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# Introduction

*Running to Win* is a four-part series to help you become more like Jesus. The books are *Starting Fast*, *Clearing Hurdles*, *Stretching Your Stride*, and *Handing Off*. You'll reap the greatest spiritual harvest if you study them in that order.

Throughout the series you'll be reading the New Testament, beginning with Matthew. A devotional journal is located in Appendix A of *Starting Fast*. Journaling helps you obtain maximum benefit from your reading because application is critical to life-change.

With each lesson you'll also be assigned a Scripture passage to memorize. The "natural" tendency will be to take the easy way out, and not learn it. Resist that temptation! Set up some sort of reward system for memorizing all the verses in this book, especially if you are working with young believers.

This book is about overcoming obstacles to your spiritual growth. After several months many believers lose the excitement they had when they first believed. They discover becoming like Jesus requires lots of sacrifices. They count the cost of clearing all the hurdles and aren't sure they want to pay it.

The author ran in a 600-yard race when he was in Junior High school. About 75 percent through the race, his body began sending brief messages to his brain: "St-o-o-o-o-p, you idiot! Are you trying to kill me or what? Winning this race isn't worth all this pain!" His

brain stubbornly prevailed. He won in a school record time. Finishing first took everything he had, and more than his body had been willing to give. Sooner or later we'll face the temptation to quit. Although at times the cost of following Jesus seems greater than the benefits, at the finish line we'll discover it's not even close!

In *Clearing Hurdles* you'll learn important race strategies to keep you going when the going gets tough. Quitting isn't an option! You're running to win!

# Scripture Memory



Share your progress carrying out your “Forgiveness” action plan.

Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.

### Why Should I Memorize Scripture?

My brother is trained in the use of the Heimlich maneuver. He has saved two persons in the last ten years. Suppose while one of them was choking he’d have said, “My Heimlich book is at home. I’ll be back in twenty minutes.” Don’t bother! The individuals needed help then and there.

How would you feel if you saw your surgeon in the operating room reading *Surgery For Dummies*? That would really make your confidence surge, wouldn’t it! When she operates, you expect her to know what to do without consulting a medical book.

One day Jack was sharing a gospel tract with an individual he had just met. Shortly after Jack began reading through the booklet in his hearing, he asked if he could see it. He took the book, put it in his pocket, and said, “Now, tell me about it.” He didn’t care what the book said. He wanted to know what Jack believed. Many times the only resource we have to minister is the Word of God in our hearts.

I’ve heard many persons claim they can’t memorize Scripture. The issue is hardly ever whether we can, but whether we will. If we know our telephone number, address, Social Security number and the names of our children or friends, we can memorize. It may not be easy, but we can. Usually the problem is more the lack of willingness than ability, more a sense that it’s not worth the effort. When I was a young Christian, I memorized verses using the Topical Memory System

produced by the Navigators. Those early years were followed by about 35 years of neglect. I took up Scripture memory again about 2005 and have continued working on Dr. Waylon Moore’s 100 verses to memorize. These can be found at [www.ercog.org](http://www.ercog.org) under Resources---Discipleship.

Memorization was much harder at 55 than at 21, but persistence and ongoing review made it doable. It took about five years to learn all 100 verses. Now I review about seven verses every morning. That gets me through all 100 verses every two weeks and keeps them fresh in my mind. I often quote these verses when I’m preaching or teaching. I no longer have the guilty feeling I had during the 35 years I neglected Scripture memory.

Why would we want to memorize Scripture when all we have to do is open the Bible and read it? Memorizing God’s Word benefits us in a number of ways.

How does it help us to become more like Jesus (Psalm 119:9,11)?

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It makes a lot of sense to imitate the One who alone was without sin. Jesus remained “undefeated” in every battle with sin through 33 years of His earthly life. What insight into his strategy do we gain from reading Matthew 4:4, 7, 10?

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Do you suppose Jesus was carrying indexed Old Testament scrolls when Satan tempted Him in the desert? \_\_\_\_\_ How did He know what was written? \_\_\_\_\_

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The heart of education for Jewish boys when Jesus grew up was memorizing Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, plus often commentaries on the same. Jesus didn't cheat by coming to earth with the Scriptures pre-programmed. He memorized them through diligent effort.

What four ways can memorized Scripture profit us (2 Timothy 3:16)?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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Many basketballs leak air. Some have to be re-inflated before every use. We're like leaky basketballs. God's Word goes into our ears every Sunday through Bible teaching and preaching. Perhaps we read it daily as well. How much do we remember one day later? Memorization enables total recall. It seals the leak. As a result of God's Word dwelling in us richly, what are we equipped to do (Colossians 3:16)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How could memorized Scripture help us during life's drab and dreary days (Romans 15:4)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Memorized Scripture helps us to give an \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone who asks how we can have hope in a hopeless world (1 Peter 3:15). Usually we'll have to answer using only the parts of the Bible stored in our memory banks. God's Word stored and then shared can exert a powerful effect. Faith comes by \_\_\_\_\_ the message and the message is heard through the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (Romans 10:17).

God's Word is a \_\_\_\_\_ to our feet and a \_\_\_\_\_ for our path (Psalm 119:105). We have a nightlight in our home that shines constantly. It has no switch. God's Word in our heart is like that. The brighter the light, the easier it is to see God's will for our lives.

Memorized Scripture enables God to turn up the intensity, like a three-way lamp.

The experiences of a "bad" day can leave an aftertaste in our mouth that disturbs our sleep. Sometimes we rehash the cutting, critical words of others over and over long into the night. By contrast, God's Words have an entirely different effect. They are sweeter than \_\_\_\_\_ to our mouth (Psalm 119:103). The shortest path to peace on such nights is from God's Word in our heart to His Word in our mouth. "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors (Matthew 6:12)," stored in our heart, tells us to forgive to find peace and rest.

