

A woman with long dark hair, seen from behind, is walking away on a dirt path that leads into a bright, hazy, sunlit area. She is wearing a long, flowing blue dress with long sleeves. The path is flanked by tall grass and some small plants. The overall atmosphere is warm and hopeful, with strong golden light rays filtering through the haze.

**2ND QUARTER 2025**

# "MOVING ON TO PERFECTION!"

*The Church of God*

**WEEKLY BIBLE LESSONS**

THE CHURCH OF GOD AT JERUSALEM ACRES  
PO BOX 1207 CLEVELAND, TN 37364-1207 [THECHURCHOFGODNTJ.ORG](http://THECHURCHOFGODNTJ.ORG)

## In this issue...

### Moving on to Perfection: The Bride of Christ

As members of The Church of God, we are called to a higher purpose, to be the Bride of Christ. This divine calling requires us to strive for perfection, preparing ourselves for the marriage of the Lamb. Our journey towards perfection is guided by obedience and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let us explore what is required to reach this goal and how we can support one another in this sacred endeavor.

### Running the Race of Faith: A Journey of Endurance, Legacy, and Victory

This **Four-Part Lesson Series** will take you on a spiritual journey mirroring the challenges and triumphs of a long-distance relay race. You'll explore how to stay focused and steadfast in your faith, the importance of mentoring and equipping the next generation, and how to finish your race well, leaving a lasting legacy of faith. In Part 4, we delve into "**The Joshua Generation and the End-Time Move of God**," recognizing the significant role our sons and daughters will play in God's divine plan as we approach the end times. Join us as we delve into God's Word and discover how to run the race of faith with purpose, perseverance, and joy.

### God's Servants the Prophets: Giving Direction to the Church

In this lesson, we will embark on a thrilling journey to uncover one of the ways God communicates with His people, with a special focus on His servants, the prophets. This enlightening lesson will reveal the crucial role of prophecy in steering the church and fulfilling God's divine will. Prepare to be amazed as we delve into the profound ways God speaks to us through His chosen messengers, revealing His plans and guidance. Let's dive in and uncover these divine mysteries together.

### Growing in Spiritual Maturity

This **Two-Part Lesson Series** explores the journey of spiritual growth and maturity for believers. Just as babies transition from milk to solid food, we are called to move beyond the basics of our faith and embrace a deeper understanding and application of God's Word. Through these lessons, we will learn the importance of spiritual growth, the responsibilities that come with maturity, and how to live out our faith with confidence and love. Join us as we commit to this journey and experience the fullness of life that God intends for us.

### The Priority of Prayer

Welcome to our **Three-Part Lesson Series** titled "The Priority of Prayer." This series delves into the essential role that prayer plays in our spiritual lives, churches, and communities. Through engaging discussions, we will explore the importance of persistent prayer, overcoming obstacles in prayer, and the transformative power of prayer. Each part of this series is designed to deepen your understanding of prayer, inspire a more consistent prayer life, and encourage you to experience the profound impact of prayer in your daily walk with God. Join us on this journey to prioritize prayer and unlock its incredible potential.

### Finding Your Rhythm: Balancing Work and Rest: A Two-Part Series

In this **Two-Part Lesson Series**, we will explore godly principles to help us in achieving a balanced life through work and rest. In the first part, we will explore the significance of work in God's plan, uncovering its spiritual and practical dimensions. The second part will focus on the importance of rest, emphasizing how it complements our work and rejuvenates our spirits. We will also discuss the importance of the Sabbath and how observing it can bring peace and fulfillment to our lives. Join us as we delve into Biblical insights and practical tips to help you find harmony and fulfillment in your daily life.

# Moving on to Perfection: The Bride of Christ

Lesson 1 For week ending April 5, 2025

As members of The Church of God, we are called to a higher purpose, to be the Bride of Christ. This divine calling requires us to strive for perfection, preparing ourselves for the marriage of the Lamb. Our journey towards perfection is guided by obedience and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let us explore what is required to reach this goal and how we can support one another in this sacred endeavor.



**Key Text:** *"Let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God"* (Hebrews 6:1).

## 1. Obedience to God's Word is Essential for Perfection.

- Obedience to God's Word is the foundation of our journey towards perfection (Revelation 14:4). As we align our lives with the teachings of the Bible, we become more like Christ. The Scriptures emphasize the importance of obedience in numerous passages, such as John 14:15, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* By obeying God's Word, we demonstrate our love for Him and our commitment to His will. Discuss love as the motivating factor in our pursuit of Jesus, the groom (Revelation 19:7).

