

WELCOME TO C.L.A.S.S. 201

DISCOVERING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

We're glad you made this big decision to take this class. This class is the second of New Hope's four basic classes. Since these classes build on each other, you must first attend Discovering Church Membership, CLASS 101, before taking this class.

THE PURPOSE FOR 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 Christ ..." Eph. 4:14-15 (Ph)

THE FOCUS OF THIS CLASS:

During this class we will focus on five basic habits Christians need to develop in their movement towards spiritual maturity. This class will help you better understand and develop these five habits:

Time with God
Bible
Prayer
Tithing
Fellowship

WHAT IS "SPIRITUAL MATURITY?"

"... In the unity of our 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)

"For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him ... should become like his Son ... " Rom. 8:29 (LB)

Based on these two verses, we might define spiritual maturity as:

BEING LIKE CHRIST

FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1. SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS 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)

Growth does not happen _____.

2. SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS A _____.

"Learn to be 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 _____.

3. SPIRITUAL MATURITY TAKES _____.

*"Take **the time and the trouble** to keep yourself spiritually fit."* 1 Tim. 4:7b (Ph)

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

Discipline is _____.

Sounds serious doesn't it? Well, growing in your relationship with God is serious. The Bible tells us about twelve men who took Jesus and their relationship with God very serious. These men were called disciples. Today, we continue to use the word "disciple" to describe someone who follows Jesus with intensity and commitment.

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

1. Mature believers are called _____.
2. I cannot be a disciple without being _____.
3. The more disciplined I become the more _____.
4. The mark of a disciple is _____.

FOUR HABITS OF A DISCIPLE

HOW CAN I BECOME A DISCIPLE? BY DEVELOPING _____ "DISCIPLE-LIKE" HABITS.

"If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new! 2 Cor. 5:17 (NCV)

*"... 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*

These types of habits are formed by:

- prayer
- repetition
- accountability

1. A DISCIPLE SPENDS TIME IN GOD'S _____

*"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*

Simply put: _____.

2. A DISCIPLE SPENDS TIME IN _____.

*"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 14:7-8 (GN)*

Simply put: _____.

3. A DISCIPLE SPENDS TIME IN _____.

*"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)*

Simply put: _____.