John 15:7 says that if we remain in Jesus and His \_\_\_\_\_ remain in us, we can ask whatever we want and it will be granted. Having God's promises committed to memory, enables us to pray with greater boldness and faith.

When we're asked to give advice, how might memorized Scripture help (Proverbs 15:23)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Our thinking shapes our life. Those who endlessly fret about their problems wear themselves out and worry themselves sick. Those who are always thinking about money never have enough. Those who are obsessed with sex are never satisfied. God has a better plan. What kind of things does God command us to think about in Philippians 4:8?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How would memorized Scripture help us to fulfill the command in Philippians 4:8?

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\_\_\_\_\_

Is God's Word to be merely an external code \_\_\_\_\_ (Deuteronomy 6:6-7, 11:18)? Why?

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What three results can we expect when we hide God's word in our heart (Psalm 37:30-31)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**How to Memorize Scripture**

1. Check your attitude. How does Philippians 4:13 relate to your ability to memorize? \_\_\_\_\_

Is memorizing Scripture God's will for your life? \_\_\_\_\_  
 How could you claim 1 John 5:14-15 in your effort to learn God's Word by heart? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Check the neighborhood. Reading the verses around the one you want to memorize helps you understand its context.
3. Learn by short units. The punctuation marks divide the verse into memory units. Read aloud the reference, the phrase before the first punctuation mark, and then repeat the reference. Continue in this way until you have mastered the whole verse.

4. Review daily for 30 days and weekly after that.



**What's God's message to you in this lesson?**

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**What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?**

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**Write your action plan to make those changes:**

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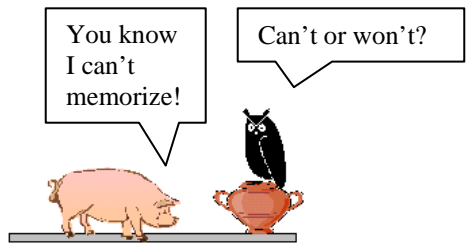
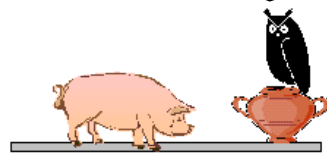
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**Scripture Memory**

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:9,11



How are you coming along on your Scripture memory verses for our small group?



# Holy Spirit

**Share your progress carrying out your “Scripture Memory” action plan.**

**Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.**

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity as illustrated in lesson 4 in *Starting Fast*. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word translated “Spirit” literally means breath or wind. It is used to describe the power of God at work.

The Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in the c \_\_\_\_\_ of the physical world (Genesis 1:1-2) and in my new b \_\_\_\_ h (John 3:5-8) that has given me spiritual life.

In the Old Testament the Spirit imparted extraordinary powers to individuals:

1. He granted w \_\_\_\_\_ to some to make priestly garments for Aaron (Exodus 28:3) and to B \_\_\_\_\_ to construct a portable worship center for Israel (Exodus 31:2-4).
2. He gave powers to those who judged Israel including O \_\_\_\_\_ (Judges 3:10), G \_\_\_\_\_ (Judges 6:34), and S \_\_\_\_\_ (Judges 14:5-6).
3. He bestowed on D \_\_\_\_\_ the ability to interpret dreams (Daniel 5:11-12).

What do these verses suggest about the power that is available to do God’s will?

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We see a gradual shift of emphasis during the ten centuries over which the Old Testament was written. Early on the Holy Spirit is an outward gift to give power for some special reason. Later He is needed for inward moral p\_\_\_\_\_ (Psalm 51:10-11).

Joel 2:28-32 predicts the Spirit will be poured out some future day on all classes of people. In Acts 2:17-21 Peter insists that Joel’s prophecy of the pouring out of the Spirit is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1).

In Luke 1:35 what six-word-expression means the same thing as the Holy Spirit?

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Match the Scriptures with the Spirit’s work in Jesus’ life:

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| __ Birth           | a. Luke 4:18    |
| __ Baptism         | b. Matthew 4:1  |
| __ Temptation      | c. Matthew 1:18 |
| __ Public ministry | d. Matthew 3:16 |

What does Jesus’ dependence on the Spirit suggest about our relationship with the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

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Match the work of the Holy Spirit to the Scriptures that describe it. Some are used more than once.

- \_\_ He is the Spirit of truth
- \_\_ He will be with disciples forever
- \_\_ He guides into all truth
- \_\_ He is “another Counselor”
- \_\_ He brings Christ’s teachings to memory
- \_\_ He comes because Christ is going away
- \_\_ He shows things to come
- \_\_ He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment
- \_\_ He glorifies Christ
- \_\_ He enables Christians to do greater things than Jesus did.
- \_\_ He speaks not on his own, but only what He hears
- \_\_ He testifies about Christ

1. John 14:12
2. John 14:16 (2 times)
3. John 14:17
4. John 14:26
5. John 15:26
6. John 16:7
7. John 16:8
8. John 16:13 (3 times)
9. John 16:14

When Roald Amundsen arrived at the North Pole, he released a homing pigeon. Amundsen's wife back in Norway was thrilled when she saw the bird circling overhead. As that bird revealed that Roald was alive, the Spirit's presence announces that Jesus is alive at the right hand of the Father.

When a floodlight is mounted properly, it can't be seen, but only the building on which it shines. The Spirit is the hidden floodlight trained on the face of Jesus. He doesn't bring attention to Himself at all.

