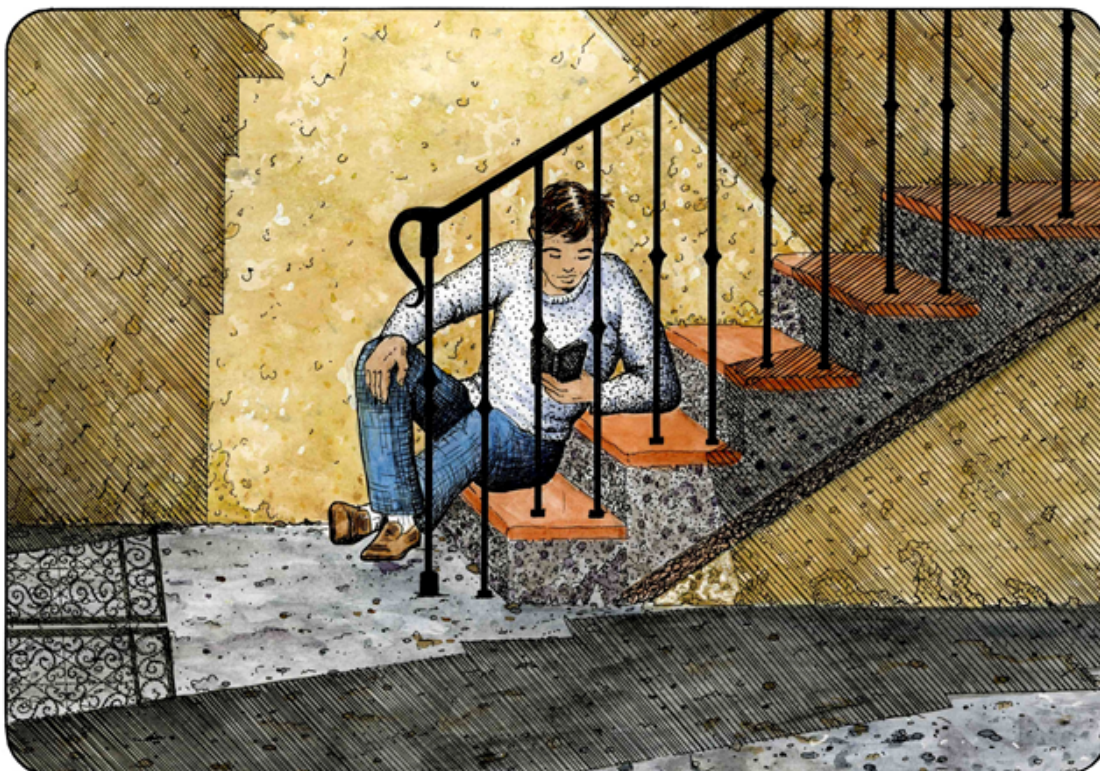


PROGRESSING TOGETHER



COURSE 103

GROWING IN CHRIST



Your Word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11

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COURSE 103 – Growing in Christ

Objectives of Course 103

- 1) *To understand the basic Christian disciplines God uses to help us know him better and live in a way pleasing to him.*
- 2) *To develop a hunger for more intimacy with God through appropriating these spiritual resources in our lives.*
- 3) *To establish a regular habit of exercising these spiritual disciplines.*
- 4) *To grow in appreciation of how God uses these disciplines to transform us and to encourage others to pursue them.*

Lessons

❶	The Spirit – Our Helper
❷	The Word – Our Food
❸	Prayer – Talking with the Father
❹	Fasting and Meditation – Drawing near to the Father
❺	The Church – Our New Family

Introduction

Do you long to draw closer to God? Do you desire to walk in greater obedience to His word? Do you long for other Christian friends to come around you and encourage you? Do you want to be filled with the joy of the Lord and experience His peace? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then this course is for you.

In this course, we will examine the resources God has given us to draw closer to Him. We will learn how to walk in greater obedience to His word and to experience the love and encouragement of the local church. In lesson 1, we will see that God has not left us alone but has sent his Holy Spirit to strengthen, guide, and comfort us. In lesson 2, we will look at how to study God’s Word and apply it to our lives. In lesson 3, we will be encouraged to deepen our relationship with the Father through prayer. In lesson 4, we will develop this further by looking at fasting and meditating on God’s Word. Finally, in lesson 5, we will see the importance of active participation in a local church and how joining with other believers in mutual encouragement can help us to draw closer to God.

Throughout this course, you will learn about the resources God has graciously provided to enable you to draw closer to Him. You will also be challenged to start using these resources in your daily life. The appendix at the end of the course will provide practical ways to establish new habits based on each lesson.

Introductory Story

The group leader will have you watch or listen to a testimony related to the topic of this course.



