

New Members Discipleship Course

Level 1 Lesson 1

ETERNAL LIFE

By Andrew Wommack

One of the most familiar passages of Scripture is John 3:16. It seems like everybody knows that verse from a young age, yet I believe it has really been misunderstood and misapplied. John 3:16 says, *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

Traditionally, this scripture has been used to teach that Jesus came and died for our sins so that we wouldn't perish. As true as this is, this verse is saying that the real purpose of Jesus coming to this earth and dying for us was so that we could have everlasting life. It just so happened that our sins were a barrier that stood between us and this everlasting life.

It is true that Jesus did die for our sins, and it is true that if we believe on Jesus, we will not perish, but there is much more to the Gospel than that. The real message of the Gospel is that God wants to give you everlasting life. Now let me explain that.

The night before His crucifixion, Jesus was praying, and He said this, *“This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ”* (John 17:3)

This says that everlasting life is knowing the Father, the only true God, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. That's what everlasting life is. Many people think that everlasting life is living forever. Well, every person lives forever. It's a misconception to think that when a person dies they cease to exist. The spirit and the soul go back to God. The body decays in the grave. The truth is, every person who has ever lived on the face of the earth will continue to live in spirit form. So to say that eternal life is living forever is not the whole truth—everybody lives forever. This verse makes it very clear that eternal life is not given to everyone.

Some people would say, “Eternal life is living forever in heaven versus living forever in hell.” But eternal life is just what Jesus said in John 17:3—to know God and Jesus Christ. It's more than an intellectual knowledge. This word “know” is used throughout Scripture to describe the most intimate, personal relationship that you can have.

The real purpose of salvation is not living forever in heaven, as great as that will be. The real purpose of salvation is to have intimacy—a personal relationship with the Lord God. There are multitudes of people who have cried out to God for the forgiveness of their sins but have never had intimacy with God as a goal.

By not explaining the real purpose of salvation, we are doing a disservice to the Gospel. When we present salvation as something that deals with just spiritual things that I will only benefit us in the future, in eternity, we are not helping people. There are some people who are living in such a literal hell right now on earth. Many are depressed, living in poverty, dealing with strife, rejection, hurt, and failed marriages. People are just trying to survive day to day. They are just trying to keep their heads above water. By making salvation something that deals only with the future, many people put off that decision because they are too busy just trying to survive today.

The truth is that Jesus not only came to affect our eternal destinies so that we can live forever in heaven in blessing instead of the punishment and curse of hell, but Jesus also came to deliver us from this present evil world (Gal. 1:4). Jesus came to give you intimacy and a personal relationship with God the Father today.

Jesus came to bring you back into close, personal relationship with Him. Jesus loves you. Jesus wants to know you personally. Jesus wants to give you a quality of life that is greater than anything you could obtain through any other source.

Jesus put it this way in John 10:10: “*The thief [speaking of Satan] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*” (brackets mine). God wants to give you eternal life. God wants to give you abundant life, and I believe that you need that today—that you want that. Christ died not only to forgive your sins, but to bring you close to him. If you don’t know the Lord, you need to know Him for that purpose. If you’ve already been born again, you need to go beyond just getting your sins forgiven and enter into everlasting life with the Father.

Facts about Eternal Life

- A. The purpose of the Gospel is eternal life. (John 3:16).
- B. Eternal life is knowing God. (John 17:3).
- C. Knowing God is an intimate relationship. (1 Cor. 6:16-17).
- D. Eternal life is available now. (1 John 5:12).
- E. God wants a personal relationship with you. (Rev. 3:20).

Discipleship Questions

1. Read John 3:16. What was the purpose of God sending Jesus into the world?

2. The biblical usage of the word “know” means to have an intimate, personal relationship with a person (Gen. 4:1). Read John 17:3. What is eternal/everlasting life, according to this verse?

3. Read 1 John 5:11-12. According to these verses, when does eternal, or everlasting, life begin? _____

4. Read John 10:10. What kind of life did Jesus come to give us?

5. Explain in your own words the quality or attributes of an abundant life.

6. Do you believe that God sent His Son Jesus into the world to die for the sins of the world, thereby giving us who believe eternal/everlasting life? _____

7. Is it clear to you that eternal/everlasting life is not only a length of time (eternity) but a quality and quantity of life? _____

Level 1 Lesson 2
SALVATION BY GRACE
By Don Krow

Jesus many times used parables, stories which illustrated spiritual truths. Luke 18:9-14 begins, *“And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.”* Jesus was targeting a certain audience: those who trusted that they were righteous and automatically despised and looked down on everyone else. He told this parable to these people who trusted in the things they did. We would call them self-righteous, which is what Jesus was speaking about when He said they looked down on everyone else saying, “I am better than you!”

In verse 10, Jesus says, *“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.”* We would say in modern language that they went to the church to pray, and one was a Pharisee. A Pharisee was a very religious person. The word actually means “separated one,” someone who was so religious that in a sense they would say, “Don’t defile me! Don’t get too close to me. I’m not like other men! I am better than everyone else!” The other man Jesus mentioned was a publican. Publicans were tax collectors and were known to be very evil, sinful people who cheated and defrauded. They collected taxes by any means they could, stuck a lot of the money in their pockets, and gave some of it to the Roman government, so they were not looked upon favorably by their peers.

The story continues in verse 11, *“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not like other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.”* I want you to notice that. Who was he praying to? He was actually praying to himself even though he was saying “God” and using the right words. God was not acknowledging his prayer, and we’ll see later why that was so. Notice that he prayed, “God, I thank You I am not like other men.” This Pharisee, this religious man, said, “I am not like other men. I am not sinful. I am not an extortioner, not unjust, not an adulterer, and I am not like this publican right here who came to pray.” You see, he despised and looked down on others because he thought he was better than them.

In verse 12, the Pharisee said, *“I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”* He was saying, “Notice what I do?” Do you know what it means to fast? It actually means to go without food. He also gave money to the church. He was one of those people who say, “Don’t bother me! I live a good life! I give to charity! I give money down at the church!”

Then we come to the tax collector in verse 13: *“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”* Notice his body language: “standing afar off.” He didn’t even go all the way into the church. He was so ashamed of his life and the things that he had done that he stood afar off and wouldn’t even look up, wouldn’t lift his eyes to heaven, but smote his breast. When the Bible talks of smiting the breasts in the Old Testament, many times they also tore their garments, which was a way of saying, “I am sorry, God, for what I have done!” It was a sign of repentance, a contrite heart, and a broken spirit, which God would not despise. This tax collector, sinful man that he was, cried out to God and prayed, “God be merciful to me, I am a sinner!”

Verse 14 says, *“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”* The publican went home justified, declared righteous before God, in right-standing with God, forgiven by God. Why was he forgiven? Why did he go to his home in right standing before God and not the religious Pharisee? It was because the Pharisee exalted himself, saying “I am better than other people! I am not sinful! I am not like other men,” while the tax collector knew he had no standing before God, nothing

he could offer Him. He was a sinful person. The Bible says Jesus didn't come to save righteous people but sinners, and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. This tax collector humbled himself and found forgiveness and pardon.

We're talking about salvation by grace. Grace is a wonderful word, and I am going to give you an accepted definition of what it means, but grace means much more. In the Greek language in which the New Testament was written, grace is the word *charis*. An accepted definition of grace is this: the free, unmerited favor of God toward people who don't deserve it. This tax collector didn't deserve anything from God, but he found God's favor because he humbled himself. There is another word in the Greek, *charisma*, which is *charis* with the suffix *ma* on the end. It means a specific manifestation or form of God's grace, and this tax collector found justification, right standing, before God as a gift.