Living water (John 7:37-39), oil (Luke 4:18), wind (John 3:8), fire (Acts 2:3-4), a dove (Matthew 3:16), and a seal (Ephesians 1:13), all represent the Holy Spirit. Water is necessary for life on earth. The deep needs of my soul are met only by the Spirit. Oil in biblical times was used as a cosmetic, medicine, food, and fuel for lighting. Abundant oil represented prosperity. Wind signifies God's power. Fire symbolizes His glory and holiness and His desire to make me pure and holy. A dove portrays the energy through which God's work is carried out, even as the Spirit hovered over the waters at creation (Genesis 1:1-2). A seal was the mark of ownership kings placed upon documents. Here's how I apply the meaning of these symbols to what the Spirit wants to do in my life: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

1 John 5:12 says that because I have the Son (Christ), I have \_\_\_\_\_. According to Romans 8:9, because I belong to Christ, I have? \_\_\_\_\_. I demonstrate I am God's child by (Romans 8:14)\_\_\_\_\_. I know I belong to God because (Romans 8:16)?\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I received the Spirit the very moment I opened the door of my life to Jesus. However, His presence doesn't guarantee His control. I must surrender the driver's seat of my life to him moment by moment. That is the theme of the next lesson.

The Holy Spirit enables my life to be spiritually significant. He sets me a \_\_\_\_\_ for his work (Acts 13:2) and gu \_\_\_\_\_ me in it (Acts 16:6-7). He empowers me to (Acts 1:8)\_\_\_\_\_. He helps me pray by (Romans 8:26-27)

\_\_\_\_\_

He has given me at least one (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)\_\_\_\_\_. He inspired the men who wrote the B \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Peter 1:21) and helps me understand it. When He controls me, I express the following nine Jesus-like character traits (Galatians 5:22-23):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit is the engine of my spiritual life! I need to depend on His strength to live it!

**Daily do the following:**

1. Before you read the Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you.
2. Ask Him to reveal and guide you in His purposes for the day.
3. Surrender your life to His control.



What's God's message to you in this lesson?

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What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?

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Write your action plan to make those changes:

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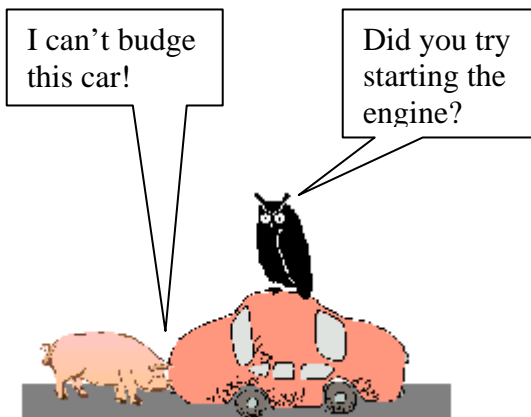
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**Scripture Memory**

Acts 1:8 - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.



# Walking in the Spirit

**Share your progress carrying out your “Holy Spirit” action plan.**

**Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.**

Walking in the Spirit means being empowered by the Holy Spirit to live for and like Jesus. This can happen only if we deny our own selfish desires and yield our mind and body to the Spirit of Christ who lives within us. Dwight L. Moody, a famous evangelist, was scheduled to hold meetings in England. An elderly English pastor wondered what an uneducated, inexperienced preacher like Moody could do that they couldn't. He asked, "Does he think he has a monopoly on the Holy Spirit." A wiser pastor replied, "No, but the Holy Spirit has a monopoly on Mr. Moody." What do you think the wise pastor meant?

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Mr. Moody believed that the moment we are emptied of pride, selfishness, ambition, and everything contrary to God's law, the Holy Spirit fills every corner of our hearts.

We all must overcome major distractions to do God's will. Our thought-life reveals them. What do you think about consistently when you're free to think about anything ?

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Based on your answer, what are the Holy Spirit's chief rivals in your life for your thoughts, energy, and passion?

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What would have to change for the Holy Spirit to have a monopoly on you?

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Walking in the Spirit includes living with the Holy Spirit as our guide. A guide leads us through strange territory. The author drove through Ottawa, Canada, in 1984 following a man who knew the city's roads. Of the three times Jack has been in Ottawa, that was the only time he didn't get lost! For most of us, living to please Jesus is very unfamiliar territory! We need a lot of help and God has provided it.

The Holy Spirit not only guides, He also calls the cadence. Galatians 5:25 says, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit. In the military a drill sergeant calls cadence to get the whole squadron in step. Obeying the voice of your sinful desires forces you out of step. Following the cadence of the Holy Spirit is a daily choice.

When we're walking in the Spirit, our desires change. Some mothers-to-be crave pickles for the first time. Some might even want them on their ice cream! The author's father hated liver until he had to eat it twice in one day while he was in the military. After that he liked it. What kind of new craving does one have who is walking in the Spirit (1 Peter 2:2)?

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Walking in the Spirit is basic to following Jesus. How does He describe that kind of life (John 8:12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is one of the purposes of the power given by the Spirit (Acts 1:8)?

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What are the results of living in the Spirit (Romans 8:4, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 2:10)? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What virtue do those who live in the Spirit demonstrate (Ephesians 5:2)? \_\_\_\_\_

Those who walk in the Spirit, walk in the \_\_\_\_\_ (3 John 4) and imitate (1 John 2:6) \_\_\_\_\_.

Based on Colossians 3:15-17 and Ephesians 5:18-21, living for Christ requires being filled with both the W \_\_\_\_ and the S \_\_\_\_\_.

The Spirit uses the Word as a tool to shape believers. We need to be filled richly with both Him and it. As the Word dwells in us richly it shapes how we think and live.

Being filled with the Spirit is like a sail being filled with the wind. Power and direction are both implied.

Many Christians try to live for Christ in their own strength. Such efforts lead only to frustration, discouragement, and burnout. Imagine a wick that is cut from a candle and lit. It will burn up in a short period of time. On the other hand, a wick on a candle doesn't burn up as long as the supply of wax lasts. The Holy Spirit is the fuel that allows us to burn on for Christ without being consumed. Are you living moment by moment in dependence on His power?

The original Greek in Ephesians 5:18 emphasizes that Christians are to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit as a way of life. In John 15 Jesus illustrates the Spirit-filled life by a grape vine and its branches. The key is to \_\_\_\_\_ in Him (John 15:5) and the result is much \_\_\_\_\_.