Lesson ①: The Spirit – Our Helper

John 14 to 16

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Objectives

1. To understand the role of the Holy Spirit in helping a believer live an obedient and victorious Christian life.
2. To experience a changed life as a result of living daily in the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. To understand the working of the Holy Spirit in the unbelieving world.



You are never alone! God is always with you. What an awesome and amazing promise! Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised that He would send another ‘Helper’ to be with His disciples forever. This ‘Helper’ is the Holy Spirit. Whether you are reading God’s Word, praying, witnessing, or just trying to do what is right, the Holy Spirit is with you to help, strengthen, guide and encourage you. In this lesson we are going to examine two passages from chapters 14-16 in the Gospel of John in order to understand who the Holy Spirit is, His role in the life of a believer, and how He interacts with the unbelieving world.



Read John 14:15-27 carefully.

①

Jesus’s promise of another ‘Helper’.



If you love Jesus (14:15), what does He say you will do?



What does Jesus promise to those who love Him and keep His commandments (14:16)?



The Greek word used for ‘Helper’ here is ‘parakletos’. It can also be translated Counsellor, Comforter, or Advocate. The simple meaning of this word is someone who comes alongside to help. Jesus was going away and wanted to console the disciples in their sorrow at his departure. He also wanted to assure them they would have guidance and assistance in the future.

②

Who is the Holy Spirit?



In John 14:17-26, Jesus describes several important characteristics of the ‘Helper’ to his disciples. Match the scriptural phrase to the words describing the Holy Spirit. Some phrases can be matched to more than one word. A model answer has been provided for the second phrase.

Describing words	Passages of Scripture	Answers
A. Invisible B. Spirit, not physical C. Eternal D. Totally truthful E. Able to be everywhere F. All knowing	He will be with the disciples forever. (14:16) He is the Spirit of truth. (14:17) The world cannot see Him. (14:17) He dwells with you and will be in you. (14:17) He will teach you all things. (14:26)	B, D



Given these characteristics, what can you conclude about the Holy Spirit?



The role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple of Jesus.



The Holy Spirit enables the believer to live a joy filled and obedient life.



Re-read John 14:15-17. Will the Holy Spirit ever depart from the disciples?



How did Jesus' presence encourage the disciples?



How would the Holy Spirit's presence encourage and comfort them?



Re-read John 14:23. Jesus again says, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word." Who will come to make their home with the disciple who does this?



This verse helps us to understand the unity of the three persons of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in the Trinity. Not only does the Holy Spirit dwell within the disciple, but, through the Spirit, both God the Father and Jesus also live within him. If the Holy Spirit is dwelling within you, then all the fullness of the Trinity lives in you to help and strengthen you.



Re-read John 14:25-26. What is another role the Holy Spirit plays in the life of a disciple?



Read John 15:18 to 16:15 carefully.

④

The work of the Holy Spirit in the unbelieving world.



When John uses the word 'world' in this passage he is referring to all those who reject God and the systems they have created. They are opposed to Jesus and His followers.



What is the attitude of the world towards Jesus' followers? (15:18-21)



Why does the world act in this manner?



In light of this, what does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will help the disciples do (15:26-27)?



Why did Jesus tell His disciples that it was 'to your advantage that I go away' (16:7)?



What is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of those who don't know God and are living according to the values of the world? (16:8-11)



It is not your role to convict an unbeliever. God has called you to bear witness for Him. It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict someone and bring them to repentance. Do not become discouraged if your witness does not change someone's heart right away. Continue to pray for them and ask the Holy Spirit to convict them and bring about repentance in their life.



Optional activities

1. Sing one of the following worship songs (or another song of your choice). Then, spend some time in praise, thanking God for the gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in us forever.
 - [Holy Spirit, living breath of God](#) by Keith & Kristyn Getty
 - [Spirit of the living God](#) by Daniel Iverson
 - [Hymn of the Holy Spirit](#) by Pat Barrett

2. Watch this video [‘What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?’](#). Then, pray that you would be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.



Applications: How can we deepen our relationship with God through the Holy Spirit?

1. Consider what we have learnt in this lesson. How is the presence of the Holy Spirit an encouragement to you today? Discuss this as a group.
2. As believers, we should all seek to be continually filled with God’s Holy Spirit. Here are some simple steps which can help us to do this:
 - Come humbly into God’s presence in prayer
 - Confess any sin that you are aware of
 - Commit yourself to doing the Lord’s will
 - Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit
 - Praise Him and thank Him for His indwelling presence and all His good gifts
 - Live in joy, obedience and faith
3. As a group, read Acts 4:23-31 and pray that the power of the Holy Spirit would fill each one of you this week. Be prepared to share testimonies next week about walking in the Spirit.
4. Establish a time of worship and study each day this week. For suggested daily Bible readings on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life, see **Appendix G** at the end of this course.



Sharing

This week, share with others what you have learned in this lesson. You can also redo the lesson with someone.