Romans 5:17 says, "*They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*" God offers you and me right standing before Him as a gift and, according to our passage, the tax collector found that gift of justification, that gift of righteousness that only comes through Jesus Christ. The Bible says in John 1:17, "*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*" This grace is only offered to one kind of person—those who humble themselves and know they have no standing before God, who cry for God's mercy. These people will find God's mercy and pardon.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Luke 18:9. What is a parable?

2. Read Luke 18:9. To whom did Jesus direct this parable?

3. Read Luke 18:9 (the last part of the verse). People that are self-righteous always reveal an attitude toward others. According to Luke 18:9, what is that attitude? A. They like others. B. They despise others or look down on others. C. They love others.

4. Read Luke 18:10. Two people went to pray; in modern language, where did they go to pray? _____

5. Read Luke 18:10. Who were these people? _____

6. Read Luke 18:11. What was the Pharisee's prayer? _____

7. Read Luke 18:12. What does fasting mean? _____

8. Read Luke 18:12. What does it mean to give tithes? _____

9. Read Luke 18:13. Where was the tax collector standing? _____ Why?

10. Read Luke 18:13. Why did the tax collector hang down his head and not look up?

11. Read Luke 18:13. What was this tax collector's prayer? _____

12. Read Luke 18:14. Which one of these men was declared righteous before God when he went to his home? _____

13. Read Luke 18:14. Why was the tax collector declared righteous and not the Pharisee?

14. Read Luke 18:14. Did God forgive this tax collector? _____

15. Read Romans 10:13. If you right now got down on your knees and cried out to God from your heart “God be merciful to me, a sinner,” would God treat you the same way He treated the tax collector? _____

Level 1 Lesson 3
RIGHTEOUSNESS BY GRACE
By Don Krow

Today we are going to look at the subject of righteousness by grace. Romans 3:21-23 says, “*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference [distinction]: For all have sinned, and come [fall] short of the glory of God*” (brackets mine).

Notice that this scripture says, “*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested.*” I once asked a man, “What do you think you have to do in order to go to heaven?” He responded that he should keep the Ten Commandments, be faithful to his wife, live a moral life, plus a number of other things. I said, “Do you know what you have to do in order to go to heaven, to be in God’s presence or in His kingdom? You would have to have a righteousness that equals God’s righteousness.” He said, “I beg your pardon? There is no one who can have a righteousness that equals God’s. Only one man had such righteousness, and that was Jesus Christ!” I said, “You have the point! That is exactly right! None of us in our own selves have ever kept the Law or commandments perfectly, outwardly or inwardly, but we need a righteousness that equals God’s in order to be acceptable before Him.”

That is exactly what is said in verses 21-22, “*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...*” The kind of righteousness that God offers you and me is a righteousness that is “through faith in Jesus Christ,” and it’s unto all and upon all who believe. There are two kinds of righteousness—the righteousness of man and the righteousness of God. The righteousness of man is a person’s very best behavior and the good works they do, but that can’t make you acceptable before God. You need a righteousness that equals God’s, and He is offering it to you—the righteousness of God that is without the law.

In the Greek, there is no definite article, which means that this text is really saying God is offering His own righteousness without Law. A righteousness that is according to Law is a righteousness of doing, earning, and achieving in order to be accepted before God. All the world religions today think you have to do, earn, and achieve in order for God to accept you. The word “Gospel” means “good news,” and the good news of the Gospel is that God is offering His very own righteousness and acceptance to all who will believe in what Jesus Christ provided—His death on the cross for our sins, imputing to us the righteousness that equals the Law. This is the righteousness of God that is apart from the Law, without us doing, earning, and achieving; and it comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Notice in verse 22 that it is the righteousness of God that is through faith in Jesus Christ unto all and upon all. Why is God offering His righteousness to everyone? “*For there is no difference [no distinction]: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (brackets mine). You have sinned, I have sinned, and we all come short of God’s standard or perfection. Because of our sin, the greatest thing we need is acceptance, right relationship, and right standing with God...and God has offered this *not* through the works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ. The righteousness of God doesn’t come by your working, your trying, your earning, or your attempts to achieve; it comes through faith, dependence, and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

How was Abraham (the Jewish forefather) saved? The Bible says he believed God—believed the promise God gave him—and then righteousness was imputed to his account. The fact that Abraham was declared righteous before God through his faith was not just for him alone. We read in Romans

3:21-22 that a man is declared righteous through his faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible says that because of the payment Christ made on the cross when He shed His blood for our sin, righteousness (right standing) will be imputed to any person's account who simply believes upon Christ.

Romans 5:17 says, "*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more that which receive abundance of grace and of the **gift of righteousness** shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ*" (emphasis mine). God is offering you a *gift* of righteousness, a gift of right standing before Him. A gift does cost something but not to the person who receives it. If you gave me a gift and asked me to pay for it, it wouldn't be a gift, but it did cost you something. God made righteousness available to you and me as a gift, and this gift of righteousness, acquittal, and right standing before God comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Titus 3:5. Is the righteousness that we need a righteousness that we can produce?

2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What kind of righteousness do we need?

3. Read Romans 3:22. How do we receive this righteousness? _____

4. Read Philippians 3:9. What is the righteousness of the Law? _____

5. Read Galatians 2:21. How could we frustrate God's grace?

6. Read Romans 5:17. The righteousness of God is received as what? _____

Level 1 Lesson 4
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
By Andrew Wommack

One of the most important things about relationship is to understand the person with whom you're going to have relationship, and that also applies to God. You need to understand the basic nature and character of God in order to have a healthy relationship with Him. Misunderstanding His character and nature is one of the reasons many people don't have a positive relationship with Him. This is exactly what happened in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent. They entered into temptation, ultimately disobeyed God, and plunged the whole human race into sin. Their lack of understanding God's nature was actually a part of the temptation.

The story in Genesis 3:1-5 is familiar to most people: *"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods [God], knowing good and evil"* (brackets mine).

There is a subtle statement by Satan here that God is really not a good God... that He was trying to withhold something from Adam and Eve...that He didn't want them to reach their full potential...that He didn't want them to be like Himself...and that the reason He made the rule about not eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was to hinder or hurt them. In a sense, Satan came against the very nature and character of God when he maligned Him by saying God did not want the best for them. The same thing is exactly what's happening to people today. Satan tells them, "If you follow God and don't experiment with all these things that are contrary to His Word, you'll never experience true happiness. Life will be boring...dead." The sad fact is that people experience after the fact that the drugs, alcohol, sex, rebellion, indulgence of self, success in jobs, and all the other things they tried didn't satisfy them. By the time they realize it, they've already destroyed their lives, their families, and their health.

The truth is that God is a good God, and His will for us is only good. But Satan uses the same temptations on us today that came against Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, basically implying that God is not a good God. Those who have only a little understanding of the Bible could get that impression because there are instances in the Word where He treated people in harsh, cruel ways. In Numbers 15:32-36, a man picked up sticks on the Sabbath Day and was stoned to death for failing to observe the Sabbath. That sounds harsh, but there was a purpose behind such punishments, though it's not obvious to most people in a casual reading of Scripture. Careful study reveals that Old Testament Law was given to make the sin that we've committed become exceedingly sinful, as Paul says in Romans 7:13. The purpose was that people didn't realize how deadly their transgressions were and that they were an offense against God. They made the mistake of comparing among themselves and measuring their actions by what other people were doing.