There are several requirements to be filled with the Spirit. First, we must really want the Holy Spirit's control. Those who hunger and thirst for r \_\_\_\_\_ will be

filled (Matthew 5:6). God won't strong arm the steering wheel of life out of our control. We must decide to yield it.

Second, we must confess any sins the Holy Spirit reveals. God doesn't use a dirty cup to pour his living water out to bless others. Once we confess those sins, God promises to forgive and \_\_\_\_\_ us (1 John 1:9).

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by \_\_\_\_\_ alone based on Hebrews 11:6 because without it, we can't please God. God's command and promise are like a target and our faith like an arrow.

According to Ephesians 5:18 what is God's will for our life?

\_\_\_\_\_

According to 1 John 5:14-15 what does God promise when we pray according to His will? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If we pray for God to fill us with His Spirit, how do we know He will?

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\_\_\_\_\_

Are feelings a reliable guide to knowing that we're filled with the Holy Spirit? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Remember that when we are convicted of sin, we have to confess it before God's Spirit can once again fill us.

Would you like for the Holy Spirit to fill you right now? If so, you can claim that filling through the following prayer:

**Lord, I present my body, soul, and spirit to you now. I want you to think with my mind, love with my heart, and bless others through the strength you will give me today. By faith I claim the control and**

power of your Spirit right now. Thank you for it in Jesus' Name. Amen.



What's God's message to you in this lesson?

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\_\_\_\_\_

What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?

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\_\_\_\_\_
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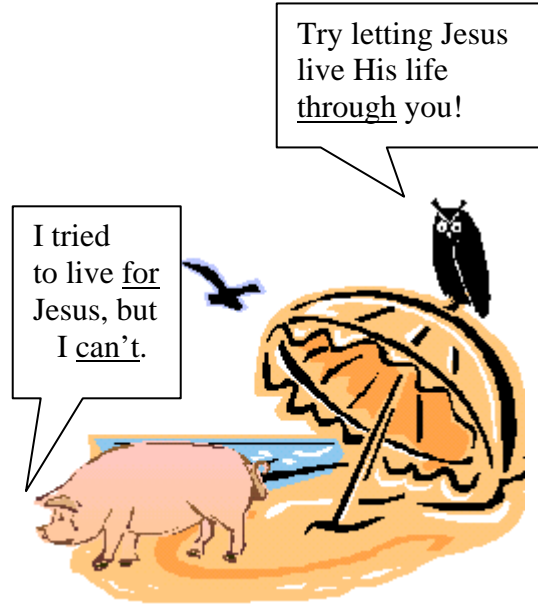


Write your action plan to make those changes:

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\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Memory

Ephesians 5:18 - Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.



**Share your progress carrying out your “Walking in the Spirit” action plan.**

**Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.**

In this lesson “flesh” refers to our tendency to seek our own will and satisfaction in everything. We naturally take the biggest cookie on the plate! The flesh is addicted to selfishness and very competitive.

“Spirit” means living by faith under the conscious control of the Holy Spirit. Spirit life revolves around loving God and others. Flesh and Spirit represent two very different approaches to achieving satisfaction—the first by getting and the second by giving. Getting never satisfies.

Without a conscious commitment to life in the Spirit, selfishness automatically determines our reactions. Captain Whatz Init Forme holds the wheel that controls the ship unless we decide to turn it over to the Holy Spirit. That decision must be made many times daily.

Why can't the flesh please God (Romans 8:7)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the way of life and the way of death (Romans 8:12-13) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus came to free us from sin's penalty and power. The flesh is one of the major wires through which the current of sin flows.

The Spirit sets us free (Romans 8:2) from the law of \_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

When the Spirit controls our mind, we experience (Romans 8:6) 1 \_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

A characteristic that identifies God's children (Romans 8:14) is that they are \_\_\_ by the Spirit of God.

After our new birth we wrestle with sin as never before. Previously, our selfish nature faced no opposition. It won every contest. It always got its way. But now an impressive competitor has weighed in. Rippling with supernatural power, this new nature is an undefeated wrestler. Its one desire is to win for Coach Jesus. The sinful nature isn't about to back down without an eye-gouging, finger-nail-scratching, hair-pulling fight. Every day we are entered in a tournament with many matches between the self-seeking and Spirit-directed natures. How do we consistently keep the Spirit-directed nature on the victory stand?

God's plan for victory is for the new nature to win every match by forfeit, because dead wrestlers aren't permitted to compete. What happened to the old nature (Romans 6: 6)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus' death on the cross frees us to choose to live for Him. Before we received Him, our only option was to obey our selfish nature. Put in your own words how Paul describes this choice to live for Jesus in Galatians 2:20.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are fifteen works of the flesh that disqualify for God's kingdom all who persistently practice them (Galatians 5:19-21)?  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Hatred and discord appear in Galatians 5 as works of the flesh even though we don't usually consider them major moral failures. Hatred is harboring hostility in our heart against another person and discord is the quarreling that results from it. These "minor" sins prevent entrance into God's kingdom. The goal of the Christian life isn't just to avoid falling into obvious open "sewers" of sin. God's plan is for our character to change through submission to the Holy Spirit's control.

The fruit of the Holy Spirit's control is (Galatians 5:22-23) \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Every morning after we rise from bed, we take off our pajamas and put on other clothes. If we're going to school or work, our night clothes are probably not appropriate! Likewise, we need to take off certain "clothing" and put others on as followers of Christ. What 11 items inconsistent with the law of love are we to remove (Colossians 3: 5-9)?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What 8 items are we to put on (Colossians 3:12-14)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The shelves in our refrigerator, freezer, and pantry are stocked with provisions for our physical body. What resources are we to stockpile for our self-seeking nature

(Romans 13:14)? \_\_\_\_\_

What practical steps could you take to make no provision for the flesh with respect to:

- a. Alcohol abuse \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Sexual lust \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Uncontrolled spending \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. Gambling \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. Oversleeping and missing church \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f. Reading material \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g. Television viewing \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h. Entertainment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do those who sow to please their selfish nature reap (Galatians 6:7-8)? Give examples of possible physical, mental, social, and spiritual consequences for those who live this way.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Give examples of how walking in the Spirit provides physical, mental, social, and spiritual benefits now (1 Timothy 4:8) \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Classify the following as either a self-centered, fleshly characteristic (F) or a loving, Spirit-filled characteristic (S). Then circle 3 fleshly characteristics you will work on eliminating from your life.

