



PATHWAY CLASS 201

Discovering Maturity Growing in Christ

Vision Statement

Our vision is to be a church that moves people to maturity, membership, ministry, mission while motivating them to magnify our savior. Col 1:28

Mission Statement

“Our Mission is Prayer, Hope for the hurting and Caring for our Community”

PRAYER – HOPE – CARING

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

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Dr. Deryck J. Hunte, Pastor

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Welcome

Welcome to “Discovering Maturity: Growing In Christ” (Pathway Class 201). This class is the second of the New Life Classes at Vision Ministries Church. Since these classes build on each other, you must first attend “Discovering Membership: (Pathway Class 101) before taking this class.

The purpose of this class can be summarized in two passages of scripture:

Colossians 1:28

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-14

¹¹ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

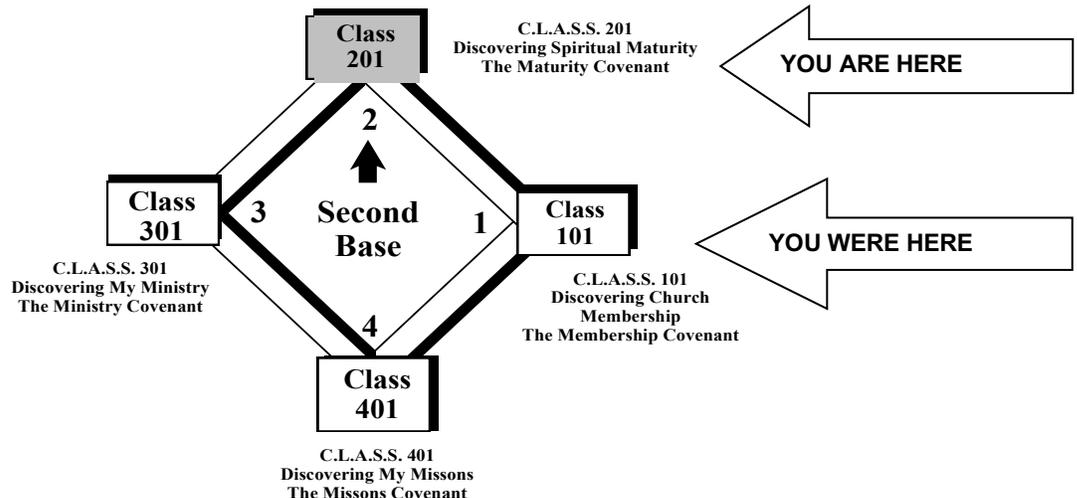
¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

The goal of “Discovering Maturity: Growing In Christ” is to introduce you to the four basic habits every Christian needs to develop in order to grow into spiritually mature person.

We hope you enjoy this class. It is our greatest desire that by the end of this class you will have developed four spiritual habits that will last a lifetime as you grow in Christ.

Dr. Deryck J. Hunte, Pastor



Purpose of Pathway Class 201

To grow people to spiritual MATURITY

Equips you with the skills you need to begin 4 habits
all Christians need to grow spiritually

Explains the tools you need to continue these habits.

What to expect

All Christians eventually ask the same questions: How can I get closer to God? How can I live more and more like Jesus? How can I grow in my faith? Where do I start? PATHWAY CLASS 201 is designed to answer these and many other questions.

During Pathway CLASS 201, you will learn four habits that will energize or renew your spiritual life. First, through Pathway CLASS 201, you will learn practical steps to making time with God a powerful part of every day. You will also receive helpful tips on overcoming the largest obstacles you'll face as you get started.

Second, every growing Christian needs to talk with God. This is called prayer. For some, talking to God is intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. In CLASS 201, you'll discover that God desires conversation with you and He's much more interested in you authentically talking with him than He is in critiquing your prayers. So, to get you started, you'll learn a pattern for prayer taken right out of the life of Jesus.

A third area that is covered is financial giving. Admittedly, this is a sensitive subject because few things give a more piercing look into our spiritual lives than how we choose to handle our financial resources. This section will help you take a healthy look at priorities and what really matters in life.

Finally, you'll clearly see the value of Christian relationships as we grow together.

As part of PATHWAY CLASS 201 you will learn how people at Vision Ministries Church have grown by becoming part of a spiritual family called a Small Group.

PATHWAY CLASS 201 OUTLINE

Table of Contents

Session I

What is Spiritual Maturity?

Session II

How to Meditate on God's Word

Session III

The Habit of A Daily Time with God

Session IV

The Habit of Prayer

Session V

The Habit of Tithing

Session VI

The Habit of Fellowship

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLASS:

*" ... that you may **become mature** Christians and may fulfill God's will for you."* Col. 4:12b (Ph)

"We are not meant to remain as children ... but to grow up in every way into Christ..." Eph. 4:14-15 (Ph)

THE FOCUS OF THIS CLASS:

We will focus on the **Four Basic Habits** every Christian needs to develop in order to grow to spiritual maturity. This class will ...

- Equip you with the **skills** you need to begin these habits
- Explain the **tools** you need to continue these habits.

In order for a seed to grow “all by itself” the seed must be _____ and _____. You will not mature spiritually unless you are being fed the spiritual nutrients essential for growth!

Session I

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY?

...in the unity of common faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity - the measure of development which is meant by “The Fullness of Christ.” Eph. 4:13 (PH)

SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS _____.

“For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him...should become like his son...”

FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

IT'S NOT _____

“You have been Christians for a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead...you need someone to teach you...When a person is still

living on milk, it shows he isn't very far along in the Christian life...He's still a baby Christian!" Heb. 5:12-13 (LB)

IT IS A _____

"Learn to be more mature." Prov. 8:5 (GN)

"Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our savior, Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18 (GN)

There are no shortcuts!