## 2. The Leading of the Holy Spirit Guides Us to Perfection.

- The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in our journey towards perfection. It is through the Spirit's guidance that we can discern God's will and receive the strength to follow it. Romans 8:14 states, *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* By yielding to the Holy Spirit, we allow God to work in us and transform us into the image of Christ (II Corinthians 3:18). How can we become more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

## 3. The Church of God is Called to Be the Bride of Christ.

- The Church of God has a unique and sacred calling. The vision we see concerning the Bride compels us to **"Move on to Perfection"**. This calling requires us to be pure, holy, and blameless, as described in Ephesians 5:27, *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* Our preparation for the marriage of the Lamb involves a continuous process of sanctification and spiritual growth. Discuss the work of Jesus Christ in preparing Himself a Bride as you read Ephesians 5:25,26.

## 4. Perfection Requires a Commitment to Spiritual Growth.

- Reaching perfection is not a one-time event but a lifelong commitment to spiritual growth. Philippians 3:12-14 encourages us to press on towards the goal, *"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* How can we stay motivated and focused on our journey towards perfection?

# Part 1: Running the Race with Endurance

Lesson 2 For week ending April 12, 2025

As we embark on our journey of faith, we are reminded that we are part of a long-distance relay race, carrying the baton of God's Word passed down through generations. The writer of Hebrews encourages us to run with endurance, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Let's explore how we can run this race with endurance and pass the baton to the next generation.



**Key Text:** *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God"* (**Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV**).

## 1. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who have run the race before us.

- The writer of Hebrews lists many individuals who lived by faith, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Samson, David, Samuel, and others. These individuals are part of a *"huge crowd of witnesses"* who have run the race before us and now await its completion (Hebrews 11:39-40). We have had many men and women of God who have run faithfully in the history of The Church of God. Discuss what this passage says about this race and the concept that it will not be complete without us. This should inspire us to run in our day with endurance to finish the race.

## 2. We must throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

- Just as runners strip off unnecessary weights to run more efficiently, we must rid ourselves of anything that hinders our spiritual progress. Sin can easily entangle us and slow us down, so we must be vigilant in identifying and overcoming it (Colossians 3:8-10). What are some things in your own life that may be hindering your spiritual progress? We must each embrace the importance of our part in the race and not let anything hinder us from running.

## 3. We must run with perseverance, the race marked out for us.

- The race of faith requires perseverance and endurance, as it is not a sprint but a long-distance journey. We must stay focused on the path God has set before us and not be discouraged by obstacles or setbacks (James 1:2-4). Even though there are times when we are weary, we must keep running. In perseverance there is great reward. Consider the importance of your continual connection to the Lord in this race as you read Philippians 4:13 and Galatians 6:9.

## 4. The race is won by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

- Jesus is our ultimate example and source of strength as we run the race of faith. By keeping our eyes on Him, we can endure hardships and remain steadfast in our faith (Philippians 3:13-14). We want to see forward momentum. This happens as we daily run the race with faithfulness looking to the Lord Jesus Christ for strength and inspiration. In what ways can you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus in your daily life?

## Part 2: Passing the Baton to the Next Generation

Lesson 3 For week ending April 19, 2025

As we continue our journey of faith, it is essential to remember that we are not running this race alone. We are part of a relay team, and our responsibility is to pass the baton of God's Word to the next generation. There will be a generation that runs the final leg of the race, bringing it to completion. Let's explore how we can effectively pass on our faith and ensure that the next generation is equipped to run their race.



**Key Text:** *"These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7 NIV).*

### 1. We must teach God's commandments diligently to our children.

- In The Church of God, we have been blessed with great understanding of many of the great treasures of the Bible. It is our responsibility to pass on the knowledge and inheritance of God's Word to the next generation. We must be intentional in teaching and modeling God's commandments in our daily lives (Proverbs 22:6). In a relay race there is a time at which both runners run together. It is a careful passing of the baton so the next runner can carry on (II Timothy 3:14-15). Talk about this important transition in the race and the important part both runners play in the continued success of the race.

### 2. We must talk about God's Word in every aspect of our lives.

- God's Word should be a constant topic of conversation in our homes, workplaces, and communities. By integrating God's Word into our daily lives, we create an environment where faith can flourish (Joshua 1:8). This is the reason God chose Abraham to be the father of nations; it was due to his unwavering faith and obedience, and because God knew that Abraham would teach his children and household to follow the way of the Lord (Genesis 18:19). In what ways can you make God's Word a central part of your daily conversations and activities, and how can you actively mentor and encourage the next generation in their faith journey?