- Self-controlled  Self-indulgent
- Reverent  Disrespectful  Lazy
- Dependable  Undependable
- Worried  Patient  Impatient
- Truthful  Deceitful  Obedient
- Rebellious  Sincere  Hypocritical
- Fearful  Forgiving  Unforgiving  Wise
- Impulsive  Discerning
- Judgmental  Apathetic
- Underachieving  Orderly
- Unreliable  Proud  Humble
- Responsible  Loyal  Unfaithful
- Callous  Sensitive  Partial
- Indifferent  Compassionate  Gentle
- Meek  Contented
- Covetous  Harsh  Angry
- Grateful  Alert  Hospitable
- Generous  Stingy  Insensitive  Unthankful
- Joyful  Self-centered  Enduring

In what specific ways has your love for God, others, and yourself increased since you received Christ?

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What's God's message to you in this lesson?

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What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?

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Write your action plan to make those changes:

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### Scripture Memory

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.



Were there cookies on this tray?

# The World

**Share your progress carrying out your “Flesh and Spirit” action plan.**

**Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.**

The world feeds the flesh. It refers to the organized forces that encourage rebellion against God’s kingdom values of faith, love, holiness, and goodness. Like an indulgent mother, it supplies everything the flesh wants.

## Who Controls the World?

Satan is the brain of the world system. He is the \_\_\_ of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). He blinds the \_\_\_\_\_ of unbelievers and actively resists their movement toward faith. He does this through the r\_\_\_\_\_ of this age (1 Corinthians 2:6,8). They are persons who are influential in science, sports, music, education, fashion, politics, journalism, art, literature, and religion. Their agenda directly opposes God’s.

Even as the Christian is characterized by \_\_\_\_\_ (1 John 3:14), the world is known for \_\_\_\_\_ (1 John 3:13). Those controlled by the world don’t listen to spiritual t\_\_\_\_ h (1 John 4:5-6). They live only for the here and now.

## What is Worldliness?

The desire for pleasure isn’t necessarily worldliness. We experience pleasure when the natural drives God created are satisfied. An ice-cold glass of water on a hot day brings pleasure. So does a big plate of spaghetti after a hard day at work.

Problems occur when in the pursuit of pleasure we jump God’s wisely laid tracks. The world system-flesh duo twists God’s good gifts and uses them in ways He never intended. For example, it pursues the pleasures of sex outside God’s established protective boundaries. For instance, Romans

1:26 describes exchanging \_\_\_\_\_ relations for \_\_\_\_\_ ones.

Worldliness means living contrary to God’s will for our lives. That will can’t simply be encoded in a list of behaviors to avoid, like “Don’t smoke, drink, or chew....” Many Christians are very strict about what they put in their mouths and wear on their backs, but lack the love that is to mark Jesus’ followers. That’s w \_\_\_\_\_ s!

## Living with Eternity in View

Our thoughts, conversations and behaviors define us. How do we measure them? Is it by a standard whose units change every year or by one that never changes?

In Romans 12:2 the term used for “world” refers to all that is on this side of eternity. It is time-bound and consists of material things we can see, hear, taste, touch, and smell. The temptation is to c \_\_\_\_\_ to and love that which is passing away. Let’s not allow the world to pour us into its jello-mold. We need to recognize and reject its pattern of thinking and behaving.

The world system is opposed to God! Not only is it His e\_\_\_\_\_ (James 4:4) but it is on the way to disappearing (1 John 2:17). Loving both it and God is like loving adultery and marital faithfulness at the same time!

**Anything** in the world can take God’s place and become our defining passion. Our spending patterns, thought life, and activities calendar identify worldly influences.

## Unpacking the World

The world is an evil system manufactured by Satan with thousands of variations on the theme of rebellion against God. It’s like a quilt with thousands of interconnected squares. It covers the whole earth and blinds

men everywhere to the glorious light of the gospel.

John summarizes these quilt squares as the \_\_\_\_\_ of sinful man, the lust of his \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of what he has and does (1 John 2:16).

The cravings of sinful man come wrapped with an independent spirit that doesn't need anyone else, including God. Preoccupation with self results in ignoring the needs of the hurting, looking down on others, sexism, racism, scorn for justice, etc.

The world puts out a welcome mat to mankind's sinful cravings. It also actively feeds them. Like gaudy Las Vegas lit with beckoning neon signs, the world solicits business from the flesh. It knows what sinful cravings desire, and it delivers.

Although we can temporarily satisfy those desires, there's no fulfillment from giving the sinful nature what it wants. The gaudy lights and hype promise way too much. At the end of lust's road lie only brokenness and despair. The lust-lane leads nowhere.

The lust of the eyes refers to the desire to have things. Things are necessary for life. Wanting more, more, more, however, proves the world has us in its grip. Material things can't bring satisfaction. If the 50 shirts/blouses we own haven't satisfied us, why should no. 51?

The boastings of what he \_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (1 John 2:16), describe the desire to impress others by grace (athletic ability), place (position), and face (appearance). It includes an inflated sense of self-importance. It's pride on a ride.

Is your reputation more important to you than God's glory or what's best for others? What status symbol do you use to define who you are? — earned degrees, income, car, house, etc.?

Let's contrast a sampling of world system values (listed first) with corresponding biblical values:

1. People are basically good vs. For all have \_\_\_\_\_ and fall short of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Romans 3:23).