IT TAKES _____

"Take the time and the trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit." I Tim 4:7b (PH)

"Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." (NASB)

UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLESHIP

Mature believers are called _____.

I cannot be a disciple without being _____.

The more disciplined I become, _____.

The mark of a disciple is _____.

(Jesus) "Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:27

How often am I to do this? _____.

(Jesus) "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23

What is involved in "cross bearing"?

_____ to give Christ first place in my life!

FOUR HABITS OF A DISCIPLE

HOW CAN I BECOME A DISCIPLE? **Develop**_____.

"...You have put off the old self with its HABITS, and have put on the new self...which God is continually renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself." Col. 3:9-10

1. TIME WITH GOD'S WORD

"If you continue in my Word, then you are my disciples indeed. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

2. PRAYER

"If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it...in this way you become my disciples." John 15:7-8 (GN)

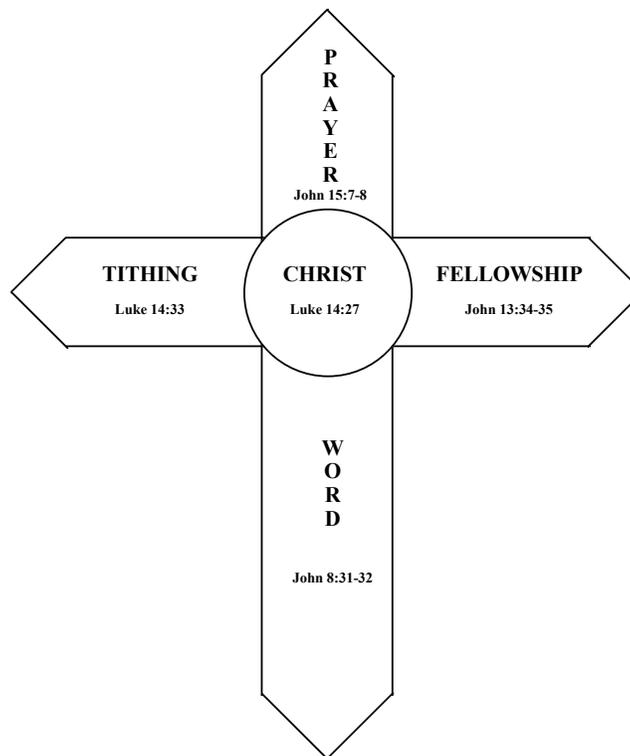
3. TITHING

"None of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions." Luke 14:33 (JB)

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God first in your lives." Deut. 14:23 (LB)

4. FELLOWSHIP

"...Love each other just as much as I love you. Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:34-35 (LB)



DEFINITIONS OF "HABIT": (Webster's II Dictionary)

"A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity, acquired through frequent repetition."

“An established disposition of the character.”

"Sow a thought, reap an act.

Sow an act, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny."

CLASS OUTLINE

SESSION ONE:

- **Introduction: Spiritual Maturity and Habits**
- **How to Get A “Grasp” On Your Bible**
- **The Habit of A Daily Time With God**

SESSION TWO:

- **The Habit of Prayer: Talking with God**
- **The Habit of Tithing: Giving Back to God**
- **The Habit of Fellowship: Enjoying God's Family**
- **How To Start And Maintain Good Habit**

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

That I will _____ to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.

**"In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice and ... the purposes of evil. So now give yourselves to the service of righteousness - for the purpose of becoming truly good."
Rom.6:19 (Ph)**

Developing a Consistent time in God's Word

If we are to develop a consistent time in God's word we must first understand, what the Word is and what it does in our lives.

The Bible is the Christian's resource book, his manual for living, the light to his path, and the index for faith and practice. The Bible is God's Word—His special revelation by which man is to cleanse and direct his way. As God's revelation to man, it teaches man things he absolutely cannot learn about life and death apart from this very special revelation as Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, Psalm 119:9-11.

Because of what it is and does, the Bible is the most important book of the Christian's life. Note the following sampling of verses:

Hebrews 4:12 (NASB95)

¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB95)

¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2 Timothy 3:17 (NASB95)

¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NASB95)

¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

2 Peter 1:20 (NASB95)

²⁰ But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,

2 Peter 1:21 (NASB95)

²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Acts 17:11 (NASB95)

¹¹ Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they

received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so.

Ezra 7:10 (NASB95)

¹⁰ For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice *it*, and to teach *His* statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Psalms 1:2 (NASB95)

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Psalms 1:3 (NASB95)

³ He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

1 Timothy 1:5 (NASB95)

⁵ But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Revelation 1:3 (NASB95)

³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Psalms 12:6 (NASB95)

⁶ The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.

Deuteronomy 6:6 (NASB95)

⁶ "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

Deuteronomy 6:7 (NASB95)

⁷ "You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

Deuteronomy 6:8 (NASB95)

⁸ "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.

Deuteronomy 6:9 (NASB95)

⁹ "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. truth.

HOW TO GET A “GRASP” ON YOUR BIBLE

"The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone." 2 Tim 3:16-17 (LB)

SIX WAYS TO GET A “GRASP” ON YOUR BIBLE

The Hand Illustration

On this page trace an outline of your own hand!