### 3. We must model a life of faith and obedience to God.

- Our actions speak louder than words, and we must live out our faith in a way that inspires others. By demonstrating a life of obedience to God, we set an example for the next generation to follow (Philippians 3:17, I Timothy 4:12). Notice that Paul encouraged Timothy, at a young age to carry on as an example of the faith.

### 4. We must encourage and mentor the next generation in their faith journey.

- It is essential to provide support, guidance, and encouragement to the next generation as they run their race. By mentoring and investing in their spiritual growth, we help them develop a strong foundation of faith (II Timothy 2:2). Mentoring allows us to share our experiences, wisdom, and lessons learned, ensuring that they are well-equipped to face the challenges of life. It fosters a sense of community and belonging, reinforcing the idea that we are all part of God's family. Moreover, it helps build their confidence and resilience, enabling them to stay steadfast in their faith. How can you actively mentor and encourage the next generation in their faith journey?

## Part 3: Finishing the Race Well

Lesson 4 week ending April 26, 2025

As we near the end of our journey of faith, it is crucial to focus on finishing the race well. The Apostle Paul reminds us that we must run with purpose and discipline, keeping our eyes on the eternal prize. By doing so, we honor God and inspire others to remain steadfast in their faith. Completing our race with integrity and dedication leaves a lasting legacy of faith for future generations. Let's explore how we can finish the race well and leave a meaningful impact on those who follow.



**Key Text:** *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."* (II Timothy 4:7-8 NIV).

### 1. We must run with purpose and discipline.

- The race of faith requires intentionality and self-discipline, as we strive to live according to God's will. We must stay focused on our purpose and avoid distractions that can lead us astray (I Corinthians 9:24-27). How can you cultivate a sense of purpose and discipline in your spiritual journey?

### 2. We must keep our eyes on the eternal prize.

- Our ultimate goal is to receive the crown of righteousness that the Lord will award to us. By keeping our eyes on the eternal prize, we can stay motivated and focused on our faith journey (Philippians 3:13-14). The finish line must be crossed. The Children of Israel returned to Canaan because it was the Land of Promise given to Abraham and his descendants. This land held significant spiritual and historical importance as it represented God's faithfulness and the fulfillment of His promises. Similarly, The Church of God has a specific calling to stand on the truths of God's Word. Just as the Israelites were called to inhabit and uphold the land given to them, the Church is called to uphold and live by the teachings and principles found in the Bible (Jude 1:3). Why is it important to have a vision for where we are going?

### 3. We must rely on God's strength to finish the race.

- We cannot finish the race on our own; we need God's strength and guidance. By relying on His power, we can overcome obstacles and remain faithful to the end (Isaiah 40:31). Through prayer, we can seek His wisdom and direction, ensuring that we stay on the right path. Additionally, studying Scripture provides us with the encouragement we need to persevere. Consider what happened to Elijah the Prophet and its application to our receiving the strength we need to finish the race (I Kings 19:5-8, John 6:35).

### 4. We must leave a lasting legacy of faith for the next generation.

- Our faith journey is not just about us; it is about leaving a legacy for those who come after us. By living a life of faith and obedience, we inspire and equip the next generation to continue the race (Psalm 78:4-7). What steps can you take to leave a lasting legacy of faith for the next generation? Together, as a unified body, we will run this race with perseverance. We will uphold each other, drawing strength from God's unwavering support. And with faith, we will cross the finish line, leaving behind a legacy that glorifies His name and guides those who follow in our footsteps.

## Part 4 - The Joshua Generation and the End-Time Move of God

Lesson 5 For week ending May 3, 2025

As we approach the end times, it is crucial to recognize the significant role that our sons and daughters will play in God's divine plan. The Bible speaks of a generation that will rise with the power and glory of the Lord, fulfilling His purposes in these last days. This lesson will explore the concept of **"The Joshua Generation"** and how our young people are being prepared to carry the baton of faith and lead the Church into the future.