4. A DISCIPLE _____.

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

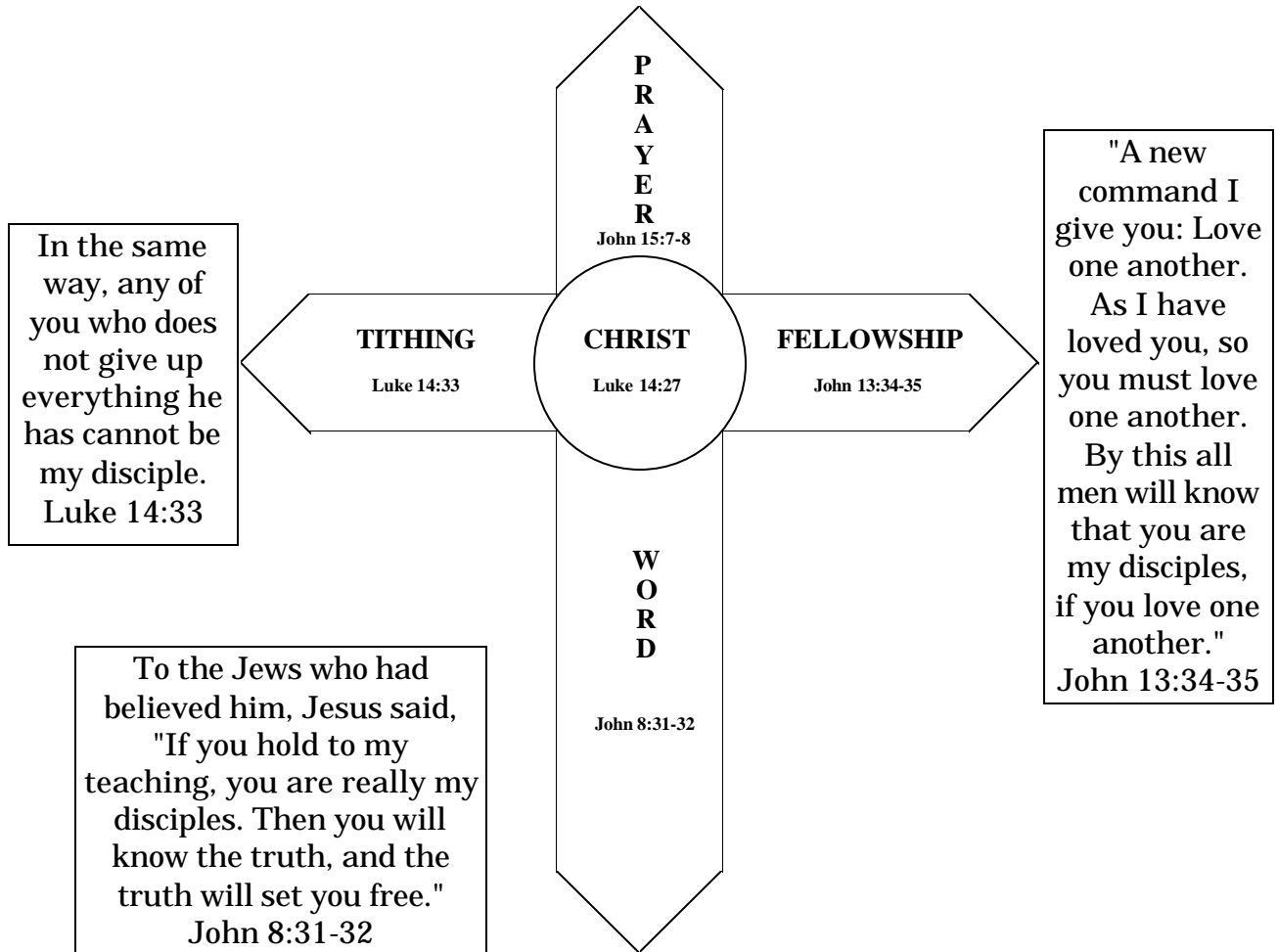
*"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always **put God first** in your lives." Deut. 14:23 (LB)*

Simply put: _____.

THE DISCIPLE'S CROSS

Try to remember these disciplines by this image.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. John 15:7-8



WHAT'S AHEAD?

In order for us to implement these habits, we need to study them, dialogue them, and then put together a plan for how they might happen in our lives. We want you to learn how to feed yourself for a life time.

1. The Habit of A Daily Time With God
2. The Habit of Reading God's Word
3. The Habit of Prayer: Talking with God
4. The Habit of Tithing: Giving Back to God
5. The Habit of Fellowship: Enjoying God's Family
6. How To Start And Maintain Good Habits

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

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

"In the past you offered the parts of your body to be slaves to sin and evil; you lived only for evil. In the same way now you must give yourselves to be slaves of goodness. Then you will live only for God." Rom. 6:19 (NCV)

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 better.

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

"Look! I've been standing at the door and constantly knocking. If anyone ... opens the door, I will come in and fellowship with him and he with Me." Rev. 3:20 (LB)

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' _____.

*"Jesus **often** withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Mark 1:35; Luke 22:39; Luke 5:16*

4. Every person who has been effective in _____ for God, developed the habit of spending time with God.

[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)

"... I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12 (NASB)

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By keeping to Your Word." Psalm 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

"(Hezekiah) was successful, because everything he did ... he did in **a spirit of complete devotion** to his God." 2 Ch. 31:21 (GN)

- 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

1. Commit your day:

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

2. 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)

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.

"For as you know him better and better God will give you, through His great power, everything you need for living a truly good life ... He has promised to save us ... and to give us **his own character!**"
2 Peter 1:3-4 (LB)

"When the council saw the boldness of Peter and John ... they were amazed and realized **what being with Jesus had done for them!**"
Acts 4:13 (LB)

III. THE PLAN FOR A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. SELECT A TIME THAT CAN BECOME A _____ .

Circle one that seems most likely for you:

- Before school
- During school
- After school
- Before bed

Now try to find a specific time for the time-block you circled.

?????? A Great Question ?????? HOW LONG SHOULD A QUIET TIME BE?

1. Start with a few minutes and allow your time to grow.
2. Don't keep track of your time (don't watch the clock!).
3. Emphasize quality, not quantity!
4. Remember, any time with God is better than no time.