I. HOW TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

"Faith comes from hearing the Word of God." Rom. 10:17

Ways to Hear God's Word

- The Bible on tape
- Church services & studies
- Sermon tapes
- Radio/TV teachers

PROBLEM: We forget _____ % of what we hear after 72 hours.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR HEARING

1. Be ready and eager to hear God.

(Jesus) "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Luke 8:8

"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"
Psalm 119:103

2. Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God (Luke 8:4-15)

"Consider carefully how you listen ..." Luke 8:18

- A Closed Mind: Is fear, pride or bitterness preventing me from hearing God?
- A Superficial Mind: Am I really serious about wanting to hear God speak?
- A Preoccupied Mind: Am I too busy and concerned with other things to concentrate on what God has to say?

3. Confess any sin in your life.

"... Get rid of all moral filth and humbly accept the Word..." James 1:21

4. Take notes on what you hear. Keep a Spiritual Notebook

"We must pay more careful attention to what we've heard, so that we do not drift away!" Heb. 2:1

5. Act on what you hear!

"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says!"
James 1:22, James 1:25

II. HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

"Happy is the one who reads this book ... and obeys what is written in it!" Rev. 1:3 (GN)

How often should I read God's Word? _____

"(The Scriptures) shall be his constant companion. He must read from it everyday of his life so that he will learn to respect the Lord his God by obeying all of his commands." Deut. 17:19 (LB)

SUGGESTIONS

Read it systematically.

Bible without notes.

Read it in different translations.

For reading: NLT, Living Bible, Message Bible

Read it aloud quietly to yourself.

Underline or color code key verses.

Choose a reading plan and stick with it.

If I read approximately _____ minutes a day, I can read through the Bible once a year.

A BIBLE READING PLAN

THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 30 DAYS

1. Matthew 1-9
2. Matthew 10-15
3. Matthew 16-22
4. Matthew 23-28
5. Mark 1-8
6. Mark 9-16
7. Luke 1-6

8. Luke 7-11
9. Luke 12-18
10. Luke 19-24
11. John 1-7
12. John 8-13
13. John 14-22
14. Acts 1-7
15. Acts 8-14
16. Acts 15-21
17. Acts 22-28
18. Romans 1-8
19. Romans 9-16
20. 1 Corinthians 1-9
21. 1 Corinthians 10-16
22. 2 Corinthians 1-13
23. Galatians - Ephesians
24. Philippians - 2 Thessalonians
25. 1 Timothy - Philemon
26. Hebrews
27. James - 2 Peter
28. 1 John - 3 John
29. Revelation 1-11
30. Revelation 12-22

III. HOW TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

"... they accepted the message eagerly and studied the Scriptures everyday ..."
Acts 17:11 (Ph)

"Be a good workman ... Know what His Word says and means." 2 Tim. 2:15

The difference between reading and studying the Bible is that you
_____ when you study.

The secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to
_____.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR BIBLE STUDY

Study Bibles:

- The Best Personal Study Bible:
"The Life Application Bible" (Tyndale)
- The Best Topical Study Bible:
"Thompson Chain Reference Bible - NIV (Kirkbride)
- The Best Background Study Bible:
"The NIV Study Bible" (Zondervan)
- The Best Doctrine Study Bible:
"The Disciples Study Bible" (Holman)

Bible Handbooks:

- "Richard's Complete Handbook" (Word)
- "Haley's Bible Handbook" (Zondervan)
- "Eerdman's Bible Handbook" (Eerdmans)

Other Important Study Tools:

As many different translations as you can afford

(These can be purchased in parallel editions)

A complete concordance to match your translation

A Bible on computer program such a "WordSearch" or "PCBible"

- "The New Bible Dictionary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible" (Baker)
- "The New Bible Commentary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands" (Moody)

IV. HOW TO MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

"Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart." Pr. 7:2-3 (LB)

BENEFITS OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

1. It helps me resist temptation.

"I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Ps. 119:11

2. It helps me make wise decisions.

"Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." Ps. 119:105

3. It strengthens me when I'm under stress.

"... Your promises to me are my hope. They give me strength in all my troubles; how they refresh and revive me!" Ps. 119:49 (LB)

4. It comforts me when I'm sad.

"Your words are what sustain me ... They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me." Jer. 15:16 (LB)

5. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15

WHEN TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

- During your Quiet Time
- While Exercising
- While waiting (spare moments)
- At bedtime (Ps 63:6)

HOW TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

1. Pick a verse that speaks to you.
2. Say the reference before and after the verse.
3. Read the verse aloud many times. Record it!
4. Break the verse into natural phrases.
5. Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
6. Write down the verse and erase a word one at a time.
7. Write out the verse on a flash card.
8. Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
9. Display your verses in prominent places.
10. Always memorize the verse word perfect.
11. Put the verse to music. Write a song!
12. Get a partner so you can check each other.

Suggested beginning rate: 2 new verses a week.

THREE KEYS TO MEMORIZING: _____,
_____, _____.

We remember what is _____.

“Your teachings are worth more to me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.” Psa 119:72 (NCV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORY COURSE

The following verses suggest a "balance" in Scripture Memory. The verses selected are key verses in understanding the foundations of the Christian Life and Christian Growth. Do not feel tied-down to this suggested list. This is only a tool to lead you in an understanding of the importance of memorizing "key" verses.