**Key Text:** *"In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams" (Acts 2:17 NIV).*

### 1. God is raising up a generation of young people to carry His work to completion.



Just as Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land, our young people are being called to lead the Church into the fulfillment of God's end-time purposes. They are being equipped with the knowledge, faith, and courage needed to face the challenges of these times (Joshua 1:1-3). How can we support and encourage our young people as they step into their God-given roles? As Joshua 1:9 says, *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

### 2. The Joshua Generation will prophesy and see visions, demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit.

- In the last days, God promises to pour out His Spirit on all people, and our sons and daughters will prophesy and see visions. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit will empower them to speak God's truth and reveal His plans (Joel 2:28-29). What are some ways we can create an environment that nurtures and encourages the prophetic gifts in our young people? As I Corinthians 14:1 advises, *"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy."*

### 3. Our young people are being prepared to rebuild and restore the Church.

- Just as the Israelites returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple, our young people are being called to restore the Church to its former glory. They will bring fresh vision and energy to the work of the Lord, ensuring that the Church remains a beacon of light in a dark world (Isaiah 60:1-4). How can we mentor and guide our young people in their efforts to rebuild and restore the Church? As Haggai 2:9 declares, *"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house," says the Lord Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the Lord Almighty."*

### 4. The Joshua Generation will face challenges, but they will overcome them through faith and perseverance.

- Our young people will encounter obstacles and opposition as they fulfill their God-given roles, but they will overcome through faith and perseverance. Just as Joshua and the Israelites faced giants in the Promised Land, our young people will face spiritual battles, but they will be victorious through the power of God (Numbers 13:30-33). How can we equip our young people to face and overcome the challenges they will encounter in their spiritual journey? As Ephesians 6:10-11 encourages, *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."*

# GOD'S SERVANTS THE PROPHETS- GIVING DIRECTION TO THE CHURCH

---

Lesson 6 For Week ending May 10, 2025

Today, we're going to embark on a revealing study to uncover one of the ways God communicates with His people, with a special focus on His servants, the prophets. This lesson will show the crucial role of prophecy in steering the church and fulfilling God's divine will. Prepare to be amazed as we delve into the profound ways God speaks to us through His chosen messengers, revealing His plans and guidance! Let's dive in and uncover these divine mysteries together.



**Key Text:** *“Indeed, the Sovereign LORD never does anything until he reveals his plans to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared— so who isn’t frightened? The Sovereign LORD has spoken— so who can refuse to proclaim his message” (Amos 3:7-8 NLT)?*

## 1. The Role of Prophets

- Prophets play a crucial role in conveying God's messages to His people. Throughout history, prophets have been chosen by God to deliver His words and guidance, ensuring that the church remains aligned with His will. This divine communication is essential for the church's spiritual growth and direction. For example, the prophet Isaiah's messages were pivotal during the reigns of several kings in Judah, providing guidance and warning to the nation (Isaiah 1:1). Prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21).

## 2. Prophecy as a Witness to God's Work

- Prophecy stands as a powerful testament to God's work in the church. Each significant divine action in the grace dispensation must be confirmed by prophecy, as seen in the early church and Jesus' ministry. Prophecy helps identify and validate God's actions among us. For example, the Pentecost outpouring of the Holy Spirit fulfilled Joel's prophecy, confirming God's work (Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:16-18).

## 3. Fulfillment of Prophecy

- The events of the grace dispensation are often identified as fulfillments of prophecy when viewed in hindsight. True prophetic fulfillment, directed by the Holy Spirit, aligns with God's plan and should not be confused with mere reenactment of past events. For instance, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem is considered a fulfillment of prophetic promises (Ezra 1:1-4). Such fulfillments serve as a testament to God's ongoing work and divine orchestration throughout history. Prophecies may also have spiritual fulfillment as is the case with the restoration of the Temple as a type of the restoration of the Church (Acts 15:13-17, I Peter 2:5).

## 4. Testing and Applying Prophetic Messages

- All prophetic messages must be tested against the Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to ensure the church remains true to God's will and avoids false prophecies. I Thessalonians 5:20-21 and I John 4:1 emphasize the importance of discernment, urging believers to test all prophecies to maintain the church's mission and teachings. Prophecy guides the church in living according to God's will. When applied to our lives, prophetic messages can help us grow spiritually and fulfill our divine purpose. Believers should use their prophetic gifts in accordance with their faith, contributing to the church's overall growth and edification (Romans 12:6-8). Encourage one another and pray together for these gifts to be given throughout the church, seeking God's movement and guidance in your local congregation.