Lesson ②: The Word – Our Food

Psalm 119:1-40

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Objectives

1. To understand the essential role of God's Word in the life of a believer.
2. To learn how to do a simple personal Bible study.
3. To begin a habit of personal daily time in God's Word.
4. To be able to share how obedience to God's word brings blessings and protection in the life of a believer.



How are you getting on?

1. What were the main points of the last lesson?
2. What happened when you shared with others what you learned?
3. What changed in your lives as a result of these teachings?



Read 2 Timothy 3:16 -17 and Psalm 119:105.



As we saw in our first lesson, the Holy Spirit is our guide and counsellor on earth. He helps the believer to understand and remember God's revealed Word, the Bible. The Bible is not just another book, it is actually 'breathed out by God' and is God's authoritative revelation of who He is, how He has saved us, and how He wants us to live our lives. It contains many promises of His presence and blessings as well as many warnings and commands for our daily life.

In this lesson, we will look at a portion of Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, to see the essential role the Word of God plays in the life of a believer. This Psalm contains 22 sections of 8 verses each that correspond to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The theme of Psalm 119 is the 'The Word of the Lord' and the following synonyms are used repeatedly to describe God's Word: law, statutes, precepts, commands, ordinances, decrees, word and promises. At the end of this lesson, you will be directed to appendix A, B, and C where you will learn some practical guidelines for establishing a regular time of Bible study, a simple way to structure your daily time of study and some application questions to help you apply what you are learning.



Read Psalm 119: 1-40 carefully.



Re-read verses 1-8.



What do these verses teach about obedience to God's Word?

② Re-read verses 9-16.



How can a young believer live a pure life that honors God?



Several ways to grow in love for and understanding of God's word are described in this passage. Find the verse(s) that describe the following activities in verses 9-16 and write a short description of each.

Study: Verse(s):
Description:

Memorize: Verse(s):
Description:

Meditate: Verse(s):
Description:



Once we have understood what God asks from us, it is important that we obey. Keeping one's heart fixed on loving God and living a life in obedience to the principles found in God's Word help a believer live a pure life.

③ Re-read verses 17-24.



What is God's part and what is our part in understanding His Word?



Recall what we learned about God the Holy Spirit in the previous lesson. How does He especially help the believer to understand His Word? (See John 14:25-26; 16:12-14.)



Pray right now that God, through His Holy Spirit, will help you understand this lesson.

④ **Re-read verses 25-32.**



How does God's Word help us in times of trouble?

⑤ **Re-read verses 33-40.**



How does the Word of God transform us?



How can a believer give the Word of God the importance that it deserves in his daily life?



Optional activities

1. Look together at the table of contents of the Bible and examine the different parts it contains. Then, watch the video [Summary of the Bible](#).
2. Watch the video [How to read the Bible](#) explaining how to read the Bible. Discuss as a group how you can implement or improve your daily reading of the Bible.
3. Watch the video [The Bible explored](#) explaining how the Bible came to us through the centuries.
4. Watch the video [Is the Bible trustworthy?](#) Discuss this as a group. Then, spend some time thanking God for preserving his Word through the centuries and for the assurance we can have that it has not been corrupted.



Applications: How can we deepen our relationship with God through the Word of God?

1. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Based on this verse, how would you complete this sentence:

"As eating bread each day is vital for the body to thrive and grow, _____."

It is important to have a daily habit of spending personal time in God's Word and in prayer. There are no set rules for having a personal time with God. But there are some good guidelines and practices you can implement to develop this habit.

- See **Appendix A** for some tips on establishing a daily time of study.
 - See **Appendix B** for a sample Bible study method using Psalm 119:105.
 - See **Appendix C** for a list of questions to ask yourself to help you apply what you are learning.
 - See **Appendix G** for suggested Bible readings each day to enhance your understanding of God's Word.
2. This week, if you have not done so yet, establish a routine of daily bible study. Each day, write down what you have learned and what impact this is having on your life. Prepare to share this with the rest of the group next week.



Sharing

This week, share with others what you have learned in this lesson. You can also redo the lesson with someone.



Lesson ③: Prayer - Talking with the Father

Matthew 6:5-15

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Objectives

1. Understand the privilege that we have as children of God to come to our Father in prayer.
2. See the Lord's prayer as a fundamental model for a daily personal time of prayer.
3. Experience change in our heart as a result of prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).



How are you getting on?

1. What were the main points of the last lesson?
2. What happened when you shared with others what you learned?
3. What changed in your lives as a result of these teachings?



Read Matthew 6:5-15 carefully.



Definitions:

- To hallow: to honor as holy.
- Temptation: enticement (urge) to do evil or a time of testing.



What attitude should the disciple of Jesus have in prayer (verses 5 and 6)?