2. CHOOSE A _____ PLACE.

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

*"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*

Two important ingredients are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. GATHER THE _____ YOU'LL NEED.

1. A Bible with an understandable translation.
2. A Notebook - to write down what the Lord speaks to you about, and to keep a prayer list.

4. BEGIN WITH THE RIGHT _____ .

• _____ **Key word:** _____

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

• _____ **Key word:** _____

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

• _____ **Key word:** _____

*"Whoever is **willing** to do what God wants will know ... "
John 7:17 (GN)*

5. FOLLOW A PLAN YOU _____ .

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 on the cross. 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 BIBLE READING

Exploring God's Love-Letter

*"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)*

Even though we titled this section “the habit of Bible reading”, there’s more to it than just reading the Bible. Lots of people read the Bible; you’ll find that people that don’t believe in God read the Bible for great literature. Even Satan knows the scriptures. In this section we want to help you understand God’s Word and the disciplines needed to apply God’s love-letter to us.

SIX WAYS TO GET A GRASP ON YOUR BIBLE

The Hand Illustration

On this page trace an outline of your own hand!

- 1. Hear**
- 2. Read**
- 3. Study**
- 4. Memorize**
- 5. Meditate**
- 6. Apply**

It’s much easier to hold onto when all are being used.

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 _____ to hear God.

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

"... *Be quick to listen ...*" James 1:19

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

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

3. Confess any _____ in your life.

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

4. Take _____ on what you hear.

"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 _____ !

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

"Whoever ... does not simply listen and then forget, **but puts it into practice**, that person will be blessed in what he does." James 1:25(GN)

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)

"(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." Duet. 17:19(LB)

Based on the passages above, how often should I read God's Word? _____.

SUGGESTIONS FOR READING THE BIBLE

- Start in the Gospel of John (pick up our pamphlet on "How to read your Bible).
- Read the Bible in an understandable translation.
- Read it in different translations.
- For easier reading: Good News, Living Bible, Phillips, New Century Version, The Message
- Read it aloud to yourself.
- Underline key verses.
- Try the One Minute Bible reading plan.
- Be realistic with your reading goals. (Better to be victorious in small amounts and continue, than to be defeated and give up)
- Write down what you're learning and any questions you might have.

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.

And the secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to _____.

Six Basic Questions:

1. WHO are the people involved with this passage?
2. WHAT are the events which take place?
3. WHERE is this passage located within the Bible? (Context:surrounding passages)
4. WHY did God put this in the Bible for me to read?
5. WHEN (in history) did this passage take place?
6. HOW did God work in this passage?

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. Knowing God's word helps me _____ temptation.

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

2. Knowing God's word helps me make _____ decisions.

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

3. Knowing God's word strengthens me when I'm under _____.

"... 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. Knowing God's word _____ 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. Knowing God's word helps me _____ 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. Read the verse aloud many times. (You might even record it on tape!)
3. Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
4. Write out the verse on a flash card.
5. Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
6. Display your verses in prominent places.
7. Find a partner who you can have help you.

Suggested beginning rate: _____ new verses a month.

THREE KEYS TO MEMORIZING: _____, _____,
_____.

We remember what is _____.

*"The law you gave me **means more to me** than all the money in the world." Ps. 119:72 (GN)*

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	Prov. 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 it's truth to my own life.

WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

1. It is the key to _____ 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 _____ 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 _____.

"... 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

FIVE 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.
- 5. Pray it!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.

IV. 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

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.

Most applications will focus on one of 3 _____:

With God

Within myself

With other people

*"Now that you know these things, **do them!***

That is the path of blessing!"

John 13:17 (LB)

THE HABIT OF PRAYER
Talking with God

"Base your happiness on your hope in Christ. When trials come, endure them patiently; steadfastly maintain THE HABIT OF PRAYER." Rom. 12:12 (Ph)

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 pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men." (vs. 5)

- Don't try to impress _____.
- Don't try to impress _____.

· **GET** _____.