Live the New Life:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Christ the Center | II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20 |
| Obedience to Christ | Rom. 12:1; John 14:21 |
| The Word | II Tim. 3:16; Josh. 1:8 |
| Prayer | John 15:7; Phil. 4:6-7 |
| Fellowship | Matt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24 |
| Witnessing | Matt. 4:19; Rom. 1:16 |

Proclaim Christ:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| All Have Sinned | Rom. 3:23; Isa. 53:6 |
| Sin's Penalty | Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27 |
| Christ Paid the Penalty | Rom. 5:8; I Peter 3:18 |
| Salvation Not by Works | Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5 |
| Must Receive Christ | John 1:12; Rev. 3:20 |
| Assurance of Salvation | I John 5:13; John 5:24 |

Rely on God's Resources:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| His Spirit | I Cor. 3:16; I Cor. 2:12 |
| His Strength | Isa. 41:10; Phil. 4:13 |
| His Faithfulness | Lam. 3:22; Num. 23:19 |
| His Peace | Isa. 26:3; I Peter 5:7 |
| His Provision | Rom. 8:32; Phil 4:19 |
| His Help in Temptation | Heb. 2:18; Ps. 119:9, 11 |

Be Christ's Disciple:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Put Christ First | Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:23 |
| Separate from the World | I Jn. 2:15-16; Rom. 12:2 |
| Be Steadfast | I Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:3 |
| Serve Others | Mark 10:45; II Cor. 4:5 |
| Give Generously | Prv. 3:9-10; II Cor. 9:6-7 |
| Develop World Vision | Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20 |

Grow in Christ likeness:

| | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| Love | John 13:34-35; I Jn. 3:18 |
| Humility | Phil. 2:3-4; I Peter 5:5-6 |
| Purity | Eph. 5:3; I Peter 2:11 |
| Honesty | Lev. 19:11; Acts 24:16 |
| Faith | Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:20-21 |
| Good Works | Gal. 6:9-10; Matt. 5:16 |

V. HOW TO MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD

"(Those) who are always meditating on His Laws ... are like trees along a river bank bearing fruit ... they never wither and whatever they do prospers."

Ps. 1:2-3 (LB)

Meditation is _____ about a Bible verse in order to discover how I can apply its truth to my own life.

WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

1. It is the key to becoming like Christ.

" ... Your life is shaped by your thoughts." Pr. 4:23 (GN)

" ... Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Rom. 12:2

"As we ... contemplate the Lord's glory, we are being transformed into His likeness ..." 1 Cor. 3:18

2. It is the key to answered prayer.

"If you live your life in Me, and my words live in your hearts, you can ask for whatever you like, and it will come true for you." John 15:7 (Ph)

3. It is the key to successful living.

" ... Meditate on (the Word) day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Joshua 1:8

SIX WAYS TO MEDITATE ON A VERSE

1. Picture it! Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. Pronounce it! Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. Paraphrase it! Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. Personalize it! Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.

Pray it! Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.

Probe it! Ask the following nine questions:

S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. Questions

Is there any ...

SIN TO CONFESS?

PROMISE TO CLAIM?

ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?

COMMAND TO KEEP?

EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

PRAYER TO PRAY?

ERROR TO AVOID?

TRUTH TO BELIEVE?

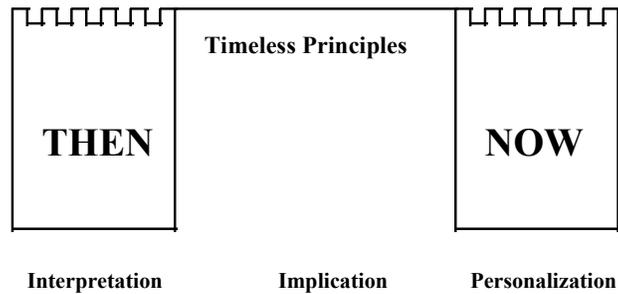
SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?

VI. HOW TO APPLY GOD'S WORD

"Do not fool yourselves by just listening to the Word. Instead, put it into practice."
James 1:22

" ... Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."
Matt. 5:19

The Application Bridge



HOW TO APPLY SCRIPTURE

1st ask: What did it mean to the original hearers?

2nd ask: What is the underlying timeless principle?

3rd ask: Where or how could I practice that principle?

Write out a sentence that describes a project or action you will take to apply the truth.

4 Marks of A Good Application Project

It's

It's

It's

It's

"Now that you know these things - do them! That is the path of blessing!" John 13:17 (LB)

THE HABIT OF A DAILY TIME WITH GOD

"The one who looks steadily at God's perfect law ... and makes that law his HABIT - not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice will be happy in all that he does." James 1:25 (Ph)

HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME

DEFINITION: "A quiet time is a daily time I set aside to be alone with God to get to know Him through the Bible and prayer."

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

Your time alone with God should be the top priority in your schedule for five reasons:

1. We were _____ to have fellowship with God.

"So God created man in his own image ..." Gen. 1:27, 2:7, 3:8 ,Rev. 3:20

2. Jesus _____ to make a relationship to God possible.

"God ... has invited you into this wonderful friendship with his Son, Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. 1:9 (LB)

3. Personal time alone with God was Jesus' _____

Mark 1:35, Luke 22:39, Luke 5:16

"Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."

4. Every person who has been effective in _____ for God developed this habit. Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, etc.

5. You cannot be a _____ Christian without it!

"Man cannot live on bread alone but on every word that God speaks." Matt. 4:4 (GN), Job 23:12 ,Ps. 119:9

II. THE PURPOSE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. TO GIVE _____ TO GOD.

"Give to the Lord the glory due to his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness." Ps. 29:2, 2 Ch. 31:21

God deserves our devotion! (Rev. 4:11)

God desires our devotion! (John 4:23)

2. TO GET _____ FROM GOD.

"Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk. Lead me ..." Ps. 25:4 (LB)

2 Things To Do In A Quiet Time

Consider your way: "Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established." Pr. 4:26 (KJV)

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct your paths." Pr. 3:6 (KJV)

Commit your day: "Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will." Ps. 37:5 (LB)

3. TO GAIN _____ IN GOD.

"Delight yourself in the Lord; and he will give you the desires of your heart." Ps. 37:4 (KJV)

"... (God's) presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure." Ps. 16:11 (GN)

FACT: The better I get to know Christ, the more _____.