If someone committed a sin and wasn't struck dead, they thought sin must not be so bad, and they lowered their standards. They had lost the true perspective on what right and wrong was. God had to bring mankind back to a plumb line, a proper standard of what right living was, so they would reject the devil and his temptations and recognize what the end result of wrong choices would be. Then when He did that, He had to enforce the Law He gave.

God did not give the Old Testament commandments for the purpose of saying, “Until you do all these things, I can’t accept you or love you.” That is not His nature or character. Rather, He gave them to make our sense of right and wrong more acute and to bring us back to the fact that we need a Savior. The problem has been that people thought God was demanding perfection before He could love them, which led to the attitude many have that His love for them is directly proportional to their performance. They feel that until they try to do everything exactly right, they will not be accepted by God, and that is not the message of the Bible.

God’s heart is to reconcile mankind to Himself not to judge them...not to impute their sins...not to hold their sins against them. That’s the heart of God for people in the Bible and also His heart for you today. You need to understand His real heart, that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). He seeks to take away your sins and anything that would separate you from Him. He’s already done it through Jesus, and He’s offering you relationship today, not based on your performance but on your faith and acceptance of Jesus bearing your sins. You can have relationship with God today regardless of the failures in your life. All He asks is that you put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Genesis 3:1. What question did Satan ask Eve?

2. Read Genesis 2:17 and Genesis 3:3. What word or words did Eve add to what God actually said to Adam? _____

3. Read Genesis 3:6. Once Satan was able to instill doubt into Eve’s mind regarding the Word of God, what did she do in this verse? _____

4. Read Genesis 3:9-10. After Adam and Eve sinned, did God still communicate and pursue a relationship with them?

5. Read Genesis 3:22-24. Why did God drive Adam and Eve from the Garden?

6. Can you see that this was an act of mercy by God rather than a punishment?

7. Read Romans 5:17. How do we attain God’s abundance of grace and gift of righteousness? A. Buy it B. Earn it C. Receive it

8. Read Romans 6:23. What do we really deserve if we sin?

9. By grace, what does God give us instead?

10. Read Romans 10:3. If we try to establish our own righteousness before God, what do we fail to do? _____

11. Read 1 John 1:9 and Romans 4:3. What does God promise to do with ALL our sins

and iniquities against Him if we would only believe? _____

12. What does this tell you about the character of God? _____

Level 1 Lesson 5
THE NATURE OF GOD
By Andrew Wommack

To have a positive relationship with the Lord, we must know His nature and His real character. Is He angry because of our sin, or is He a merciful God who wants to give us His life and blessing, independent of our performance? The Scriptures actually give us two different views of God, not that He has ever changed or done anything differently. There was a period of time that in the terminology used in the Bible, God “held men’s sins against them.”

This can be compared to raising children. When they’re very young, it isn’t possible to reason with them, to tell them why they should act properly or why they shouldn’t be selfish and take toys away from their brothers or sisters. They have to be told the rules and, if they break them, be disciplined. The rules have to be enforced even though they don’t know about God and the devil, or that they’re giving place to the devil when they are selfish. They may not understand the concepts, but they can understand that if they repeat the action, they will be punished.

In a sense, that’s what the Lord did with the Old Testament. Before people were born again, they didn’t have the spiritual perception we have under the New Covenant, so He had to give laws and enforce them with punishment, sometimes even death, to deter them from sin. Because Satan was destroying people through sin, there had to be restraints placed on sin, and they had to be enforced. Although this left the false impression that God didn’t really love us because of our sin, that is not what the Word of God teaches. Romans 5:13 says, *“Until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law.”* “Until the law” means until the days of Moses when God gave the Ten Commandments and other ceremonial laws that applied to the Jewish nation. Up until that time, sin was in the world but wasn’t imputed. The word “impute” is a bookkeeping term; e.g., you go to the store to buy something and say, “Put it on my tab.” When it is put on your tab, it is recorded and charged against your account, and the purchase is imputed to you. If they failed to impute it, that means it wasn’t recorded and held against you.

This verse is saying that until the time the Ten Commandments came, sin was not being held against people. That’s an amazing statement. Look at Genesis 3 and 4. Most people have the concept that when Adam and Eve sinned against God, because He was holy and man was now sinful, He could have nothing to do with sinful mankind. They think God drove man out of the Garden to remove him from His presence because a Holy God couldn’t have anything to do with unholy man. They further think that until you clean up your act through right actions, God once again cannot have any relationship with you. That is contrary to the message Jesus brought. Romans 5:8 says God commended His love toward you, and while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you; so the New Testament teaches that God extended His love to you while you were living in sin, not after you have cleaned up your act. One of the great truths of the Gospel that will change your life is to understand that God loves you just like you are. He loves you so much that if you receive His love, you won’t want to stay as you are. You will change, but you’ll change as a byproduct of God’s love not in order to get His love.

In Genesis 4 you can see that God was still fellowshiping with man, still talking with Adam and Eve even after they sinned. He talked with Cain and Abel, and when they came to offer sacrifices to Him, He spoke to them in an audible voice. By their reaction, we can see that they were accustomed to hearing His voice, and it didn’t scare them. When Cain killed his brother Abel and became the first murderer on the earth, God’s audible voice came from heaven: “Where is your brother Abel?” Cain lied to God, seemingly without compunction. That can happen only if a person is so used to hearing the voice of God that they take it for granted and have no fear of it. All this says is that God was still

fellowshipping with mankind and had not broken fellowship, as is commonly believed. He was not imputing man's sins to him. Does that mean that He condoned their sins or that they were not wrong? No, that's the reason He eventually gave the Law. God had to give the Law to bring man back to a proper standard. God had to show man that he needs a Savior and that he has to humble himself and receive forgiveness as a gift. Sadly, religion has manipulated and controlled these things to teach that the Law was given so you can keep it and thereby earn God's forgiveness and acceptance. No! The purpose of Old Testament Law was to magnify your sin to such a degree that you would despair of ever saving yourself and say, "God, if this is your standard of holiness, I can't do it. Forgive me, have mercy on me." The overall nature of God has always been love.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Romans 5:13. What does the word "impute" mean? _____
2. Read Romans 7:7. What was the purpose of the Law? _____
3. Read Galatians 3:24. According to this verse, what was the purpose of the Law?

4. Read John 8:1-11. How did Jesus deal with the woman caught in adultery?

5. Did Jesus' words and actions reflect the true nature of God? See John 3:34.

6. Read 1 John 4:8. According to this verse, what is the true nature of God? _____
7. Read Romans 5:6. God's love was directed toward us when we were what? _____
8. Read Romans 5:8. God loved us while we were what? _____
9. Read Romans 5:10. God loved us while we were what? _____
10. If you asked Jesus Christ to forgive you and be your Savior and Lord, trusting Jesus' sacrifice as payment for your sin, would God show you His true nature of mercy and grace? _____

Level 1 Lesson 6

REPENTANCE

By Don Krow

Some people have a misunderstanding of what repentance is. Repentance is not perfection but a change in direction. We're going to talk about the parable of the prodigal son, or the lost son. Jesus is telling a story that perfectly illustrates what it means for an individual to repent. In Luke 15:11-12 Jesus said, *"And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living."*

The younger son wanted his inheritance before his father died, which is quite unusual, but his father granted the request and gave his sons their inheritance. Verse 13 says, *"And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."* The younger son took all of his wealth, his part of the inheritance, went into a distant country, and wasted it in riotous living. One translation says, "partying and spending the money on prostitutes."

Verses 14-15 read, *"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land [The land became destitute and people were starving]; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine"* (brackets mine). He got a job working for a man in that country and was sent to feed the pigs. Verse 16 says, *"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks of that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."* He was so hungry, at the point of starvation, and he said "Just give me the pig's food—anything," but no one gave him anything. He had squandered all of his inheritance. Verse 17 continues, *"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"* One translation says, "when he came to his senses." In other words, his father's servants had more than enough food, and he was dying from hunger.