2. Truth is relative vs. God's Word is \_\_\_\_\_ (John 17:17).

3. Man sets his own moral values vs. on judgment day all will have to \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ of every careless word they've spoken (Matthew 12:36).

4. All religions lead to God vs. no one comes to the \_\_\_\_\_ except through Jesus (John 14:6).

5. The Bible isn't relevant vs. All Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

6. Live for the moment vs. set your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on things above (Colossians 3:1-2).

7. Physical well-being and material possessions are the highest good vs. you can't serve God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 6:24).

8. Life is meaningless vs. Jesus came that we might have life to the \_\_\_\_\_ (John 10:10).

9. God helps those who help themselves vs. apart from me [Jesus] you can do \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15:5).

10. Brains, bucks, brawn, and beauty determine worth vs. God did not spare His own \_\_\_ but gave Him up for us all (Romans 8:32).

11. Great people hold the highest positions vs. the one who wants to be first must be the \_\_\_\_\_ of all (Mark 9:35).

- 12. Clothes make the man vs. God looks at the \_\_\_\_\_ ( 1 Samuel 16:7).
- 13. Do your own thing vs. \_\_\_\_\_ what God commands (John 14:15).
- 14. Avoid suffering at all costs vs. rejoice that you participate in the s \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (1 Peter 4:13).
- 15. Take care of #1 vs. seek first God’s \_\_\_\_\_ and righteousness (Matthew 6:33).
- 16. Be like “Mike” vs. be like God’s \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 8:29).
- 17. Make money vs. make \_\_\_\_\_ of all nations (Matthew 28:19).
- 18. Win the lottery vs. win the l \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 15:4).
- 19. Ignore the poor vs. remember the \_\_\_\_\_ (Galatians 2:10).
- 20. Live it up vs. bear much \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15:8, 16).
- 21. Be entertained vs. do good \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 2:10).
- 22. Hide your weaknesses vs. \_\_\_\_\_ your sins ( 1 John 1:9).
- 23. Government saves vs. Jesus saves (John 3:17).
- 24. Appearance determines destiny vs. faith determines destiny (John 3:36).
- 25. Health is everything vs. God’s \_\_\_\_\_ is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- 26. Be self-sufficient vs. depend on \_\_\_\_\_ (John 15:5).
- 27. Pamper yourself vs. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself (Luke 9:23).

- 28. Get even with those who hurt you vs. \_\_\_\_\_ others (Ephesians 4:32).
- 29. Tolerance is the highest virtue vs. \_\_\_\_\_ what is evil (Romans 12:9).

Which world system principles just described still have the strongest influence on you? \_\_\_\_\_

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**What’s God’s message to you in this lesson?**

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**What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?**

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**Write your action plan to make those changes:**

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Scripture Memory

1 John 2:16 - For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.



**Share your progress carrying out your “The World” action plan.**

**Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.**

The 1991 Barna Report, *What Americans Believe*, reveals that about 60 percent of adults tend to disbelieve in Satan’s existence. Only 25 percent believe strongly that he is a real presence. What do you think?

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Satan is more than an evil force. He is described by personal pronouns, e.g. Matthew 4:10 and John 8:44. He has personal characteristics, e.g. will in Isaiah 14:13-14 and knowledge in Job 1:9-10. He also performs acts associated with persons, e.g. in John 8:44 he is a l \_\_\_ and a m \_\_\_\_\_.

His stated goal in Isaiah 14:14 is to be like the \_\_\_\_\_. He wants your worship and obedience. If he can’t get it, he’ll settle for your worshipping something other than God. Before human history he led a revolt against God (Isaiah 14:12-15). His rebellion continues.

### His Names

He is S \_\_\_\_\_, meaning adversary (Matthew 4:10). He opposes both God and man. That’s why doing God’s will is like walking upstream against the current.

He is the d \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 13:39). As such he slanders and accuses both God to man (Genesis 3:1-7) and man to God (Job 1:9). In Genesis 3:4-5 he questions God’s character, motives, truthfulness and love. In Job 1:9-11 he slanders Job by saying that he serves God because of the material benefits it brings.

He is the great \_\_\_\_\_ (Ezekiel 29:3) represented by Pharaoh. This title describes both his power and his evil nature.

He is the s \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 3:1). As such, he is crooked and deceitful. On the internet the First Church of Satan advertises Satan as a positive role model and describes its website as fun for the whole family! Oh, yes—about as fun as a traffic accident on the way to your wedding!

He is B \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 10:25). We don’t know exactly what this word means.

He is B \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 6:15). This refers to his worthlessness. Like a counterfeit 100-dollar bill, he promises much but has no value at all.

He is morning \_\_\_\_\_ and son of the \_\_\_\_\_ (Isaiah 14:12). As such he pretends to be an \_\_\_\_\_ of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). He is to be feared as a lion, even more as a serpent, and most of all as an angel of light. The appearance of good is good’s chief enemy.

He is the e \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 13:19). His character is wicked through and through, like an apple rotten to the core.

He is the t \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 4:3). He induces persons to sin through suggesting all its “benefits” and downplaying its cost. Drew Anderson was shopping with his wife at a mall when an attractive young woman in tight clothing strolled by. His eyes followed her. Without looking up, his wife asked, “Was it worth the trouble you’re in?” The “benefits” the tempter offers are never worth the cost.

He is the \_\_\_\_\_ of this \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 4:4). He isn’t upset when individuals find a fragment of the truth as long as they never grasp the whole. Many will simply wrap that kernel with the husk of error and lead others astray with their “religious insight.”

Christianity competes against hundreds of false religions whose chief architect is the god of this age.

He is the ruler of the kingdom of the air. (Ephesians 2:2). He is the leader of all who oppose God and the unholy spirit who energizes the rebel world.

He is the ruler of this world (John 12:31). He influences human governments and wields power on earth. He wrote the scripts Marx, Stalin, Hitler, and many others obediently followed.