The objective of your Quiet Time is not to study about Christ, but to actually spend time with him!

4. TO GROW _____ LIKE GOD.

"Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him. With these gifts you can share in being like God" 2 Pet 1:4 (NCV) , Acts 4:13

HOW TO BEGIN A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. SELECT A SPECIFIC TIME.

The best time to have a quiet time is when I am _____!

Reasons for considering a early morning quiet time:

- The example of Bible character. (Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Job, Hezekiah, David, Daniel, Jesus.)
- It seems logical to begin the day with it.
- " The best time to tune your instrument is before you play the concert, not after!"
- It demonstrates that meeting with God is your first priority. You give him the first part of your day!
- You are likely to be more rested, your mind is less cluttered, and it's often the quietist time!

Whatever time you set, _____.

HOW LONG SHOULD A QUIET TIME BE:

3 Guidelines

Start with 15 minutes and let it grow.

Don't watch the clock!

Emphasize quality, not quantity!

2. CHOOSE A SPECIAL PLACE.

"Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives ... to pray."
Luke 22:39 (GN)

The Important Factor:

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a solitary place, where he prayed." Mark 1:35

3. GATHER THE RESOURCES YOU'LL NEED.

1. A Bible - with readable print.
2. A Notebook - to write down what the Lord speaks to you about, and to keep your prayer list.
3. A Songbook - if you want to sing.

4. BEGIN WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES

"Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10

"Open my eyes to see wonderful things in your Word." Ps. 119:18 (LB)

"The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants"
Mat 6:33 (NCV)

5. FOLLOW A SIMPLE PLAN

"FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH GOD"

(A Plan To Get You Started)

1. _____ (1 Minute)

Be still and quiet! Slow down! Prepare your heart. Take a few deep breaths and wait on God.

2. _____ (4 Minutes)

Begin reading where you left off the day before. Read until you feel God has told you something. Then stop and think about it.

3. _____ (4 Minutes) You may use the S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. or any of the 6 methods of meditation. Think about what the passage means to your life. Write down your thoughts. Part of reflecting is memorizing verses that speak to you in a special way.

4. _____ . (2 Minutes) Write out a personal application statement that is practical, passable, and measurable.

"Thoughts disentangle themselves when they pass through the lips and the fingertips."

5. _____ . (4 Minutes)

Conclude our Quiet Time by talking to God about what He has shown you and making your requests from our prayer list.

III. HOW TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS WITH YOUR QUIET TIME

1. THE PROBLEM OF DISCIPLINE

Your first problem in establishing a quiet time will face you the moment you wake each morning: Am I going to get out of bed? ("The Battle of the Blankets")

Suggestions

1. Go to bed _____.
2. Get up _____.
3. Be aware of quiet time _____.
4. Fall asleep thinking _____.

2. THE PROBLEM OF DISTRACTIONS

Satan will try to use anything to get your mind to wander during a quiet time.

Suggestions

- Get out of _____.
- Get thoroughly _____.
- Read and pray _____.
- _____ during your prayer time.
- Keep a _____.

3. THE PROBLEM OF DRYNESS

Sometimes you will feel like you're not getting anything out of your quiet time. ("The Battle of the Blahs")

Never judge your quiet time by your _____.

Possible Causes of Spiritual Dryness

1. Your physical condition.
2. Disobedience to God.
3. Rushing your quiet time.
4. Getting in a rut.
5. Not sharing insights with others.

4. THE PROBLEM OF DILIGENCE

Your greatest problem will be your struggle to stay consistent. I find Satan fights nothing harder than my quiet time.

Suggestions

1. Make a covenant or vow to God.
2. Schedule it on your daily calendar.
3. Be prepared for Satan's excuses.
4. Leave your Bible open at night to the passage for the next day!

What if I miss a day?

Don't _____.

Don't _____.

Don't _____.

It takes _____ weeks for you to become familiar with a new task. Then it takes another _____ weeks before it becomes a comfortable habit.

"Let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't get discouraged and give up." Gal. 6:9 (LB)

A PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

"Father, I realize that I was created to have fellowship with you. Thank you for making this privilege possible through Jesus' death. I know that daily fellowship with You is to be the most important thing in my life. I now want to commit myself to spending at least some time every day with you in a quiet time of Bible reading and prayer. I'm trusting in your strength to help me be consistent. In Jesus' name, Amen."

THE HABIT OF PRAYER

Talking with God

Romans 12:12 (NASB)
rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to
prayer,

HOW TO REVITALIZE YOUR PRAYER LIFE

I. APPROACH PRAYER WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE.

(Matthew 6:5-8)

•BE _____

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men." (vs. 5)

| |
|--|
| Don't try to _____ Don't try to _____ |
|--|

•BE _____

"But when you pray go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (vs. 6)

•BE _____

"Don't recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only by repeating them again and again. Remember, your Father knows exactly what you need before you ask Him! (vs. 7-8 LB)

II. USE THE MODEL JESUS GAVE US

*Matt. 6:9-15 "This, then, is **HOW** you should pray ..."*

THE SIX PARTS OF PRAYER

1. PRAISE: I BEGIN BY _____

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name .."

TWO KINDS OF PRAISE:

- "ADORATION" - Praising God for *who he is*.
- "THANKSGIVING"- Praising God for *what he has done*.