He made a decision; he repented. Repentance is a change of mind, a change of heart that causes a person to turn around and move in a new direction. In verses 18-19, he said, *"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."* "Just make me a slave, father. I've sinned against you, squandered your living, and sinned against God. Just make me a slave." Then he rose and went to his father. Repentance is more than just a change of attitude, a change of mind, and a change of heart; it leads a person to act on what they believe, to turn around (or return) and go in a new direction. We've all turned away from God, our Father, and from heaven, our home. The Bible says in Isaiah 53:6 that *"all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way,"* but God in His mercy took our sins and laid them on Jesus.

The story continues in verses 20-24. *"And he arose, and came to his father."* One night I was telling this story to a man who had never heard it before, and he just knew that when the son returned, his father would say, "Son, look what you've done. You've wasted all my wealth, all I accumulated in my life. Be one of my slaves." Most earthly fathers would probably be very angry and have an attitude like that, but notice the attitude of this father: *"But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion [love came out of his heart for his son], and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry"* (brackets mine). They began to have a party.

I once told this to a man who said, "I see what Jesus is saying. If I'll just turn to the heavenly Father for mercy and say 'Father, I've sinned against you, and I'm not worthy to be your son,' He'll accept me." Our heavenly Father will have compassion, and He won't make you a slave. He'll restore you to full sonship with Him. God is waiting. Have you turned away? Why don't you turn to God, your Father, and to Heaven, your home, today?

Discipleship Questions

1. Define Repentance.

2. Read Luke 13:1-5. What must one do in order not to perish? _____

3. Read 2 Peter 3:9. What is God's desire for all people? _____

4. Read Luke 16:19-31. In Luke 16:28, why did the rich man want someone to come back from the dead and speak to his brothers? _____

5. Read Luke 16:30. What must these brothers do in order to avoid this place of torment (hell)? _____

6. Read Acts 26:18. Although it doesn't specifically say, this verse is talking about repentance. What will happen to those who repent?

7. Read Acts 26:20. In the last part of this verse, three things are stated that the Gentiles should do. What are these three things? _____

8. Read Matthew 7:21-23. What did Jesus say these people practiced instead of the will of God? _____

9. What does this show you about the importance of true repentance versus lip service toward God?

10. Read Isaiah 55:7. What must the wicked do? _____

11. What two things must the unrighteous do? _____

12. What will God do for the person who does those things stated above? _____

13. Read Luke 15:7. What is heaven's reaction to one sinner who repents? _____

14. Read Acts 3:19. If you repent and are converted, what will happen to your sins?

Level 1 Lesson 7
COMMITMENT
By Don Krow

Luke 14:25-26 – And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

“And there went great multitudes with Jesus, and He turned, and said unto them...” (Luke 14:25). At this time in Jesus’ ministry, there were multitudes of people who followed Jesus. The English language doesn’t bring this out, but in the Greek language, this is an imperfect tense. This means that at this time, the great multitudes began to repeatedly and continuously follow Jesus. Perhaps it was because of His miracles or because He fed them, we don’t know the exact reason, but great multitudes were following Him. It was at this time that Jesus turned and deliberately said something which appears to have caused many people to turn and follow Him no more.

“If any man come to Me [that means wants go with me, wants to accompany me, wants to follow me, this is the requirement], and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26, brackets mine). As I looked at that scripture, I thought, *Lord, you can’t mean that. What does that word “hate” mean? It probably means to love less or something like that.* As I began to study, however, I discovered that the word literally means “hate.”

Jesus used the strongest possible word to emphasize a point. He said unless you hate your father, your mother, your sister, your brother, even your own life, you can’t be His disciple. I want to ask you something: What is the closest relationship you will ever have on this earth? It’s your mother and father or your spouse and children. What happens if your wife turns against you and divorces you, or your mother and father die? Who will stick with you then? It will be your brothers and your sisters. Jesus said, unless you hate them, you can’t be His disciple. What is He saying???

Jesus is talking about the closest relationships we will ever have. He is asking for a commitment from you, a commitment in which He is preeminent. He wants to be number one in your life. He is going to compare His relationship with you to the closest relationships you have on earth. “Hate” is a metaphor, a word of comparison, and Jesus is saying, “My relationship with you is so important that I want it to be above all earthly things.” There is one person you love more than your wife, your children, your mother, your father, or your sisters and brothers. Do you know who that is? It’s not God . . . it’s you. You love yourself more than you love your closest relationships.

Why do marriages break up? Why do people divorce? Because they love themselves more than they love their spouse. “You’re not doing it like I want you to, so I’m getting rid of you.”

Jesus said there is one relationship I want to be number one above—it’s your own selfish life. This is true discipleship. He is not talking about a no-cost discipleship. He’s asking us to follow Him. He’s asking to be number one in our lives.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Luke 9:57-62. What does this passage teach about the level of commitment toward following Christ? _____

2. Read Luke 8:13-14. Why do some people seem to fall away, or turn away, from the Christian faith? _____

3. Read Ezekiel 16:8. God uses the illustration of marriage to describe a relationship with His people. Whose possession does one become in this relationship? _____

4. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19. Who do you belong to? _____

5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:20. Who does your body and your spirit belong to?

6. Read James 4:4. Can you commit spiritual adultery against God? _____

7. What would constitute spiritual adultery in God's eyes? See Romans 1:25.

8. Read John 2:23-25. What can we learn about commitment and faith from these verses? _____

9. Read Luke 14:28-30. Have you counted the cost to follow Jesus? Do you want to follow Him? _____

Level 1 Lesson 8
WATER BAPTISM
By Don Krow

Question: “I need to know if you have to be baptized to go to heaven. I love God and was baptized when I was seven years old. I am now eighteen years old, and someone from a non-denominational church told me that no one can be saved and baptized at such a young age. They also said that you have to be baptized to go to heaven, but my Baptist family said that you don’t. I just want to go to heaven. I am living for God in every way that I can, but I need to know if I must be baptized again now that I am supposedly of age to be baptized. Please help me ASAP. God bless and thanks.”

Response: Salvation and the forgiveness of sins come freely as a gift through faith in Jesus Christ. Acts 10:43 states: “*All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His Name*” (*New International Version*). Salvation comes through faith; that is, trust and reliance upon Jesus and His shed blood to give you a right standing before God. In Acts 10:44-48, the Holy Ghost was given to the believers (confirming their salvation) before they were baptized.

Even though this is true, at other times it seems that the forgiveness of sins happened at the time of baptism (Acts 2:38). This is because baptism is an expression, or act, of faith that was carried out at the time that a person turned to Jesus in repentance and faith (Mark 16:16 says, “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*”). It was also a way of calling on the Lord for a clear conscience (Acts 22:16 and 1 Pet. 3:21).

If you truly turned to Jesus from your heart at the age of seven and were baptized, God accepts your childlike faith. Baptism does have requirements. One requirement is repentance. Did you have a change of heart and a change of mind that resulted in turning from sin to Jesus and His forgiveness (Acts 2:38, 20:21, and 17:30)? Did you exercise faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior (Mark 16:16, John 3:16, and Rom. 10:9-10)? If not, then turn to Jesus now, repent from your sins, turn to His grace to forgive you, and seal that decision to follow Him through water baptism.