By what name should believers address God in prayer (verse 9)?



In verse 5, Jesus speaks to a group of people: 'When you (plural) pray...' But in verse 6, he makes it more personal: 'You (singular), when you (singular) pray...' He is emphasizing that our prayers should be in private, between us and God.



What gives us this privilege? (See John 1:12)



What does Jesus teach about the repetition of empty phrases (verse 7)?



For what three requests are we instructed to pray in verses 9 and 10?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



If I sincerely pray for these things, how will my life be affected?



How does Jesus teach us to pray for our personal needs (verse 11)?



Read also Philippians 4:6-7. What does our Heavenly Father promise to us when we commit our needs to Him?



Jesus teaches us that we should ask for our Heavenly Father's forgiveness daily. Why is this important?



What should be our attitude of heart towards those who have offended us?



What is the consequence of an unforgiving spirit? (Matthew 6:12-15)



Why is it important to gather to pray with others? (Matthew 18:18-20)



What have you learned in this lesson which can help you in your prayer life?



Optional activities

1. How are the instructions that Jesus gives about prayer different from what is practiced around you? Why do you think that nothing is mentioned about ritual washing, positions to adopt, direction to face, times of the day or language to be used for prayer? Discuss this as a group.
2. If you do not know the Lord's Prayer by heart, learn it now (using the version that is used in your local church).
3. Watch this [sketch about the Lord's prayer](#). Discuss what you learned through it. Then, pray the Lord's prayer together, stopping after each sentence as you meditate on its meaning.
4. Pray and ask God to show you what you are anxious about. Break up into groups of two or three and share (as specifically or generally as you want) about these situations. Pray for each other. Finish with singing the hymn 'Turn your eyes upon Jesus' or a song of your choice on this theme.



Applications: How can we deepen our relationship with God through prayer?

1. Take a few moments to pray together through the Lord's prayer using the model below:
 - **Worship (verse 9):** Come to God as Father, thanking Him that you are his child. (5 minutes)
 - **Submission (verse 10):** Submit yourself to His will and pray that His will would be accomplished in different areas of your life. (5 minutes)
 - **Petition (verse 11):** Bring your needs to Him trusting that He will provide. Pray also for the needs of those around you. (10 minutes)
 - **Confession (verse 12):** Confess any sins you are aware of and ask for His forgiveness. At the same time, be sure to forgive anyone who has offended you. (5 minutes)
 - **Protection (verse 13):** Ask God to keep His hand of protection around you and to strengthen you to walk in His will. (5 minutes)
 - **Thanksgiving:** Close with a time of thanksgiving and re-affirmation of your love for Him. (2 minutes)
2. This week, set aside a regular time each day for prayer. You can use the guidelines/model you have been given in this lesson. In **Appendix D**, there is also a list of different prayer activities that you can use to begin to develop your prayer life. In addition, see **Appendix G** for suggested Bible readings each day to deepen your understanding of prayer. Write down what you learn and how prayer is affecting your life. Prepare to share this with the rest of the group next week.



Sharing

This week, share with others what you have learned in this lesson. You can also redo the lesson with someone.



Lesson ④: Fasting and Meditation - Drawing near to the Father

Matthew 6:16-18

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Objectives

1. *Enrich our intimacy with God through the study and practice of various spiritual disciplines.*
2. *Understand Biblical fasting and its relationship to prayer.*
3. *Increase our desire to invest time in waiting on God in prayer.*



How are you getting on?

1. What were the main points of the last lesson?
2. What happened when you shared with others what you learned?
3. What changed in your lives as a result of these teachings?



The Psalmist writes: “As a deer pants for streams of waters, so my soul pants for you, my God.” (Psalm 42:1) In this lesson, we will discover some biblical practices that help us deepen our prayer communion with God, our Heavenly Father.

FASTING



- In the Bible, fasting often accompanied prayer during particular times of need and crisis:
- Moses fasted 40 days without eating or drinking (Exodus 34:28) before receiving the 10 commandments.
 - David fasted seven days (2 Samuel 12:16,21) pleading with God to spare the life of his sick child.
 - Esther asked for a fast of three days before she approached the king and pleaded for her people (Esther 4:16).
 - Christ ate nothing during his 40-day period of temptation by the devil. (Luke 4:2)



① Anna, the Prophetess



Read Luke 2:36-38.



How did Anna worship the Lord?



What do you think motivated her to devote herself to prayer and fasting?



What unexpected reward did she receive?



The Church of Antioch



Read Acts 13:1-3.



What happened when the leaders of the church in Antioch were worshiping the Lord and fasting?



This was a turning point in the history of the church. Christian believers were already sharing their faith naturally with their family and friends. But this was the beginning of a deliberate outreach to new towns and countries. By His Spirit, God intervened in the time of prayer and fasting in order to start a new work.