# Part 1: The Journey to Spiritual Maturity

Lesson 7 For week ending May 17, 2025

As believers, we are called to grow and mature in our spiritual walk. Just as babies transition from milk to solid food, we must move beyond the basics of our faith and embrace deeper understanding and application of God's Word. This journey of spiritual growth is essential for us to become effective disciples of Christ, capable of discerning right from wrong and living out our faith with confidence. By committing to this process, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and become a source of strength and encouragement to others. Let's explore the importance of spiritual growth and the steps we can take to mature in our faith.



**Key Text:** *"We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 5:11-14 NIV).*

## 1. We must move beyond the basics of our faith.

- The writer of Hebrews expresses frustration with believers who remain spiritually immature and need to be taught basic principles repeatedly. Mature Christians should be able to discern right from wrong and apply God's Word to their lives. It's like learning to ride a bike; once you master the basics, you can explore new paths and adventures. How can we move beyond the basics of our faith and embrace deeper understanding and application of God's Word (Hebrews 6:1-3)?

## 2. Spiritual maturity is not determined by physical age.

- Spiritual maturity is based on one's knowledge, faith, and application of God's Word. Young believers can mature in their faith, while older individuals may still be spiritually immature. Think of Timothy, who was young but set an example for all believers in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. How can we encourage and support believers of all ages to grow in their faith and maturity (I Timothy 4:12)?

## 3. Love is a hallmark of spiritual maturity.

- Mature Christians demonstrate love through patience, kindness, and selflessness, as described in I Corinthians 13:4-7. Love is like the glue that holds everything together, making our actions meaningful and impactful. In what ways can we grow in our love for God and others as we mature in our faith (John 14:21)?

## 4. Spiritual gifts are given to help others, not for self-glorification.

- Mature Christians use their spiritual gifts to edify and build up the body of Christ. It's like sharing a delicious meal with others rather than keeping it all to yourself. How can we use our spiritual gifts to serve and build up the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:7)?

## Part 2: Embracing Spiritual Responsibilities

Lesson 8 For Week ending May 24, 2025

As we grow in our spiritual walk, we must embrace the responsibilities that come with maturity. Just as adults take on responsibilities, mature Christians take on spiritual responsibilities and lead by example. This journey of embracing spiritual responsibilities is crucial for us to live out our faith with integrity and purpose. By stepping into these roles, we can positively impact the Kingdom of God and demonstrate the love of Christ through our actions. This lesson will explore the importance of spiritual responsibilities and how we can live out our faith with maturity and contentment.



**Key Text:** *"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me" (1 Corinthians 13:11 NIV).*

### 1. Mature Christians take on spiritual responsibilities and lead by example.

- Just as adults take on responsibilities, mature Christians serve out of love and do not seek recognition. It's like being a lighthouse, guiding others safely to shore without expecting applause. How can we embrace our spiritual responsibilities and lead by example in our church (1 Corinthians 12:31)? Mature leadership involves humility, wisdom, and a servant's heart. Leading by example, they inspire others to follow Christ and cultivate a supportive and nurturing community. How can we develop these qualities in our leaders and ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4)?

### 2. Contentment is a sign of spiritual maturity.

- Mature Christians learn to be content in all circumstances, trusting in God's provision and focusing on eternal values rather than material possessions. It's like finding peace during a storm, knowing that God is in control. Discuss ways to cultivate contentment in our lives and focus on eternal values (Philippians 4:11-13)?

### 3. Being part of a church community is crucial for spiritual growth.

- Church leaders help believers mature in their faith and provide accountability and support. For those of you who have children, you are familiar with the struggle to get them to eat their vegetables. At church you find the spiritual food you need to become a growing Christian. It's like being part of a family, where everyone plays a role in helping each other grow. Discuss the way actively participating in your local church fosters growth in you and in others (Ephesians 4:11-15).

### 4. Spiritual growth is an ongoing process.

- Spiritual growth involves learning from experiences, enduring trials, and continually seeking to know and follow God more closely. It's like climbing a mountain, where each step brings you closer to the summit. We must never give up, but continue day by day, trusting that each small effort brings us closer to spiritual maturity. Growth often happens without us even realizing it, much like when you see young relatives and notice how much they've grown since the last time you saw them. Every challenge we face and overcome builds our character and strengthens our faith. How can we embrace the process of spiritual growth and remain steadfast in our faith through trials and challenges (James 1:2-4)?

# Part 1: "Prayer: The Lifeline to God"

Lesson 9 For week ending May 31, 2025

Prayer is the spiritual oxygen that sustains our relationship with God. It is the vital connection that empowers every aspect of our lives and ministries. Through prayer, we open our hearts to God's presence, seeking His guidance and wisdom. It is a sacred conversation, where we share our deepest thoughts and receive divine insights. Engaging in regular prayer strengthens our faith, aligns us with God's will, and brings us closer to His heart. It is through this intimate communion that we find peace, purpose, and the courage to face life's challenges.