He is the accuser (Revelation 12:10). He continually accuses Christians before God. He also accuses believers of their sins and tries to paralyze them with guilt. He says things like, "You did that again? You're a very poor excuse for a Christian!" Many wilt under the pressure.

**His Little Red Toolbox**

Let's consider some of the tools of his trade: He lures (John 8:44), tempts (Matthew 4:1), sows away the Word (Matthew 13:19), sows (1 Thessalonians 2:18), tempts (2 Corinthians 12:7), sows (Luke 22:31), misleads (2 Corinthians 11:14), accuses (Revelation 12:10), leads astray (Revelation 12:9), strikes with darkness (Luke 13:10, 12, 16), deceives into persons (John 13:27), and mimics (John 8:44). He performs counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9) to lead human beings astray.

**And in This Corner...**

Jesus came to defeat the devil's plans (1 John 3:8). He came to undo what the devil had done and frustrate his plans. He came to build a bridge back to fellowship with God. With every temptation dished out by the devil, Jesus provides a way out (1 Corinthians 10:13). His fight strategy is so brilliant that the only rounds the devil ever

wins are those we give away through unbelief.

Jesus came to destroy him who has the power of darkness (Hebrews 2:14-15). He came to make Satan as powerless as though he no longer existed. Physical death has not been abolished, but Jesus drew sin's sting for us (1 Corinthians 15:55). Like a honeybee that has already stung, it can't sting again. As a result those formerly oppressed by the fear of death have been set free.

**The Knockout**

In the last days he will be hurled to earth (Revelation 12:7-9). He will be locked and sealed in the Abyss for 1000 years (Revelation 20:1-3). After that he will deceive the nations and gather them for battle against the Lord's saints and city (Revelation 20:7-9). Then he will be thrown into and tormented in the lake of burning sulfur forever (Revelation 20:9-10).

**Our Fight Strategy**

Here's how you can overcome Satan's schemes:

- 1. **Understand how he operates** (2 Corinthians 2:11). Football coaches study their opponent's game films. They look for what other teams do in various situations and any trick plays. Then they prepare their own game plan. God's Word is the game film. Study it. Satan's tendencies include undermining the church's witness by internal conflict, disunity, immorality, and false teaching. Are any of these present in your church?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Are you part of the problem?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what will you do to take away his favorite play in your church?

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2. **Be self-controlled and alert.** Satan’s temptations usually present themselves as opportunities for “happiness.” That’s a laugh! He wants to make you happy about as much as a fox wants to make chickens happy!

If you have to rationalize why a certain behavior should be permitted, forget it! God isn’t out to spoil your fun. He loves you and knows where the opportunities for “happiness” lead. Alert drivers avoid accidents. Alert Christians recognize and avoid the enemy’s “happiness” traps.

Self-control is both a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and the result of a disciplined life. Without it, you’re unlocked and wide-open to the thief whose goal is to devour you. (John 10:10).

3. **Respect him. Stand in the faith** (1 Peter 5:9). Treat Satan’s happiness traps like an annoying telemarketer. My standard line: “We wouldn’t be interested in that, thank you.” I immediately hang up. If you let a telemarketer or the devil keep talking, you’ll regret it. Lexy Fowler, a sheep rancher, uses llamas to protect her sheep from coyotes. When they see a coyote, they walk straight toward it. Coyotes don’t like such aggressive behavior. Neither does the enemy of the faith.

4. **Don’t slander him** (2 Peter 2:10-11). Even \_\_\_\_\_ don’t do that. Enough said!

4. **Put on the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and stand against his schemes** (Ephesians 6:10-18). This includes the \_\_\_\_\_ of truth (v.14), \_\_\_\_\_ of righteousness (v. 14), feet fitted with the \_\_\_\_\_ of peace (v. 15), the \_\_\_\_\_ of faith (v. 16), the \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit, God’s Word (v. 17). These verses make clear that life

isn’t a “what will make me happy” picnic. As Jesus’ soldiers, we’re part of an immense spiritual conflict. The prize is the souls of men. Everything else in life is small stuff.



**What’s God’s message to you in this lesson?**

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**What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?**

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**Write your action plan to make those changes:**

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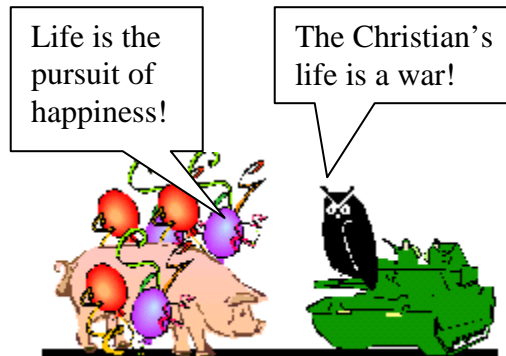
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**Scripture Memory**

Ephesians 6:10-11—Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.



# Pride

Share your progress carrying out your “Satan, the Enemy” action plan.

Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.

## One Rude Dude

The bricks of almost every sin are molded from the clay of pride. The pride of our heart d \_\_\_\_\_ us (Jeremiah 49:16). It causes our heart to become h \_\_\_\_\_ (Daniel 5:20), It breeds \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 13:10). God \_\_\_\_\_ the proud but gives \_\_\_\_\_ to the humble (James 4:6).

## It’s Everywhere!

Pride takes the shape of its human container. We can be proud that we’ve risen to the top of the company or that we haven’t lowered ourselves to play the political games necessary to climb the corporate ladder. We can be proud of our appearance or of our warm, embracing personality despite ordinary looks. We can be proud that we received all A’s on our report card or that we are in the “in-group” at school. We can be proud that we don’t have a single weed in our lawn or that we don’t obsess over it like our neighbor does. We can be proud that we’ve been voted the best teacher by our students or of our average rating because we don’t dish out high grades on demand. We can be proud of all the money we inherited or that we earned it all ourselves. Pride is absolutely universal.