*"**Enter** into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be **thankful** unto him, and **bless his name**." Ps. 100:4*

HOW TO PRAISE GOD:

1st: As you read your Bible, make a list of God's character qualities that you discover and then review them when you pray. (See *Prayer Guide 1*)

Examples:

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| God is patient | Num. 14:18 |
| God is merciful | Num. 14:18 |
| God is forgiving | Num. 14:18 |
| God knows everything | 1 Sam. 2:2 |
| God is loving | 1 John 4:8 |

KEY: _____ is the basis for our boldness in making requests in prayer. God answers the prayers that acknowledge who he is!

2nd: Remind yourself and affirm the promises God has made that are contained in the meaning of his names. (See *Prayer Guide 2*)

3rd: Make a list of all that you are thankful for and review them when you pray. (See *Prayer Guide 3*)

2. PURPOSE: I COMMIT MYSELF _____

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven ..."

Pray for God's will to be done ... in my family ... my church ... my ministry ... my job ... my future ... my city ... the nation ... the world.

"Offer yourself as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his Service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer." Rom. 12:2 (GN)

3. PROVISION: I ASK GOD TO _____

*"Give us today our **daily** bread ..."*

What needs can I pray about? _____

*"God will supply **all** your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us." Phil. 4:19 (LB)*

"Since God did not spare even his own Son for us but gave him up for us, won't he also surely give us everything else?" Rom. 8:32

"You do not have ... because you don't ask God!" James 4:2

THE KEY: _____

Write down your requests, with a promise you are claiming from the Bible, and expect an answer!

(See *Prayer Guide 4*)

"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, by pray and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Phil. 4:6

4. PARDON: I ASK GOD TO _____

"Forgive us our debts ..."

4 Steps to Forgiveness

1. Ask the Holy Spirit _____ every sin

"Examine me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me".
Ps. 139:23-24

2. Confess each sin _____.

"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you." Prov. 28:13 (GN)

3. Make _____ to others when necessary.

"When you remember your brother has something against you ... go at once to make peace with him, then come back and offer your gift to God. Matt. 5:23-24 (GN)

4. By Faith, _____ God's Forgiveness.

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness."
1 John 1:9*

5. PEOPLE: I PRAY FOR _____

"... as we have also forgive our debtors."

*"Pray much for others; plead for God's mercy upon them; give thanks for all he is going to do for them."
1 Tim. 2:1 (LB)*

If you want to know how to pray for others ...

Eph. 1:15-19, Col. 1:3-12, 1 Th. 1:2-3, 2 Th. 1:11-12

Make a prayer list of people you want to pray for. You might pray for different people on different days of the week. (See *Prayer Guide #5*)

6. PROTECTION: I ASK FOR _____

*"And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."
(vs. 13)*

Believers face a spiritual battle everyday. Satan wants to defeat you through temptation and fear. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face every situation during the day.

*"The Spirit who is in you is more powerful than the spirit who is in those who belong to the world."
1 John 4:4 (GN)*

PRAYER GUIDE 1

CHARACTER TRAITS OF GOD

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| Faithful | II Cor. 1:20 |
| Righteous | II Tim. 4:8 |
| The Light | John 8:12 |

PRAYER GUIDE 2 THE NAMES OF GOD

Did you know that God has several names? They are all in the Bible and each name describes a facet of his character. You can take each of these 8 names and focus individually on what God is really like! Pray the names of God as affirmations of praise!

8 HEBREW NAMES OF GOD - DECLARE WHO GOD IS

Jehovah-Shammah-" God is Present with me" (Ezekial 48:35)
You are here! I am never alone!

Jehovah-Rohi-" God is my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)
You lead me and feed me and protect me!

Jehovah-Jireh- " God is my Provider" (Gen. 22:14)
You see what I need before I even ask!

Jehovah-Rophe- " God is my Healer" (Exodus 15:26)
You can heal my body, emotions, and relationships!

Jehovah-Tsidkenu-" God is my Righteousness" (Jer. 23:6)
You accept me and forgive me because of Jesus!

Jehovah-M'Kiddish-" God is my Sanctification" (Lev. 20:8)
You make me holy and like Jesus!

Jehovah-Shalom-" God is my Peace" (Judges 6:24)
You give me peace in spite of circumstances!

Jehovah-Nissi-" God is my Banner" (Exodus 17:15)
You are my victory in conflict and confrontation!

Think on the implications of these names and you'll have plenty to praise God for!

PRAYER GUIDE 5
PEOPLE I'M PRAYING FOR

Family _____

Christian Friends _____

Friends I'd like to see become Christians _____

Spiritual
Leaders _____

Government Leaders _____

Others _____

THE HABIT OF TITHING

Honoring God With My Giving

1 Corinthians 16:2 (NASB)

On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

HOW MY GIVING REVEALS MY SPIRITUAL MATURITY

*"Just as you excel in everything else... in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness... see that you also **excel in the grace of giving.**"* 2 Cor. 8:7

WHY GOD WANTS ME TO GIVE 7 Benefits to My Life

1. GIVING MAKES ME _____

*God so **loved** the world that **He gave** his only Son ..."* John 3:16

2. GIVING DRAWS ME _____

"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Matt.6:21

3. GIVING IS THE ANTIDOTE TO _____

*"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to **be generous and willing to share.** In this way they may take hold of the life that is truly Life!"* 1Tim. 6:17-19

4. GIVING STRENGTHENS _____

*"**Trust in the Lord** with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Honor the Lord **by giving him the first part of your income,** and he will fill your barns to overflowing." Prov.3:5,9*

"Give and it will be given to you ... For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38

5. GIVING IS AN INVESTMENT _____

"... Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity. 1 Tim 6:18-19 (LB)

6. GIVING BLESSES ME _____

"A generous man himself will be blessed." Prov. 22:9

*"**A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.**" Prov.11:25*

"Good will come to him who is generous ..." Ps. 112:5

7. GIVING _____

(Jesus) "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." Acts 20:35

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT TITHING

WHAT IS TITHING?