**Key Text:** *"My prayer came to You, into Your holy temple." (Jonah 2:7).*

## 1. Prayer allows believers to interact with God as beloved children with their Father, creating a profound sense of connection and trust.

- Through this sacred dialogue, we align ourselves with God's will and open our hearts to His guidance and love. How does prayer strengthen your relationship with God, enriching your life with peace and purpose (Matthew 7:9-11)? By engaging in regular prayer, we deepen our spiritual journey and experience the transformative power of God's presence in our daily lives.

## 2. Persistent prayer demonstrates our reliance on God.

- This highlights our trust in His timing and wisdom. It is a key to unlocking His blessings and guidance, as we remain steadfast in our faith and patiently await His answers (Luke 18:1-8). Have you ever felt discouraged when your prayers were not immediately answered? What are some challenges you face in maintaining a consistent prayer life, and how do you overcome them?

## 3. Jesus prioritized prayer in His life and ministry.

- He would often be found withdrawing to pray in solitude and He taught His disciples to do the same (Luke 5:16, Acts 6:4). He demonstrated the importance of seeking God's presence before taking any major action or decision. By incorporating more prayer into your daily routine, you can follow Jesus' example and cultivate a deeper relationship with God. Consider setting aside specific times each day for prayer and creating a quiet space where you can focus solely on connecting with God (Psalms 55:17). How can you incorporate more prayer into your daily routine (Luke 11:1)?

## 4. The early church devoted themselves to prayer, resulting in powerful ministry and significant growth.

- Prayer was central to their fellowship, worship, and decision-making processes. This commitment to prayer helped them experience God's guidance and power in remarkable ways. By making prayer a priority in your life, you can also witness profound changes and blessings. How can you encourage your church community to embrace a more prayerful lifestyle (Acts 2:42)?

## Part 2: "Overcoming Obstacles in Prayer"

Lesson 10 For week ending June 7, 2025

Prayer can be challenging, but overcoming these obstacles is crucial for a vibrant spiritual life. Often, distractions and the busyness of our daily schedules can hinder our focus and effectiveness in prayer. It is important to set aside dedicated time and create a peaceful environment to connect with God. Additionally, recognizing our human tendency to rely on our own strength rather than seeking God first helps us cultivate a greater dependence on Him. By developing a habit of turning to prayer before making decisions or facing difficulties, we can experience a deeper sense of peace and guidance. Embracing perseverance and persistence in our prayer life, trusting in God's perfect timing, allows us to grow spiritually and witness the transformative power of prayer in our lives.



**Key Text:** *"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective"* (James 5:16).

- 1. Distractions can hinder our focus and effectiveness in prayer, so we need strategies to minimize distractions and stay focused.**
  - Common distractions might include noise, electronic devices, or even wandering thoughts. To combat these, consider setting up a dedicated and quiet space for prayer, free from interruptions. Additionally, practicing mindfulness and bringing your focus back gently when it strays can greatly enhance your prayer experience. What are some common distractions you face during prayer (Matthew 6:6)?
- 2. The tendency to rely on our own strength instead of seeking God first highlights the importance of humility and dependence on God in prayer.**
  - To cultivate a greater dependence on God, start by acknowledging your limitations and recognizing God's limitless power (John 15:4-5). Make it a habit to turn to God in every situation, no matter how small or large, and invite His guidance into your daily decisions. By doing so, you'll develop a deeper trust in His wisdom and timing, allowing your faith to grow stronger with each prayer.
- 3. Faith is essential for effective prayer, as believing in God's power and promises profoundly influences how we approach our conversations with Him.**
  - When we pray with faith, we trust that God hears our petitions and will respond in accordance with His perfect wisdom and timing. This trust can transform our prayer life, filling us with peace and assurance even in uncertain times. How does your faith shape the way you pray, and what impact has it had on your spiritual journey (Mark 11:22-24)?
- 4. Perseverance and persistence in prayer are essential qualities that deepen our spiritual lives.**
  - Trusting in God's perfect timing can be challenging, especially when answers seem delayed. However, continuing to pray faithfully, even in the face of uncertainty, strengthens our reliance on Him. This steadfast approach not only fosters peace and patience but also allows us to witness the transformative power of prayer as we grow closer to God and see His work unfold in our lives (Romans 12:12).