Why do you think they again fasted and prayed before sending Barnabas and Saul on their way?



Jesus teaches about fasting



Read Matthew 6:16-18.



Did Jesus expect his disciples to fast and pray?



What was the purpose of this fast?



How does Jesus want us to behave when fasting? Complete the following table which contrasts right and wrong attitudes to fasting.

	Hypocritical fasting	Fasting according to Jesus
Physical appearance	Gloomy and disheveled	
Purpose		To seek after God
Reward		



Now in your own words, describe the kind of fasting which is truly pleasing to God.



By setting aside preoccupations with daily life chores and pleasures, fasting enables us to spend extended time with God in prayer. It can increase our longing to meet with God. Fasting also gives us a great opportunity to meditate on God's word.

WAITING ON THE LORD AND MEDITATING ON HIS WORD



When we wait on the Lord, we focus our attention on Him so that He can reveal Himself to us. We spend time in quiet in order to shut out the cares of this world. The goal is to enable us to receive whatever message the Lord may impress on our thoughts or simply to sense His presence. Such a message should always be in accordance with the teaching of God's word.

Therefore, during our time of waiting on the Lord, it is helpful for us to meditate on His word. Read a Bible verse or passage several times and then spend time thinking about the meaning. What does it teach about God and His relationship to you? This can lead you into a time of praise.



Hunger for God



Read Psalm 63.



How does the Psalmist describe his desire for God's presence?



Describe the ways the Psalmist sought for God.



The Psalmist longed for closeness to God as he had experienced in the sanctuary (the tabernacle, the place of the Lord's presence). Today we can experience the same closeness anywhere as we reflect on and worship Jesus.



What benefits did the Psalmist receive from seeking God?



Optional activities

1. Share experiences of fasting and prayer with others in the group.
2. How is Biblical fasting similar/different to the fasting that is practiced by others in your context? Discuss this as a group.
3. Discuss why you think many Christians don't fast much anymore.
4. The discipline of fasting can be very good for us physically as well as spiritually. Have someone in the group research the physical benefits and share with the group.



Applications: How can we deepen our relationship with God through fasting and meditation?

1. Take a time of fasting and prayer for any serious matter. Does your country, church or family need guidance or have any critical needs? Before taking part in a fast, consult **Appendix E** at the end of this course for fasting guidelines and safety recommendations.
2. Meditate each day this week on a passage of Scripture in your personal study and prayer time. Appendix G at the end of this course provides you a verse for each day this week that has been chosen to help you deepen your understanding of fasting and meditation.



Sharing

This week, share with others what you have learned in this lesson. You can also redo the lesson with someone.



Lesson ⑤: The Church – Our new family

Acts 2:42-47

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Objectives

1. Realize that we are part of a worldwide family of believers.
2. Learn from the Jerusalem church the key activities of a Christian fellowship.
3. Understand how to apply biblical principles of giving.
4. Commit to participating in the local Body of Christ



How are you getting on?

1. What were the main points of the last lesson?
2. What happened when you shared with others what you learned?
3. What changed in your lives as a result of these teachings?



In the first four lessons, we have looked at the place of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, prayer, fasting and meditation in the life of the new believer. But we are not alone in our struggle to live for Christ our Savior in this hostile world. We have been born into a new family with many brothers and sisters. In this lesson, we will see how this brings us great privileges but also important responsibilities. As members of this new family, what part can we play and how can we benefit?



Serving God together: the first Church



Read carefully Acts 2:42-47.



The apostle Peter's powerful preaching at Pentecost led to 3000 people accepting the Lord Jesus and being baptized. What were the four key activities to which the believers devoted themselves? (Verse.42)

—
—
—
—



The Apostles' teaching: These first believers did not have the Bible as we know it today. The apostles taught them that Jesus was the Messiah who fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. They urged them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. They taught them about Jesus' life and teaching. Today their teaching is found in the New Testament.

The breaking of bread: This was part of the earliest Christian worship. The believers remembered the last supper of Jesus with his disciples. They gave thanks for his death and resurrection and celebrated his presence with them. (Luke 24:30-35; Acts 20:7)



Each of these key activities is both a privilege and a responsibility. Complete the table below, filling in each column.

Activity	Privilege	Responsibility
Apostles teaching	To learn the great truths of the Christian faith.	To listen carefully and to put the teaching into practice.
	To receive help and encouragement from others.	
Breaking of bread		To prepare oneself to worship sincerely. To participate in gatherings for worship.



We read how the believers sold their possessions and goods to help fellow believers in need. This was a truly practical expression of their fellowship. Can you think of other ways in which their financial gifts were necessary and important?



How did the believers use their homes?



What was the impact of the believers on the community? (v.47)

② Giving to God through our Church family



The devotion and generosity of the early Jerusalem church is inspiring. However, it was by no means an obligation for all believers to sell all their possessions. In 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9, Paul gives important guidelines about how we should give.



Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-12.



How does our faith in God affect our giving to His family?



Now focus on verse 7 as you answer the following questions:

- Who should give?
 - ☐ Those who are wealthy enough.
 - ☐ Those who need to atone for their sin.
 - ☐ All believers.
 - ☐ Those who want to.
- How much should we give? (See also 1 Cor 16:1-2)
- Who decides?
- What should be our attitude?



We must joyfully give our offerings first and foremost in worship to God, then to the church fellowship to distribute according to the needs.

③ Encouraging one another through the local church



Read Hebrews 10:23-25.



The writer of the letter to the Hebrews was very concerned that some of his friends had stopped regularly meeting to worship together. They had endured hardships and persecution. Some of them had lost their property and been ill-treated (10:32-34). They might even face the prospect of martyrdom (12:4). He urged them not to give up.



Why is it important that we should continue to meet together?



Optional activities

1. Watch the video [What constitutes a real church?](#) How do the people in your society see the church? What has changed in the way you see church through the lesson of today? Discuss this as a group.
2. Listen to the prayer that [Jesus prayed for his disciples](#) just before his arrest. As you listen, note down what Jesus asks the Father for his disciples. What is important for him? Then, pray for your local family of disciples.



Applications: How can we deepen our relationship with God through the participation in a local church?

1. Look again at the table of the activities of the Jerusalem Church, with their responsibilities and privileges. Consider each activity carefully. Then discuss the following questions:
 - a) In what ways can you benefit more from the privileges of each activity?
 - b) In what ways can you take more responsibility?
2. This week, develop your own giving plan based on the principles in this lesson. See **Appendix F** at the end of this course for guidelines to help you determine your giving plan.
3. Each day of this week, do the suggested Bible readings in Appendix G to deepen your understanding of the principles in this lesson related to the church.



Review of Course 102

Review the five lessons of this Course. Then, share personal testimonies of what they have learned during this course and how it has affected their lives



Sharing

This week, share with others what you have learned in this lesson. You can also redo the lesson with someone.



Appendices

Lesson 2: The Word of God

Appendix A: Guidelines and Practices for Effective Bible Study

- Having a fixed time and place to meet with God is the first step in developing this habit.
- Another good practice is to begin with a time of prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your heart to understand and apply His word.
- As you read God's Word each day, remember the three ways we found in Psalm 119:9-16, that you can feed on the Word of God.
 - 1) **Study:** carefully observing, analyzing and seeking to understand God's Word
 - 2) **Memorization:** repeating the words of Scripture until learning them by heart (remembering each word)
 - 3) **Meditation:** reviewing or reciting Scripture and reflecting on the meaning of the passage and its application to life. This is encouraged throughout the day and made accessible through memorization of Scripture.

Lesson 2: The Word of God

Appendix B: Effective Bible Study Method

➤ Here is a simple Bible study method you can use each day to help you understand and apply God's Word.

- 1) **Worship:** Begin by praising God and asking Him to reveal Himself to you. (3 min)
- 2) **Bible Study:** Seeking to understand the passage you have selected.
 - a. Observe the text (5 min)
 - b. Explain the meaning of the text (5 min)
 - c. Apply the teaching to your life (5 min)
- 3) Close with a **time of prayer**, starting by responding to the Bible passage and what you have learned through the study. (5 min)

➤ **Below is an example** of this Bible study method using **Psalm 119:105:**

- 1) **Worship:** Begin by praising God and asking Him to reveal Himself to you. (3 min)
- 2) **Bible Study:** Seeking to understand Ps 119:105.
 - a. Observe the text. (5 min)
 - What are the key words the psalmist uses to describe the impact/importance of the Bible in his life?
 - Read the rest of the verses in this section of the psalm (verses 105-112). How do they help us better understand what the psalmist is saying in verse 105?
 - Now write your own observation question and give the answer.
 - b. Explain the meaning of the text. (5 min)
 - Think about one or two key words the psalmist used and write why he chose them to describe the impact of God's Word on his life.
 - How is the psalmist an example for us in his dedication to follow the teachings of the Bible? (Verses 105-112)
 - Now write your own interpretation question and give the answer.
 - c. Apply the teaching to your life. (5 min)
 - Reread verses 107 and 110. Are you experiencing opposition as David did when he wrote them?
 - Memorize Ps 119:105. Review it first thing every morning this week and last thing before going to bed at night, and then in between each activity during the day. Thank the Lord for his Word and ask Him to use it to guide you.
 - Choose something the psalmist did (v105-112) with the Bible and imitate it in your own life.
- 3) Close with a **time of prayer**, starting by responding to this verse and what you have learned through the study. (5 mins)