"Tithe" means "a _____ part"

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A "TITHE" AND AN "OFFERING"?

- A "tithe" is giving _____ of my income.
- An "offering" is anything I give _____ my tithe.

WHY SHOULD I TITHE? 8 REASONS FROM GOD'S WORD

1. Because God _____.

"A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy." Lev. 27:30

2. Because Jesus _____.

"Yes, you should tithe, and you shouldn't leave the more important things undone either." Matt. 23:23

3. Tithing demonstrates that God has _____.

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God in first place in your life." Deut. 14:23 (LB)

4. Tithing reminds me that _____ was given to me by God!

"Always remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce wealth." Deut. 8:18

5. Tithing expresses my _____.

"How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" Ps. 116:12

"Each of you should bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you." Deut. 16:17

6. God says that refusing to tithe is _____ from Him!

*"God says 'Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!' But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' God says 'In tithes and offerings ... Bring your **whole** tithe to My house.'" Mal. 3:8-10*

7. Tithing gives God a chance to prove _____ and wants to bless you!

*"Bring your whole tithe to My storehouse. **Test me in this**" says the Lord, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out **so much blessing** that you won't have room enough for it! I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will be protected from plagues." Mal. 3:10*

8. Tithing proves that I _____.

(Jesus) *"If you really love me, do what I command."* John 14:15

"... I want you to be leaders also in the spirit of cheerful giving ... This is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond mere words." 2 Cor. 8:7b - 8 (LB)

WHAT SHOULD I TITHE?

The _____ part of what I earn, not the _____

*"Honor the Lord by giving him the **first part** of all your income."* Prov. 3:9-10

WHERE SHOULD I GIVE MY TITHE?

WHERE I _____

"Bring your **whole** tithe to My Storehouse (Temple) ..." Mal. 3:10

WHEN SHOULD I TITHE? _____

"On the first day of every week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." 1 Cor. 16:2 (LB)

How To Remember

- Keep a Ledger Book - Acct. #1: My Tithe
- Use weekly envelopes
- Teach your children to tithe

GIVING WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES

•GIVE _____.

"For if the willingness is there, your gift is acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have." 2Cor.9:12

"Each one should give **what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under pressure ..." 1 Cor. 9:7a

•GIVE _____.

"... for God loves a cheerful giver!" 2 Cor. 9:7

•GIVE _____.

"They gave as much as they were able, and even **beyond their ability**. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service ..." 2 Cor. 8:3-4

•GIVE _____.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and whoever sows generously will reap generously." 2 Cor. 9:6

THE KEY TO GIVING

"...THEY FIRST GAVE THEMSELVES TO THE LORD ..." 2 Cor. 8:5

A COMMITMENT PRAYER

"Father, I know you love me and want what's best for me. I recognize that all I have, or will ever have, comes from you. I am more interested in pleasing you than in having more possessions. I want you to have first place in my life and I am willing to begin tithing as you have commanded. Out of gratitude for all you've done for me, and in expectation that you will continue to provide for me, I commit myself to returning at least the first 10% of all I earn back to you. I want to begin investing for eternity. Help me to remain faithful to this commitment. In Jesus' name, Amen."

THE HABIT OF FELLOWSHIP

Participating in God's Family

Hebrews 10:25 (NASB)

WHY IS FELLOWSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

1. I _____ IN GOD'S FAMILY WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.

*"Let us do good to all people, especially to those who **belong to the family of believers.**" Gal. 6:10*

"The Christian who is not committed to a group of other believers for praying, sharing, and serving, so that he is known, as he knows others, is not an obedient Christian. He is not in the will of God. However vocal he may be in his theology, he is not obeying the Lord." Dr.RayOrtland

*"You are a member of God's very own family ... and **you belong** in God's household with every other Christian." Eph. 2:19 (LB)*

*"So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member **belongs** to all the others!" Rom. 12:5*

2. I NEED _____ TO GROW SPIRITUALLY.

"Let us think of one another and how we can encourage each other to love and do good deeds." Heb. 10:24 (Ph)

"Two are better off than one ... If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it's just too bad, because there is no one to help him ... Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break." Eccl. 4:9-10,12 (GN)

3. I NEED _____ TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

"People learn from one another just as iron sharpens iron." Pr. 27:17 (GN)

"Every day ... keep encouraging one another so that none of you is hardened by the glamour of sin." Heb. 3:13 (JB)

*"Brothers, if someone is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should **restore** him gently ... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:1-2*

4. CHRIST IS _____ WHEN WE FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER.

"For wherever two or three have come together in my name, I am there, right among them!" Matt 18:20 (GN)

5. THERE IS _____ WHEN PEOPLE PRAY TOGETHER.

"Whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." Matt. 18:19 (GN)

6. FELLOWSHIP IS A _____ TO THE WORLD.

(Jesus) "My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind .. so the world will believe you sent me." John 17:21(LB)

7. I AM _____ TO EVERY OTHER CHRISTIAN

"God has given you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other ..." 1 Peter 4:10 (LB)

*There are different kinds of service to God ... together you form the body of Christ and each one of you is a **necessary part of it.**" 1 Cor. 12:5, 27 (LB)*

The "One Anothers" of Fellowship

(Partial List)

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Serve one another | Gal. 5:13 |
| Accept one another | Rom 15:7 |
| Forgive one another | Col. 3:13 |
| Greet one another | Rom. 16:16 |
| Bear one another's burdens | Gal. 6:2 |
| Be devoted to one another | Rom. 12:10 |
| Honor one another | Rom. 12:10 |
| Teach one another | Rom 15:14 |
| Submit to one another | Eph. 5:21 |
| Encourage one another | 1 Thess. 5:11 |

HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN GOOD HABITS

HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN GOOD HABITS

STEP ONE: _____

You must start with a strong desire. You must be internally motivated. External motivations don't last. If you start only half-heartedly, you will never make it to the success point.