## Part 3: "The Transformative Power of Prayer"

Lesson 11 For Week ending June 14, 2025

Prayer has the power to transform our lives, our churches, and our communities. By prioritizing prayer, we open ourselves to experiencing God's presence and power in remarkable ways. Engaging in regular prayer can lead to personal spiritual growth, as well as a deeper sense of peace and purpose. Moreover, fostering a culture of prayer within our church community can strengthen our collective faith and unity. When we come together in prayer, we not only support one another but also invite God's guidance and blessing in all aspects of our lives.

**Key Text:** *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land"* (II Chronicles 7:14).

### 1. Prayer is the catalyst for spiritual revival and renewal, with countless historical examples of communities transformed through dedicated prayer.

- When we commit ourselves to fervent and persistent prayer, we open the door to experiencing profound changes in our personal lives and within our congregations. How has prayer impacted your personal spiritual growth? Reflect on the early church in Acts 2:41-47, where prayer led to remarkable growth and unity among believers. Through prayer, we can foster a deeper connection with God and witness His powerful work in every aspect of our lives.

### 2. The role of prayer in reaching the lost and spreading the gospel is crucial, as we earnestly seek God's guidance and blessings in our efforts.

- Through prayer, we can ask for divine opportunities to share our faith and for the courage to speak the truth with love and grace. What role does prayer play in your church's ministry and outreach (Colossians 4:3)? It empowers us to connect with those who have yet to experience God's love, creating a strong foundation for our evangelistic endeavors. By committing to prayer, we can see remarkable transformations in our communities and beyond.

### 3. Prayer serves as a foundation for discipleship and spiritual growth, encouraging others to develop a strong and consistent prayer life.



By sharing your own experiences and the transformative power of prayer, you can inspire others to make prayer a priority. How can you support and motivate your friends, family, and fellow church members to incorporate prayer into their daily routines (Luke 11:1)? Consider organizing prayer groups, sharing uplifting prayer resources, or simply offering to pray with or for someone in need (Matthew 18:20). These small steps can foster a deeper connection with God and strengthen the faith of those around you.

### 4. The impact of corporate prayer on the church and community is significant, building a culture of prayer within the church (Acts 4:31).

- When believers come together to pray, they experience a unique sense of unity and common purpose, fostering a supportive environment where faith can flourish. Through collective prayer, we invite God's presence to move powerfully among us, addressing the needs of our congregation and community. This spiritual practice not only strengthens individual relationships with God but also enhances the overall spiritual health and vibrancy of the church.

# Part 1: The Gift of Work

Lesson 12 For week ending June 21, 2025

Work is a divine gift from God, designed to be a fulfilling and integral part of our lives. Understanding the biblical perspective on work helps us find purpose and balance in our daily endeavors. In this Two-Part Series, we will explore various aspects of work and its significance in God's plan for us. This lesson will delve deeper into the spiritual and practical dimensions of work, offering insights and reflections to enrich our understanding. Join us on this inspiring journey as we uncover the profound wisdom behind the gift of work.



**Key Text:** *"Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15).*

## 1. Work is Part of God's Original Design:

- Work was given to humanity before the Fall, indicating that it is not a curse but a part of God's perfect plan for us. Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden to work and take care of it, reflecting the importance of productivity and stewardship in God's creation. The command to work came before sin entered the world, showing that work is inherently good and purposeful. It is a means for us to reflect God's image as creators and caretakers of His creation (Genesis 1:28; Genesis 2:15). How does understanding work as part of God's original design change your perspective on your daily tasks? In what ways can you reflect God's image through your work?

## 2. God's plan is for mankind to be productive through work:

- In God's design, man is told to be *"fruitful"*. This is more than a command to populate the earth. It is a directive to find purpose and meaning in life (Ecclesiastes 3:12,13). Even after sin entered the world, God still revealed the importance of work as a part of man's survival and wellbeing (Genesis 3:17-19). This is confirmed in Proverbs 23:14, *"All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty"*. Discuss what the New Testament says about work as you read II Thessalonians 3:10, I Timothy 5:8 and Ephesians 4:28.

## 3. The Dangers of Overworking:

- Overworking leads to stress-related diseases, emotional fatigue, and problems in close relationships. It is important to recognize the signs of overworking and take steps to prevent it. It is crucial to find a balance and prioritize our health and relationships (Matthew 11:28-30; I Peter 5:7). What are some signs that you might be overworking? How can you create boundaries to prevent overworking? Do you find yourself neglecting your spiritual life because you are too busy?