Lesson 2: The Word of God

Appendix C: Bible Study Application Questions

- Below is a list of good questions you can ask as you are trying to understand how to apply the Bible in your daily life:
 - 1) Is there an **example** for me to follow or not to follow?
 - 2) Is there a **sin** for me to avoid?
 - 3) Is there a **promise** for me to claim?
 - 4) Is there a **prayer** for me to pray?
 - 5) Is there a **command** for me to obey?
 - 6) Is there a **condition** for me to meet?
 - 7) Is there a **verse** for me to memorize?
 - 8) Is there an **error** (doctrinal/theological) for me to avoid?
 - 9) Is there a **challenge** for me to face?
 - 10) Is there something that **helps me cope** with a situation that I am going through?
 - 11) Is there anything that I need to **share** and pass on to others...
 - a. in my family?
 - b. in my church fellowship?
 - c. in my relationships or contacts with unbelievers?

Lesson 3: Prayer

Appendix D: Prayer Activities

- Below is a list of prayer activities you can use in your daily prayer times with God. (Adapted from Dick Eastman *"The Hour that Changes the World"*)
- **Praise & Worship** – expressing your adoration to God for who He is and what He has done.
 - **Waiting upon the Lord** – a time of quiet solitude where you silence yourself and your surroundings and wait in His presence.
 - **Confession** – humbly examining yourself and admitting your sinfulness to God and accepting the cleansing of your sins based on Jesus's death on the cross.
 - **Praying Scripture** – praying through a chosen passage of scripture helps feed yourself from God's word. You can pray that God would accomplish His will in your life or in those whom you mention by name.
 - **Watching** – A time of spiritual observation where you ask God to show you his plan or course of action in a particular situation while you stay alert to the prompting of the Lord.
 - **Intercession** – Standing in the gap on behalf of someone else and praying for the needs of that person whether it be salvation, physical, spiritual, or mental needs.
 - **Petition** – Bringing your own requests to God
 - **Thanksgiving** – Acknowledging your appreciation for God's tender care, protection, blessing, and kindness.
 - **Singing** – expressing adoration, worship or glory to God in song.
 - **Meditation** – a quiet time reviewing or reciting Scripture and reflecting on the meaning of the passage and its application to life.
 - **Listening** – a silent time of being still before God seeking instructions or direction from the Lord.

You can now build your own prayer time using the prayer activities above. Example: You could have a one-hour prayer time spending 5 minutes on each prayer activity.

- In addition, you can use again the time of prayer outline based on the prayer Jesus taught his disciples in Matthew 6 which we used at the end of lesson 3. Take a few moments to pray through the Lord's prayer using the model below:
 - **Worship (verse 9):** Come to God as Father, thanking Him that you are his child. (5 minutes)
 - **Submission (verse 10):** Submit yourself to His will and pray that His will would be accomplished in different areas of your life. (5 minutes)
 - **Petition (verse 11):** Bring your needs to Him trusting that He will provide. Pray also for the needs of those around you. (10 minutes)
 - **Confession (verse 12):** Confess any sins you are aware of and ask for His forgiveness. At the same time, be sure to forgive anyone who has offended you. (5 minutes)
 - **Protection (verse 13):** Ask God to keep His hand of protection around you and to strengthen you to walk in His will. (5 minutes)
 - **Thanksgiving:** Close with a time of thanksgiving and re-affirmation of your love for Him. (2 minutes)

Lesson 4: Fasting and Meditation

Appendix E: Fasting Guidelines

- Below are some questions you can ask yourself to help you get started planning a fast and some guideline to help you safely fast.

1. What is the purpose of your fast?

- a. To seek after God in worship
- b. To ask for help during a time of crisis
- c. To ask for God's blessing and protection on Christian work
- d. Other personal reasons

2. Which type of fasting will be appropriate for you.

- a. **Normal Fast** – no food, but you are allowed liquids.
- b. **Partial fast** – abstain from certain types of food (Example: Daniel refrained from eating the King's food - Daniel 1:8-16). This is good for those with certain health problems (Example: diabetes) that a normal fast would exacerbate.
- c. **Total fast** - No food or water (Example: Moses on Mount Sinai – Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9,18). You should be very careful with this kind of fast. You should stop the fast and seek medical attention if peculiar symptoms arise. This type of fast should be of a short duration.

3. How long will you be fasting for?

- a. A single meal
- b. Sunrise to sunset
- c. Full 24-hour day (midnight to midnight).
- d. Multiple days. Be careful with this duration of fasting and stop the fast and seek medical attention if peculiar symptoms arise.

4. What activities will you be focused on during the time of fasting?

- a. Prayer – have a prayer list of items to bring before God
- b. Meditating on God's Word – have passages picked out to study
- c. Waiting on the Lord – have a place you can go to be still and quiet.

