5. Confess your complete inadequacy and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the power to obey God with your life.

DAY AND READING

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Habakkuk 3:17-19 | 17. Hebrews 12:1-3 |
| 2. Isaiah 40:28-31 | 18. John 14:12-15 |
| 3. Joshua 1:8-9 | 19. Jeremiah 1:4-8 |
| 4. Romans 12:1-2 | 20. Acts 4:24-31 |
| 5. Psalm 119:9-11 | 21. Philippians 3:7-11 |
| 6. Matthew 7:24-27 | 22. Matthew 6:31-33 |
| 7. Ephesians 5:3-5 | 23. Proverbs 3:5-7 |
| 8. Hebrews 11:24-26 | 24. II Peter 1:4-8 |
| 9. Psalm 63:6-8 | 25. II Corinthians 12:8-10 |
| 10. Nehemiah 9:5-6 | 26. I Thessalonians 4:1-8 |
| 11. Colossians 1:9-13 | 27. Romans 12:9-14 |
| 12. Psalm 37:3-5 | 28. Titus 2:11-14 |
| 13. II Corinthians 5:14-17 | 29. Ephesians 6:13-20 |
| 14. James 1:2-8 | 30. I Samuel 15:22-23 |
| 15. Philippians 4:6-7 | 31. I John 2:11-17 |
| 16. II Timothy 2:1-4 | |

DATE 10/8/99

VERSE Galatians 2:20

1. Write out the verse and circle the 5 key words or phrases.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2. Define the key words /phrases.

Crucified – Death, dying Christ - Son of God, Savior Life – My new purpose, Reason for living Loved and gave Himself – His commitment/sacrifice for me Faith – trusting Him.

3. In your own words, summarize the passage.

The way I live in union with Christ, dying to my old life, is to live by faith. He loves me so much, I can trust Him to give me the new life He promises me.

4. Write out how this truth applies to your life.

1. I need to take time daily to study His word and pray so that I will live in union with Him. 2. Remember it takes faith to obey Him, believing He loves me and will give me what I need. 3. Ask Him to show me what He wants me to do with my life.

DATE _____ VERSE _____

1. Write out the verse and circle the 5 key words or phrases.

2. Define the key words /phrases.

3. In your own words, summarize the passage.

4. Write out how this truth applies to your life.



OVERCOMING TEMPTATION STUDY #3

I. Take time to discuss the areas of temptation you have been battling with since you received Christ.

SIN: Christians aren't supposed to do it. Right? Avoid It! Separate from It! Don't be controlled by It! You must forsake It! But how do you fight sin? This is a difficult issue to tackle.

A deeper issue than "How to Fight Sin" must be addressed if you are ever going to be able to overcome temptation. You must understand "Why You Sin"... You must know what "bait" is luring you to the hook of sin and why the "bait" is so inviting to you. You must fight sin at the heart level and not simply at the behavior level. This study is designed to help you overcome temptation and grow in your satisfaction in God Himself.

II. Why Do We Sin?

Obviously we sin because we are sinners. But when we sin, what is it that we are seeking to experience or accomplish? The following verses give insight into why and how we sin.

A. Isaiah 55:1-3

How We Sin

Why We Sin