## 4. Work as a Means of Worship:

- Our work can be an act of worship when done with the right heart and attitude. It is an opportunity to serve God and others. When we approach our work with a heart of service and excellence, we honor God and reflect His character. Our work becomes a testimony of our faith and a means to bless others (Colossians 3:23-24; I Corinthians 10:31). How can you view your work as an act of worship? In what ways can you serve God and others through your work?

## Part 2: The Importance of Rest

Lesson 13 For week ending June 28, 2025

Rest is a vital part of God's design for our lives. It is essential for our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The Sabbath is a precious gift that allows us to pause, reflect, and reconnect with our Creator. It is a time to appreciate the beauty of God's creation and the blessings He bestows upon us. Understanding the biblical perspective on rest helps us prioritize it in our busy lives, ensuring we honor God's plan for balance and renewal.



**Key Text:** *"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work"* (Genesis 2:2).

### 1. Rest is a Command from God:

- God commands us to rest, just as He rested on the seventh day after creation. This command is for our benefit, allowing us to recharge and reconnect with Him. The Sabbath is a day set apart for rest and worship. It is a time to cease from our labors and focus on our relationship with God and our loved ones (Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27). How do you observe the Sabbath in your life? What are some ways you can make your Sabbath more meaningful?

### 2. Rest as a Time for Renewal:

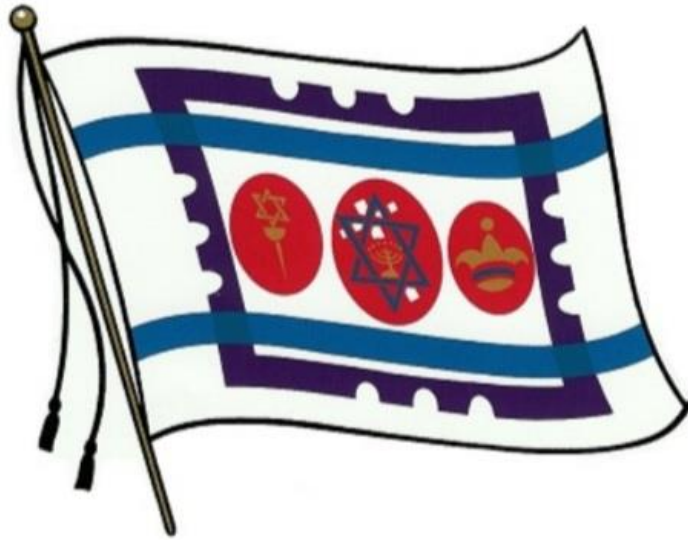
- Rest is not just about physical relaxation but also about spiritual renewal (Matthew 11:28-30). It is a time to draw closer to God and find refreshment for our souls. Jesus often withdrew to solitary places to pray and rest. This example shows us the importance of taking time to be alone with God and renew our spirits (Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:31). How do you find spiritual renewal in your times of rest? What practices help you draw closer to God during your rest (Genesis 2:3)?

### 3. The Consequences of Neglecting Rest:

- Neglecting rest leads to burnout, stress, and a diminished quality of life. It is crucial to recognize the signs of burnout, such as chronic fatigue, irritability, insomnia, and decreased productivity, and take proactive steps to prevent it. By taking regular breaks and setting boundaries, we can maintain a healthy balance and enhance our overall well-being (Isaiah 40:29-31). Rest is not a luxury but a necessity that allows us to be more productive and effective in our work. As Psalm 127:2 reminds us, *"In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves."* How can you create a healthier balance between work and rest?

### 4. Rest as a Reflection of Trust in God:

- Resting is an act of trust in God's provision and care. It is a reminder that we are not in control, and we can rely on Him to meet our needs. When we rest, we acknowledge that God is our provider and sustainer. It is an opportunity to surrender our worries and trust in His faithfulness (Psalm 23:1-3; Matthew 6:25-34). How does resting help you trust in God's provision? In what ways can you surrender your worries to God during your times of rest?



*A quarterly publication of*

# **THE CHURCH OF GOD**

**– Jerusalem Acres –  
Post Office Box 1207  
1826 Dalton Pike, SE  
Cleveland, Tennessee 37364-1207, USA  
Phone: 423/813-0299**

**Website: [thechurchofgodntj.org](http://thechurchofgodntj.org)**

**Email: [thechurchofgodntj.com](mailto:thechurchofgodntj.com)**