STEP TWO: _____

Begin right now! Don't wait. Don't procrastinate. You don't slide into a new habit. "One of these days" never arrives. You must have a starting point. It's easier to break a bad habit today than it will be tomorrow!

"If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done." Eccl. 11:4 (LB)

STEP THREE: _____

Announce your intentions publicly. Make a covenant or resolution. The power of a vow is awesome. It is particularly powerful if you put your commitment in writing.

"Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them." Ps. 76:11

STEP FOUR: _____

Never allow an exception until the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Each lapse will be fatal. A single slip unwinds many turns at first. Continuity and success at the start is essential. Never be swayed by "just this once". The act of yielding weakens the will and reinforces your lack of self-control. It takes 3 weeks to become comfortable with a new habit and it takes another 3 to 4 weeks (doing it daily) for it to become a part of your life.

IT TAKES _____ TO _____ REPETITIONS TO LEARN SOMETHING!

STEP FIVE: _____

Whenever you feel the slightest urge or prompting to practice this new habit - DO IT THEN! Don't wait. Seize every opportunity to reinforce your habit. Those feelings will not last, so whenever you feel inclined to perform your new habit, do so!

STEP SIX: _____

Get a partner who will support you and encourage you. Find someone who is willing to hold you accountable and check up on you especially in the early days before the habit is firmly rooted in your life.

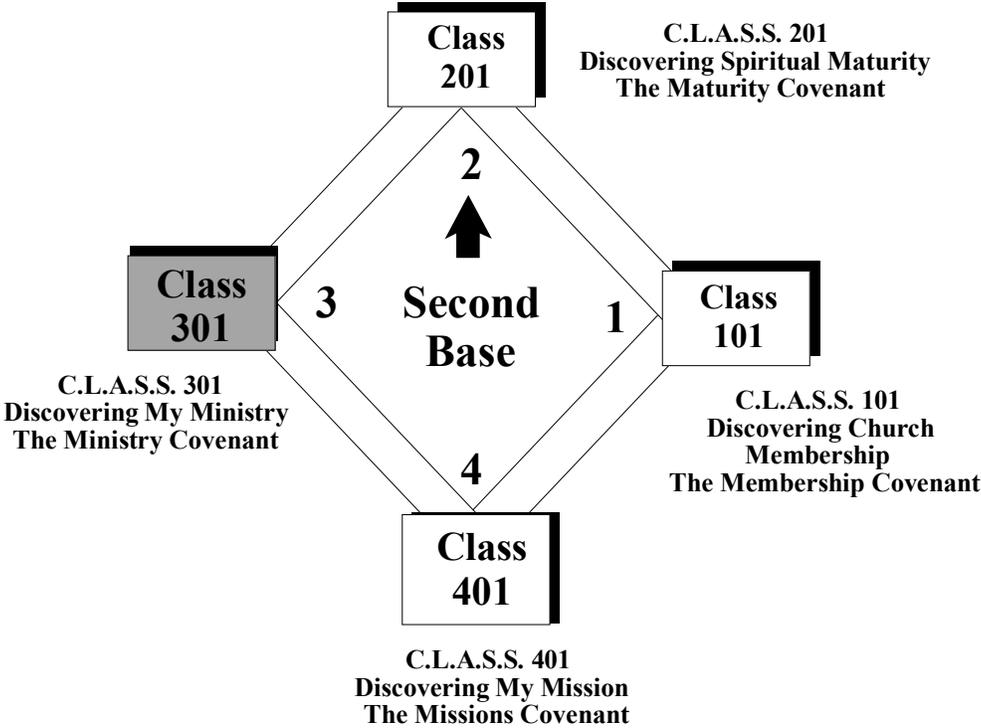
"Let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over each other, studying how we may stir up and stimulate each other to ... helpful deeds and noble activities." Heb. 1:25 (Amp)

"Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up." Eccl. 4:9-10 (GN)

STEP SEVEN: _____

Rely on God's power to help you establish the habit. Remember, Satan does not want you to develop habits that help you grow spiritually and make you like Christ so he will do all he can to tempt you, cause you to slip, or discourage you. Pray! 2 Tim. 1:7 (GN), Phil. 2:13 (Ph)

WHAT NOW?



**LIFE IN THE VISION
CONNECTION PATHWAY CLASS 201 EVALUATION**

Please answer the questions as best that you can. There is no right or wrong answer; your input is simply evaluated as to how we can improve the Connection Class 201 course.

1. Which subject/teaching was the most meaningful/helpful to you? Which was least meaningful/helpful?

2. If someone were to ask you what is the process for growing as a Christian how would describe the process?

3. Here is the list of the goals we had for the course; please evaluate the degree to which you feel the goal was accomplished with 1 = "goal poorly accomplished" and 10 = "goal highly accomplished".

A. To know and understand spiritual maturity

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

B. To know and understand how to meditate on God's Word

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

C. To become familiar with the habits of a growing Christian

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

D. To become familiar with the habit of tithing and fellowship

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

E. Did the teacher provide you with the tools you needed to accomplish these goals?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

F. Was you teacher helpful and presented the information clearly ?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10