Baptism is an act that expresses one’s faith in Jesus. Without that faith, the act means nothing. People who turned to Jesus as Lord and Savior were willing to express that faith and openly confess Jesus in this public way. People who say “no” to Jesus’ command are showing, to some extent, a dead faith. **Faith is dead when people are unwilling to express it** (James 2:18-19). Faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone. It is always willing to express itself. Baptism was a way of expressing that faith. **Baptism is not what saves; it is Jesus. Water doesn’t wash away sins; it is the blood of Jesus.** But faith applies His blood to you, and sometimes that faith was expressed at the time a person was baptized (Acts 22:16). The question is, have you repented? Do you believe in Him (Jesus)? If so, why do you delay—arise and be baptized!

Discipleship Questions

1. What is the question that this young man is asking? _____
2. According to Acts 10:43, salvation comes to us how? _____
3. Baptism is an expression of faith that usually takes place at the time of salvation. How does Acts 2:38 express this truth? _____

4. How does Mark 16:16 express this truth? _____

5. Baptism is a way of calling upon the Lord. How does Acts 22:16 express this truth?

6. Baptism is a way to call upon the Lord for a clear conscience. Does 1 Peter 3:21 confirm this truth? _____

7. What are the requirements for baptism, according to Acts 2:38? _____

8. What are the requirements for baptism, according to Mark 16:16? _____

9. Can an infant repent? _____

10. Can an infant believe? _____

11. Read Acts 10:43-48. What is the next step, after faith in Christ, that a believer should take? _____

Level 1 Lesson 9
IDENTITY IN CHRIST (Part 1)
By Andrew Wommack

Second Corinthians 5:17 says, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*” The phrase “in Christ” is a terminology that is used over 300 times in the New Testament, always referring to a vital union relationship with God. Once that takes place, you become a new creature. Some translations actually say “a new creation.”

This leads to a critical issue that I believe is imperative to understanding your new identity in Christ: It did not take place in the physical realm. It isn't talking about your physical body, saying that it completely changes, that your looks change. If a person was fat before they were saved, they'll still be fat afterward, unless they go on a diet. It also isn't talking about your mental or emotional part—what most people consider to be the real “them.” If you weren't too smart before you were saved, you won't be too smart after you're saved, but you will still have a lot of the same memories and thoughts.

There is a third part, and according to this scripture, by process of elimination, it has to be the part of us that is changed—our spirit man. A scripture that verifies this is 1 Thessalonians 5:23 where Paul is praying for the Thessalonians, “*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” That passage shows that we have a spirit, soul, and body. The body part is very obvious. It's the part of us that is seen, our outward persons. We all recognize that there is another part beyond that; our emotional, mental part; which Scripture calls the soul. We know that even though a person may not physically touch you, they can touch you by their words, either in a positive or negative way. Most people are in tune with the physical and soulish parts, but according to Scripture, there is another part, which is the spirit.

The spirit is the part of us that is changed and is new after salvation. It is actually the life-giving part. James 2:26 says, “*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*” That shows that it is the spirit that actually breathes life into our physical bodies. It is where our life comes from. In Genesis 2 when God created Adam and Eve, Adam's body was complete, but then God breathed into him the breath of life. This word “breathe” in Old Testament Hebrew was the exact same word that we use for breath, and it is translated “spirit” in other places. God created the physical body and the soulish person of Adam, but then He breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul. The spirit is the part of us that gives life.

Prior to salvation, before a person made a total commitment of their life and the Lord coming into them, the spirit within them was dead. Ephesians 2:1 says, “*And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins*” (brackets mine). We know we were alive before we were born again, but the word “dead” is speaking of spiritually. Death in the Bible doesn't mean ceasing to exist, as some people today think of it. It literally means “separation.” When a person physically dies, they don't cease to exist. The Bible teaches that they go immediately into the presence of God or into the presence of hell. The soul and spirit continue to live, but there is a separation from the physical body, which dies and decays.

When Genesis 2:17 says “*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,*” it didn't mean they would die physically but spiritually, that they would become separated from God. The spirit, the part that God breathes into us, which actually gives life and motivation, became separated from God's supernatural life...His holy and complete life...what the Bible calls “*zoe*” life or “life in an absolute or abundant sense.” Man then began to degenerate. He still functioned, but he was functioning

independent, separated from God. That's really what causes all the problems in our lives...all of our emotional stress.

When a person comes to the Lord, they receive a new spirit and are born again, which is the terminology Jesus used in John 3:5. In the same way man is born physically with a spirit, soul, and body, when he is born again, he receives the Spirit of Christ. Galatians 4:6 says, "*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*" God literally places His Spirit inside of us, and we now have a new quality of life, a new identity, and are a totally new person in our spirits.

The rest of the Christian life is learning in your soulish, mental realm what has taken place in your spirit. The truth is, one-third of your salvation is over when you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord. Your spirit becomes completely changed. It is the exact same spirit you will have throughout eternity. It already has love, joy, peace, and is full of the presence of God. There is no lack or inadequacy in your spirit, but you have to perceive that, which is the reason studying the Word of God is so vital to the Christian life. You are a totally brand-new person, but until you get knowledge, you won't change. Victory in the Christian life comes when you are able to look into the Word, which is Spirit and life, see who you are, see what God has done, and begin to believe it.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. If anyone be in Christ, they are what?

2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What happened to the old things?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What things have become new?

4. Read Ephesians 2:1. What was your condition before you were born again, or made alive? _____

5. Read Ephesians 2:2. As an unbeliever, how did you walk, or live?

6. Read Ephesians 2:3-5. What is God rich in?

7. Read Ephesians 2:4. Why is God so merciful? _____

8. Read Ephesians 2:5. What did God do for us while we were still dead in trespasses and sins? _____

9. Read Ephesians 2:5. How did God save us? _____

10. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Can you relate with any of these descriptions on this list?

11. Read 1 Corinthians 6:11. Is the word "were" a past, present, or future condition?

12. Read 1 Corinthians 6:11. When you became “born again,” what three things happened to you?

13. Read 1 Corinthians 6:11. Is this a past, present, or future condition?

14. Read 1 Corinthians 6:17. “He that is joined unto the Lord is _____ with Him.”

Level 1 Lesson 10
IDENTITY IN CHRIST (Part 2)
By Andrew Wommack

In our last lesson, we discussed what it meant to be born again, that in our spirits, our hearts are changed. We used 2 Corinthians 5:17, which says, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* We began to see that when we are born again, a total transformation has taken place in our spirits, and the only way to know what has transpired in our spirits is through the Word of God. We can’t perceive it through external things, and we can’t perceive it through our emotions, because that is in the soulish realm. But in the spirit part of us, there is a total transformation.

Let me use a few scriptures which show the things that took place when a person received Jesus into their life. Ephesians 4:24 says, *“Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”* When a person is born again, their spirit becomes righteous and truly holy. The Bible actually speaks of two types of righteousness.

There is a righteousness you produce through your own actions, and you must maintain that type of righteousness in relationships with other people. If you don’t live right and do right, your boss may fire you or your spouse may divorce you; so you need to have your own righteousness. God, however, doesn’t accept you based on your external righteousness. God literally gave you His righteousness.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21 it says that God the Father made the Son to become sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. So there is a righteousness which goes far beyond our external righteousness and is based on what God did for us. We literally received the righteousness of God by faith in Christ. We were created in righteousness and true holiness. We aren’t growing into that righteousness; we are already righteous. A simple definition is that we are already in right standing with God.