"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 A.C.T. U.P. MODEL

A ADORATION Key word: _____

C CONFESSION Key word: _____

T THANKSGIVING Key word: _____

U UPLIFTING Key word: _____

P PRAYER REQUEST Key word: _____

Adoration ... "I praise you God because ... "

Give thanks to the Lord and pray to Him. Tell the nations what He has done. Sing to Him. Sing praises to Him. Tell about all the wonderful things He has done. Be glad that you are His." 1 Chronicles 16:8-9

Confession ... "I ask for forgiveness for ... "

"But if we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins. We can trust God. He does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrongs we have done." 1 John 1:9

Thanksgiving ... "I'm thankful for ..."

"Oh, how grateful and thankful I am to the Lord because He is so good." Psalm 7:17

Uplifting ... "Today I'm going to encourage ..."

"But encourage each other every day. Do this while it is 'today'." Hebrews 3:13

Prayer Request ... "I ask you for ... "

"Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it." Phil. 4:6-7

Now, cover up the top part of this page and write out the A.C.T.U.P. words:

THE HABIT OF TITHING

Honoring God With My Giving

*"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

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*

KEY BIBLE WORDS

- Believe: used _____ times in the Bible
- Pray: used _____ times in the Bible
- Love: used _____ times in the Bible
- Give: used _____ times in the Bible

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 REMEDY 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!" 1 Tim. 6:17-19*

4. GIVING STRENGTHENS MY _____.
*"**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. 3:9*

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

"The people **rejoiced** ... for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord." Prov. 11:25

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT GIVING

Another word used for giving is _____.

WHAT IS TITHING ?

"Tithe" means "a _____ part."

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 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*

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)

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." 2 Cor. 9:12

*"Each one should give **what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under pressure ..." 2 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

*"Let us not give up **the habit of meeting together**, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage each other."*

Heb. 10:25 (GN)

WHY IS FELLOWSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

1. _____ 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*

*"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*

"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. Ray Ortland

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 reach out and 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. 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)

"By your love for one another, people will know that you are My followers."
John 13:35

5. I AM AN _____ PART OF OTHER CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH!

"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)

6. IT IS _____!

"Yea, that's exactly what I said, fellowship IS fun." Andy Brazelton, 1998

The "One Another's" of Fellowship

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 CAN A LARGE CHURCH MAINTAIN CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS?

BY BEING IN SOME TYPE OF _____.

"(They met) day after day, in the **Temple courts** and from **house to house.**"
Acts 5:42

2 Types of Church Meetings

- Large Group: **SUNDAY MORNING**
- Small Group: **MIDWEEK**

"Greet the church that meets in their home." Rom. 16:5; Acts 2:26, 8:3, 16:40, 20:20; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15

Within our New Hope Ministry we believe that we must... grow _____ and _____ at the same time. (101 review, remember?)

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS?

Acts 2:42-47

1. _____
"They **DEVOTED THEMSELVES** to the apostle's teaching ..."

2. _____
"... and to the fellowship ..."

3. _____
"... and to the breaking of bread ..."

4. _____
"... and to prayer ..."

"OUR FATHER ... give US ... OUR daily bread ... forgive US ... OUR ...
debts ... as WE have forgiven OUR debtors ... lead US not into temptation
... deliver US ... " Matt 6:9-13

5. _____
"... they gave to anyone as he had a need ..."

"... you shared with me the **fellowship** of giving and receiving."
Phil. 4:15 (Ph)

6. _____
"... they ate together with glad and sincere hearts ..."

"Get into **the habit** of inviting guests home for dinner, or if they need
lodging, for the night." Rom. 12:13 (LB)

7. _____
"... praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people ..."

8. _____
"And the Lord added to their number **daily** those who were being saved."

***HOW TO START
AND MAINTAIN
THESE HABITS***

HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN THESE 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. The power of a vow is awesome. It is particularly powerful if you put your commitment in writing and tell others about it.

"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. Continuity, at the start, is essential of a habit. Don't allow yourself the "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 the 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. Get a S.A.G. F.I.V.E. partner today before you leave.

"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. Therefore, satan will do all he can to tempt you, cause you to slip, or discourage you. Pray!

*"For the Spirit of God has given us ... power, love, and **self-control**." 2 Tim. 1:7 (GN)*

*"For it is God who is at work within you, giving you **the will and the power** to achieve his purpose." Phil. 2:13 (Ph)*