Lesson 5: The Church

Appendix F: Develop a Giving Plan

(Adapted from Design for Discipleship, “Growing in Discipleship,” Booklet n°6, NavPress, 1980, pages 21-22)

➤ **The following steps will help you develop a regular giving plan:**

1) Decide.

After prayer and reflection, decide what percentage of your income you want to give to the Lord. Determine what resources you have to offer: money, crops, time, skills, etc.

2) Set apart the Lord’s part.

When you receive some money or resources, put aside immediately the part you decided belongs to the Lord. These resources belong to the Lord and should not be used for your personal needs.

3) Distribute

Distribute these resources according to the guidelines you received through prayer. It is good to give regular gifts. Make sure you give priority to your local assembly of believers. (See chart below.)

4) Make additional gifts and increase your percentage gradually as the Lord prospers you.

➤ **To help you determine to whom you give, complete the following table:**

To whom or to what ministry?	How much?	How often?	Why?

➤ **‘The one who entrusts his money to God commits himself to God.’**

Appendix G: Daily Plan for spending time with God

- Below is a list of verses designed to correspond with the teaching of each lesson. These verses are to be used in a daily time of study and meditation of God's Word to enhance your understanding of each lesson.

Lesson 1 - The Holy Spirit/ Week 1:

Day 1 John 14:15-18, 25-27

Day 2 Acts 1:4-8, 2:1-4

Day 3 John 7:37-40

Day 4 Psalm 139:1-10

Day 5 Romans 8:26-27

Day 6 Romans 5:1-5

Lesson 2 - The Word of God/ Week 2:

- Each day use the Bible study method template from **Appendix B** above as you study and meditate on the verses below.

Day 1 Psalm 119:105

Day 2 Psalm 1:1-3

Day 3 Matthew 7:24-27

Day 4 Acts 17:10-14

Day 5 Matthew 8:23-27

Day 6 2 Peter 1:16-21

Lesson 3 - Prayer / Week 3:

- Each day, a different prayer activity is highlighted from **Appendix D** above.

Day 1 **Praise and Worship** – Psalm 100

Day 2 **Meditation** – Joshua 1:8-9

Day 3 **Confession** – Psalm 32

Day 4 **Waiting on the Lord** – Lamentations 3:22-26

Day 5 **Intercession** – James 5:14-18

Day 6 **Petition** – Philippians 4:6-7

Lesson 4 - Fasting and Meditation/ Week 4:

- Meditate each day on a passage of Scripture in your personal study and worship time. A topic of meditation has been presented with each verse.
- Choose one day to take a time of fasting for any serious matter.

Day 1 Meditate on **Psalm 25** - What are the blessings of seeking God?

Day 2 Meditate on **Matthieu 11:28-30** – Pray through these verses and then wait on God asking Him to show you where you can experience His rest.

Day 3 Meditate on **Psalm 19** – How is the Word of God sweeter than honey to you?

Day 4 Meditate on **Isaiah 58:1-12** – What is a true fast?

Day 5 Meditate on **Psalm 131** - What enjoyment does a weaned child receive from being on his mother's lap?

Day 6 Meditate on **Proverbs 2** – What are the benefits of seeking wisdom?

Lesson 5 - The Church/ Week 5

- Meditate each day on a passage of Scripture in your personal study and worship time. A topic of meditation has been presented with each verse.

Day 1 **Psalm 84** – The longing to worship God in His temple

Day 2 **Psalm 133** – The joy of fellowship with God's people

Day 3 **Malachi 3:8-12** – The importance of honoring God with our offerings

Day 4 **Hebrews 10:19-25** – Stirring up one another to love and good deeds.

Day 5 **2 Corinthians 8:1-5** – The example of generosity in the Church in Macedonia

Day 6 **Colossians 3:12-17** – Encouraging one another in the body

Appendix H: What to do when God seems distant?

- Normally, when we take time to meet with God, we are filled with the assurance of his presence and rewarded with his peace and joy. But sometimes despite our seeking Him faithfully He can seem to be absent. (See Psalm 77)

- What can we do? Here are some ideas and suggestions that can help:

- **Remember**

Think back on how God has blessed you recently and thank Him for it. Remember His mighty deeds in the past, His promises and His character and praise Him (Psalm 77:10-15). Soon you will discover you have much to rejoice in.

- **Recite**

Read Scripture or praise aloud in song. Often, when our spiritual enemies assail us, they flee again when they realize their attacks only increase our resolve to praise the Lord.

- **Review**

Examine your heart to make sure there is not some sin you have neglected to address. If necessary, confess and ask God to refill you afresh with His Spirit.

- **Recruit**

Gather other brothers and sisters to do battle with you in prayer.

- **Realize**

God uses such times of spiritual dryness to increase our faith. (Some have called these 'dark times of the soul'.) We honor God greatly, as Job did, when we cling on to Him in faith, waiting until He meets us afresh.