God is pleased with us based on Christ, not on anything else. Our spirits are where the change took place. We’re already created in righteousness and true holiness and are brand-new creatures. Ephesians 2:10 says, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”* In our spirits, we are perfect and complete. There is no sin or inadequacy. Ephesians 1:13 says, *“After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”*

Some of you may think, *Well, when I first believed on the Lord, I did believe I was totally forgiven and cleansed, and everything was fine. But since that time, I have sinned, I have failed God again.* If you did, you failed in your actions and your mental and emotional part, but your spirit did not sin. It was sealed just as a woman puts fruit into a jar and then puts paraffin over it to make it airtight and to keep all impurities out. God sealed you, so when you were born again, you received a new spirit, and sin does not penetrate your spirit. You have a new identity. For you to have relationship with God, you have to fellowship with and worship Him, based on who you are in your spirit not in your flesh.

This is really the great transformation in the Christian life, that a person has to change their identity. You have to relate to God based not on what you do in the physical realm, not what you think in your mind, but by who you are in the spirit based on what He has done for you. That’s a completed work, something that does not fluctuate (change back and forth). You were created in righteousness and true holiness. That is the spirit part of you, and to fellowship with God, you have to worship Him in spirit and in truth. You have to stand in this identity of who you are in Christ.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:17. The only way we can know that total transformation has taken place in our spirits is by the Word of God. What does this verse say has happened to us? _____

2. Read Ephesians 3:17. Where does Christ now dwell?

3. Read Ephesians 3:17. How does this happen?

4. Read 1 John 5:12. Who must we possess to have salvation? _____

5. Read Colossians 1:26-27. What is the mystery that was hidden from ages and generations but is now made known? _____

6. Read Ephesians 4:23-24. What was created in righteousness and true holiness?

7. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. Whose righteousness do we possess? _____

8. Read Ephesians 1:4. What is the standing of the believer before God? _____

9. Read Ephesians 1:6. How were we accepted? _____

Level 1 Lesson 11
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS?
By Don Krow

Today we want to look at the subject of “What Happens When a Christian Sins?” The Bible tells us in 1 John 1:8-9, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all*

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Romans 4:5. God justifies (makes righteous) people who are _____.
2. Read Romans 4:2-3. God put something to Abraham's account (when he believed) which he did not have before. What was this? _____
3. Read Romans 4:22-24. If we believe as Abraham did, what will God put to our account? _____
4. Read Romans 4:6. God puts righteousness (or right standing) to a person's account: A. according to their works. B. apart from their works. C. according to how nice they are.
5. Read Hebrews 10:14. How long are believers perfected before God? _____
6. Read Romans 5:17. Righteousness is received: A. by earning it. B. as a gift. C. by working for it.
7. What does the word "gift" imply? _____
8. To trust Jesus to be your personal Savior, you must trust Him to take you all the way to A. church. B. heaven. C. Russia.

Level 1 Lesson 12
INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD
By Andrew Wommack

Mark 4 is a tremendous chapter about the integrity God's Word has—the power, the character, and the faith in it. There were at least ten parables taught during this one day. You have to compare Mark 4 with Matthew 13 and Luke 8 to come up with that. There were a number of parables, one of which was about the sower sowing seed. In Mark 4:26 it says, *“So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.”* Remember that in verse 14 it says this seed is the Word of God. God isn't really teaching you how to be a farmer, but is using a natural thing to illustrate spiritual truth. Verse 27 says, *“And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.”* Now, I believe that's important. It says the man doesn't really understand. He doesn't know how this is happening.

Some people say, “I just don't understand what you're talking about. How can reading the Word of God really change me and cause God's life to come alive inside me?” I don't totally understand it, but I know it works. I don't understand how you can put a tiny seed in the ground and have an entire stalk of corn come up with ears of corn on it and reproduce a hundredfold. Nobody fully understands it, but it works, and I tell you that this works. Reading God's Word and letting it begin to saturate you changes your attitude, your experience, and your perceptions.

Verse 28 says, *“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.”* The earth was made to incubate seed, and to germinate and release that life. Your heart was made for the Word of God—it really was. God's Word was created to be placed in your heart. Just taking a Bible and holding it close, putting it on your coffee table, or carrying it with you doesn't have any virtue. It doesn't release power in your life. You have to take the Word, make it a seed, and plant it in your heart. When you do that, your heart is designed to bring forth fruit of itself. It will automatically change the way things work in your life. The verse continues, *“First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”* This implies that there are stages or steps to growth and maturity. People come to me all the time expressing that they're believing God for something really good, a godly thing I can agree with. But if they have never done anything, if they have never led a person to the Lord, I can guarantee they aren't going to have a television or radio ministry within the next few weeks.

You have to do things in steps. There are stages to receiving from God, and that's what this parable is illustrating. First of all, you have to start, and then comes the hope, and then the faith, and then it produces results. There are always steps to victory. No one is going to go from zero to thousand miles per hour all at once. Though it may be a godly desire, it isn't going to work that way. This Scripture is showing that the kingdom of God is like a seed. The Word has to be planted in your heart, and growth comes in stages: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The next verse says, *“But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”* There are stages, but eventually there will come a time of fruitfulness and maturity.

The point is made in verse 35, *“And the same day when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.”* Jesus had been teaching them all day about the power of the Word, how the Word is like a seed, and how it will release God's life into your life. He'd been teaching them this in at least ten parables, so here He gives them a test. He tells them, “All right, here's the word from the Lord—let's go to the other side of the lake.” He didn't say “Let's get into the boat, go halfway across the lake, and drown,” but “Let's go to the other side.” Then He got into the boat and went to sleep. The story goes that a great storm came and water filled the boat. You have to remember that this wasn't a cabin cruiser with berths below deck where Jesus was dry and didn't know what was going on. It was

an open boat and Jesus was asleep, sloshing around in the water. The reason this was significant is because He knew what was going on, but He was still trying to sleep. The disciples got upset, came to Him, and said, "Master, don't you care that we perish?" In other words, they were saying, "Do something! Get a pail and bail water! Row, do something! You're not pulling your weight!"

Many times people do the same thing with God today and say, "God, why haven't you done something?" God has done something. He's provided everything we need through the atonement of the Lord Jesus. He has produced His Word and given us all these seeds. It's our job to sow them into our hearts. He's given us the Scripture, and it's our job to take the seed, put it in our hearts, and meditate on it until it releases life. But the disciples wanted to wake Jesus up and say, "Why don't you do something?" He got up, rebuked the wind and the waves, there was a calm. Then He turned around and said to His disciples, "Why are you so fearful? How is it you have no faith?" He didn't say, "Hey, guys, I'm sorry. I should have done something." No, His part was to teach them the Word and give them promises, and it was their part to take the Word and believe the promises. God has provided everything through Jesus coming to this earth. He gave you everything it takes to succeed in every area of your life in seed form in the Word. All you have to do is take the seeds of the Word of God and plant them in your hearts through reading it, meditating on it, thinking on it, and letting it take root on the inside of you. As you do that, you will be able to stand up and stop the storms in your life.

I believe God's best was for these disciples to take the teaching Jesus gave them that day and say, "Let's go over to the other side." They could have said, "According to everything He taught to us today, this is a promise. This is the Creator of the universe who said let's go to the other side, not let's go halfway and drown. They could have taken that word, mixed it with faith, and rebuked the wind and the waves. That's exactly what Jesus said: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" You know what? We need to believe God's Word and act upon it.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Matthew 13:19. If we do not plant God's Word into our hearts, what will happen to it? _____
2. Read Joshua 1:8. When should we meditate on God's Word?

3. Read John 6:63. According to this verse, God's Word is _____.
4. Read Matthew 4:4. Mankind should live not by physical food alone but by _____.
5. Read Ephesians 6:17. God's Word is like what kind of weapon? _____
6. Can a sword do damage to its enemy? _____
7. Read Romans 8:6. When we give proper place to God's Word in our lives, we will have _____.
8. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18. What we set our attention on is what we become full of. What should we set our focus on? _____

Level 1 Lesson 13
GOD'S NOT GUILTY
By Andrew Wommack

Today I want to share one of the most important things God has ever done in my life. It seems people automatically believe everything that happens to them is from God, that He controls everything. The reason for this is that by definition, God is supreme and all-powerful, and they just assume He controls everything that happens in their lives. Even unbelievers believe it. There are many Christians who promote this doctrine, and it has become ingrained in their lives. I believe what Scripture teaches is contrary to this, and it's very important that you learn this lesson. James 1:13-17 says, *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."*

These verses make it very clear that God is the author of the good things. Jesus said in John 10:10, *"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."* If it's good, it's God; if it's bad, it's the devil. That's very simple theology. The reason this is so critical is because James 4:7 says, *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."* This says we have to submit, or yield control, to God and resist the devil. The word "resist" means to actively fight against.

When people believe everything that happens in life is totally from God—for example, sickness, failure in business, losing a job, rebellious children, or divorce—that puts them in the position of being passive. If they really believe God is the author of a situation and is using it to punish them or change them, they would be fighting against Him if they resist. Yet, James 4:7 says to resist the devil and he will flee from you. You have to submit yourself to God. This shows that certain things are of God and certain things are of the devil. There is a force of evil in this world, and not everything that happens in your life comes from God. If you don't understand that, you will end up submitting to the devil, and actually empowering Satan.

I want to bring out a passage in Romans because it is misused so often. I've actually been to funerals where people don't know anything about God, don't go to church, and know hardly any Scripture, but they know this one. Romans 8:28 says, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."* This has been interpreted to say that whatever happens in your life, God does it and works it together for good in some way. I actually was at a funeral for a young boy and girl who had been mixing alcohol and drugs, got into a car, drove too fast on a slick road, slid around a corner, hit a telephone pole, and were both killed. The preacher quoted this Scripture, "We know all things work together for good," and said God must have a purpose in doing this. God didn't kill those teenagers, and in a sense, you can't even say the devil did it. It was the teenagers. I'm sure the devil enticed them to rebel against the standards their parents and others had taught them, but ultimately it was their choice. They're the ones who did the dope and alcohol; they're the ones that hit the telephone pole. That was a natural thing, and God wasn't the source of it.

What does it mean when it says "we know that all things work together for good"? First of all, it didn't say we know all things come from God and work together for good. It says all things work together for good but puts qualifications on it: "to them that love God." This Scripture doesn't work for a person who doesn't love God. That is so obvious that it should go without saying, but it is amazing how people apply it toward instances like these young people who were doing drugs and alcohol and were in total

rebellion against God and His principles. This says it only works together for good to those who love God, and to those that are called according to his purpose.

In 1 John 3:8 it says, *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”* God manifested Himself to destroy Satan’s work. That’s His purpose, and it will only work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose; that is, those who are walking in this calling, are resisting the devil, and are out to destroy his works. Those who are resisting the devil and living for God can say that regardless of what the devil does in their lives, God can turn it around and use it for good.

We need to start discerning that God does not control everything in our lives. There is an enemy that comes to kill, steal, and destroy, but Jesus has come to give us life. We have to choose life and willfully recognize that God’s not guilty of everything that comes into our lives.

If God was a physical human being who did the things He is accused of, such as putting cancer, deformities, depression, sorrow, and grief on people, I guarantee there isn’t a government on earth that wouldn’t arrest, imprison, or try to stop Him. Yet we think God, who is much more merciful than any person we’ve met or imagined in our lives, is going around striking people and doing this. There are some things that are demonic attacks and some that are natural, and not all disasters are God ordained. The insurance companies write in their policies “acts of God, such as earthquakes and pestilence.” No, God is not the author of all these things.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read James 1:13. Does God cause men to be tempted by evil? _____

2. Read James 1:17. Where do good gifts come from? _____

3. Read John 10:10. Who is the thief? _____

4. Read John 10:10. What are his purposes? _____

5. Read John 10:10. What is the reason Jesus came?

6. Read James 4:7. What is the result of submitting yourself to God and resisting the devil? _____

7. Read Romans 8:28. Does Romans 8:28 say that all things are from God? _____

8. Read Acts 10:38. Is sickness from God? _____

Read 1 John 3:8. What was the purpose that the Son of God was manifested?

Level 1 Lesson 14
THE POWER OF A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE
By Don Krow

Mark 16:15-16 is known as the Great Commission. Jesus said to His disciples, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* In Acts 8, verse 5 and 12, we see how this commission was worked out through the preaching of Philip in Samaria. *“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them...But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”*

The question is, did these people of Samaria become Christians according to Mark 16:15-16. Yes, they did. Philip went to the city of Samaria, preached Jesus Christ, and through faith in Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. According to the Great Commission, we could say these people were saved, but had they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

The Bible speaks about John baptizing in water, but only Jesus Christ could baptize with the Holy Spirit. According to the Scripture, people believed, were saved, and water baptized, but they had never received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:14-17 says, *“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”*

We can see from the scriptures that just because a person has believed, been baptized, and saved doesn't mean they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has come into their lives—in John 20:22 we see that the Holy Spirit regenerated the disciples—but it was on the Day of Pentecost that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered by God. There is a difference between the quickening of the Holy Spirit in salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit when He comes upon an individual. There is an immersion in the Holy Spirit that comes upon individuals and empowers them. Even though a person has been saved, it doesn't mean they have been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 19:1-2 it states, *“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.”* Paul said, *“Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?”* They said, *“We don't know anything about a Holy Spirit.”* Paul said, *“If you weren't baptized with the Holy Spirit when you believed, what were you baptized with?”* They said, *“We were baptized with John's baptism.”* I believe Paul explained more perfectly about Jesus being the Christ, and these believers then identified with Jesus through water baptism. In verses 6-7 it says, *“And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.”*

Even though these people were disciples who believed in the Messiah who was to come, they hadn't been baptized with the Holy Spirit. A person can be born again and water baptized without having been baptized in the Holy Spirit. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct experience from conversion.

Although I can baptize a person in water, I can't baptize them in the Holy Spirit; only Jesus can do that.

If you have never asked Jesus to baptize you with the Holy Spirit, why don't you ask Him now? Luke 11:13 says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Why don't you ask Him today?

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Mark 16:16. Now read Acts 8:5, 12. Did the people described in Acts 8:12 become Christians? _____

2. Read Acts 8:14-16. Had these people received the baptism with the Holy Spirit? _____

3. Read Acts 19:1-5. Are these people believers? _____

4. Read Acts 19:6-7. Had they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? _____

5. Read Luke 11:13. What does Luke 11:13 say we need to do to receive the Holy Spirit? _____

6. Read 1 Corinthians 14:2. When a person speaks in tongues, what are they doing? _____

7. Read 1 Corinthians 14:14. When a person speaks in tongues, what are they doing? _____

8. Read 1 Corinthians 14:16-17. When a person speaks in tongues, what are they doing? _____

9. Read Acts 2:4. When someone speaks in tongues, is the Holy Spirit speaking or the personal individual speaking? _____

10. Read Acts 2:4. Who is giving utterance to the person? _____

Level 1 Lesson 15
HOW TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT
By Don Krow

We're going to talk today about how to receive the Holy Spirit. Acts 10:1 says, "*There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band.*" This was a military rank, probably a captain over a regiment. Verse 2 continues, "*A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.*" He was righteous, did things that were right, feared God, gave much money to people in need, and the Bible says he prayed to God always. But we are going to find out, and it will be amazing, that even though he did things right, even though he feared God, and had a prayer life, he didn't have a personal relationship with God though Jesus Christ.

It says in verses 3-6, "*He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day [about three o'clock in the afternoon] an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms [giving] are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*" (brackets mine).

This man, although he was God-fearing, righteous as far as doing things that were right, and had a prayer life before God, was sent an angel who told him to send for Simon Peter who would tell him what he must do. We see in Acts 10:43 exactly what Peter was instructed to tell him: "*To give him all the prophets witness, that through his name [through the name of the Lord Jesus] whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*" (brackets mine). Isn't this amazing? This man who had all these things to his credit didn't have a personal relationship with God through the person of Jesus Christ. God said, "The things you're doing are great, they're wonderful, and they are a memorial before me, but I tell you what I'm going to do. I've sent an angel down to tell you to send for a man named Peter, and he will tell you what you must do." In Acts 10:43, when Peter went to Cornelius' house, he said, "*Whosoever believeth in him [the Lord Jesus Christ] shall receive the remission of sins*" (brackets mine).

Now look what happened here. "*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word*" (Acts 10:44). Cornelius was receiving as he heard of faith in Christ, and he put his faith in Christ for the remission of his sins. As soon as he did, the Holy Spirit fell upon him and all those that were in that house. It says in verse 45, "*And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" How did they know that? "*For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God*" (verse 46).

Every time the Holy Spirit falls on an individual in the New Testament, a gift of the Holy Spirit manifests and gives evidence that they have received the infilling of the Spirit. In the New Testament, they usually spoke in tongues or prophesied.

I got down on my knees one evening in a field in Dallas, Texas, and said, "God, I don't know about all this speaking in tongues and the baptism in the Holy Spirit that people are talking about, but if there's a way I can praise you, a way I can magnify you, a way I can go beyond my human English language, I want it. I started worshiping God, and as I did, the Holy Spirit gave me a language, an utterance that I hadn't known or learned. The Bible says in Acts 2:4, "*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*" Who did the speaking? They

did. Who gave the utterance? The Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:13 says, “*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*” All you have to do right now is ask, believe that you receive, yield yourself to God, begin to worship the Lord, and He will give you an utterance to worship and praise Him in a language you have never learned.

Discipleship Questions

1. Describe some of the terms that the Bible uses for salvation.

2. Read Acts 11:15. How does this verse describe the experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit?

3. Jesus’ disciples received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22), but a few days later were actually baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). Look at and compare these facts (John 20:22 and Acts 2:1-4).

4. Read Acts 1:8. What is the purpose of the baptism with the Holy Spirit?

5. Read Acts 2:38-39 and 1 Corinthians 1:7. Is the baptism with the Holy Spirit for us today? _____

6. Read Luke 11:13. If you have not received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, what should you now do? _____

7. Read Acts 2:4. Will you ask, receive, speak, and worship God in the prayer language that God gives you? _____

Level 1 Lesson 16
THE BENEFITS OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES
By Andrew Wommack

One of the things that happened when the baptism of the Holy Spirit first came was that all the people who were there spoke in tongues. Acts 2:4 says that on the Day of Pentecost, they were filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Consistently all the way through the book of Acts, there was a manifestation of God's presence when the people received the Holy Spirit.

Of course, there is much more to the Holy Spirit than speaking in tongues, but it is one of the important manifestations. First Corinthians 14:13-14 says, "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he might interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." When you pray in tongues, your spirit prays. Once you speak in tongues, pray that you interpret so your understanding will become fruitful.

I can give my own personal testimony that when I received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and started speaking in tongues, it changed my life dramatically. I believe when I got born again, Christ came to live inside of me and deposited everything there, but when the Holy Spirit came upon me, it started to manifest to me and other people. There are a couple of things that happen. The first year I prayed in tongues, my mind told me it was crazy, that all I was doing was wasting time. It took faith for me to pray in tongues, which is the reason Jude 20 says you build yourself up in your most holy faith. It takes you out of natural thinking and reasoning and puts you into a supernatural realm of faith.

Another thing I experienced was that when I prayed in tongues, people I hadn't thought of for years would come to my remembrance. I'd start praying for them, and within a day or two, they would contact me and I'd find that something miraculous had happened. This happened so many times that I finally began to put these things together and realize that when I was praying tongues, I was praying with wisdom that went beyond my mental ability. My spirit that knew all things and had the mind of Christ was praying for people in ways that I could never do with my own physical understanding.

One day I was praying in tongues—as I said, it took faith for me to pray in tongues—and I was battling some thoughts like, You could be speaking in English and doing some good instead of speaking this gibberish. I had to deal with these thoughts and put them down, and I just kept praying. A guy I hadn't seen for four years knocked on my door. He came in, didn't say hello or anything, sat down, and began to cry and pour out his heart because he was having a lot of problems. I sat there thinking, Boy, I should have been praying in English. My next thought was, How would I have known to pray for him when I hadn't seen him in four years? Finally, it just dawned on me that I had been praying, and God had been preparing me. I had been interceding for him in a way that I couldn't have done if I were praying with my understanding. Suddenly, a revelation began to come to me and I told him, "I can tell you what your problem is." I finished his story for him and gave him his answer.

You have to understand that this was back when I was in a denominational church. He didn't know what had happened to me and I wasn't sure. It scared us both. But it was the power of God in manifestation, and He used it supernaturally. That is what this means: When you pray in tongues, it's your spirit praying. Your spirit has been born again, has the mind of Christ, and knows exactly what to do. It has an unction (anointing) from God so that you know all things, and there is no limitation in your spirit. If you could walk in the power and revelation of your spirit, it would transform your physical life. One way of doing that, though not the only way, is to just start speaking in tongues. Recognize and believe that when you do, you're building yourself up in your most holy faith, that your

spirit is praying the hidden wisdom of God, and the perfect revelation of God is coming. Then, according to 1 Corinthians 14:13, pray that you can interpret. That doesn't mean you have to stop praying in tongues and pray in English to interpret; it just means your understanding becomes fruitful.

If you give a message in tongues in a church service, you have to stop and interpret in English. When you're praying by yourself, what I do is pray in tongues and trust that God is giving me revelation. Sometimes my attitude just changes. I don't have a specific word, but suddenly I see things clearly and get a different perspective. It may take a week before I get the full revelation, but I believe the time spent praying in tongues and believing I interpret is a part of it.

Speaking in tongues is important for many reasons, certainly more than to prove you've received the Holy Spirit. It should be a part of everyday life. It is a way to communicate directly from your heart to the Father, bypassing your brain with its doubts and fears. It builds you up in your most holy faith and releases the hidden wisdom of God. I just pray that all of you will be able to flow in this, release your faith, and receive the full benefit of speaking in tongues.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Jude 20. What great benefit is received by praying in the Holy Ghost?

2. Read Acts 2:4. How many people were filled with the Holy Spirit?

3. Read Acts 2:4. What did they do as a result of being filled?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 14:14. What part of you is praying when you pray in an unknown tongue? _____

5. Read 1 Corinthians 14:2. When a person speaks in an unknown tongue, who are they speaking to? _____

6. Read 1 Corinthians 14:2. When a person prays in an unknown tongue, do people understand what is being said? _____

7. Read 1 Corinthians 14:2. When you pray in an unknown tongue, your spirit is speaking what? _____

8. Read 1 Corinthians 14:4. When you pray in tongues, you do what?

9. Read 1 Corinthians 14:16. When you pray in tongues, you are doing what?