**I'm better than...**

## High-Horsing Around

Pride is an exaggerated sense of superiority because of what we do, are, or have. It’s

both self-centered and self-sufficient. Here’s how a clever salesman closed hundreds of sales: "Let me show you something several of your neighbors said you couldn't afford." After that line, he just set the hook and reeled them in!

A proud person seeks praise, glory and “worship” from others. Pride is God’s rival, and he h \_\_\_\_\_ it (Proverbs 6:16-17). Why do you think he does?

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## Playing the ... er Game

Pride thrives on comparison. It isn’t enough to be a good shopper, baseball player, or whatever. One has to be a *better* shopper, ballplayer, etc. than someone else. A woman confessed the sin of pride to her pastor. When she looked around the church at the other ladies, she couldn’t help feeling she was prettier than any of them. The pastor comforted her by telling her it wasn’t a sin—just a mistake!

Too much of our lives has already been spent foolishly trying to exalt ourselves by establishing our superiority. For a time the author tried that with a little white ball! At the University of Michigan, he and a guy named Dave defeated a very good doubles team in a game of table tennis. He was very proud. Then he reflected on the importance of pounding a celluloid ball better than someone else or even anyone else. Among the thousands of skills that humans have, it has to rank near the bottom! He was reminded of the fleeting nature of human glory when about a week later one of the fellows they’d beaten crushed him 11-0!

**Pride on a Ride**

In the early 1990s the author was driving to Altoona to visit a parishioner in the hospital. He was mentally patting himself on the back for being physically quicker than most people and thereby never having had an accident. In an unforgettable way he soon discovered he was taking credit that belonged to God. Not five minutes later a car turned left across his lane while only a few feet in front of him. He couldn't avoid the accident. Crash!! Fortunately no one was injured. A few days later the Lord connected the dots for him. That accident left a longer lasting impression on him than on his car.

**Clearing Invisible Hurdles**

Pride is the highest hurdle to clear on the way to becoming like Jesus. It's all the more challenging because it's almost invisible. It's the last thing we see in ourselves and the first in others. It's a disease that makes everyone sick except the one who has it. A survey by *Discipleship Journal* ranked it second to materialism as the greatest spiritual challenge.

A humble servant bows to an adoring crowd. Before he knows it, he is proud of his humility! Spiritual pride strikes again. Pride in how much we serve is worse than pride in how much we have. Those proud of their goodness are a lot more like Satan than they are like Jesus!

**Humble Hamburgers Serve**

A fast food chain once advertised "Have it your way" hamburgers. Jesus lived a "Father, have it your way" life. The humble person says, "Jesus, have it your way! I'll fit into your plans. I'll love others and help fulfill the Great Commission."

We are to clothe ourselves with \_\_\_\_\_ toward one another because God opposes the \_\_\_\_\_ but gives grace to the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Peter 5:5-6). Like hair in a drain pipe, pride clogs the lines through

which God would pour out his grace. Proud people think they can make it on their own. They'd better. They're not going to get any help from God.

We are to humble ourselves under God's \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Peter 5:6). That means submitting to him as to a surgeon. Think of him as Dr. G. His hand works through our circumstances for our ultimate good. Today's pain brings eternal gain.

Humility doesn't mean thinking we're a worm. The humble person sees himself accurately and truly. He has neither an inflated nor an "I'm a zero" sense of identity. He considers what others think. He's quicker to give credit to others than take it himself. He knows his weaknesses and strengths and gives God credit for the latter.

Humility is a profound sense that we're unworthy of God's gifts, love, and grace married to a grateful desire to live for Him. In brief it's serving, taking orders from, and fitting into the plans of God and other Christians.

**Humility's Exhibit A**

Jesus is gentle and \_\_\_\_\_ in heart (Matthew 11:29)—the very opposite of pride. He demonstrated his humility by washing his disciples' \_\_\_\_\_, the job of a servant (John 13:5). Though Jesus was rich, for our sakes he became \_\_\_\_\_ that we through his \_\_\_\_\_ might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). He \_\_\_\_\_ himself and became obedient to death on a cross (Philippians 2:8).

**Humility's Perks**

- The benefits of humility:
1. God gives \_\_\_\_\_ to the humble (Proverbs 3:34).
  2. With humility comes \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 11:2)

- 3. Pride starts \_\_\_\_\_ but wisdom is found in those who take advice (Proverbs 13:10)
- 4. The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ the proud of heart and they won't go \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 16:5)
- 5. Humility comes before \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 18:12)

**Humility in Your Slippers**

1. What can you do better than most people? (use another sheet if necessary!) How can you resist pride in these areas?

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2. One guy calls only the prettiest girls for dates. Another shy fellow is afraid to call any girls at all. How are both of them in the clutches of pride?

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3. How is it possible to be proud while people think you're humble?

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4. Why is trying to do your best a lot healthier approach than trying to be the best?

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5. When others praise you, how can you keep your pride under control?

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**What's God's message to you in this lesson?**

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**What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?**

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**Write your action plan to make those changes:**

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**Scripture Memory**

Proverbs 3:34 - He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.



# Enslaving Habits

Share your progress carrying out your “Pride” action plan.

Share one God-message from your devotional time since we last met.

### The Face of Evil

Addiction is a symptom of spiritual sickness. It’s probably the most wide-spread face of evil in the world today. Ironically, those who insist on controlling their own lives forfeit control to enslaving substitutes for God. God’s desire is that we would no longer be \_\_\_\_\_ to sin but freed from its addicting chains (Romans 6:6). Bondage is broken through knowing the \_\_\_\_\_ (John 8:32).

### The A, B, Cs of Addiction

Addiction is characterized by powerlessness to change some compulsive behavior. Life is out of control. Many are slaves to multiple addictions. Addictive behavior fractures relationships, undermines jobs, wastes money, crushes self-esteem, and sends persons to jail. Shame and self-hatred invariably follow each round of excess. Many addicts deny any problem, and others want to stop but can’t. Addiction pulls all of life into its swirling drain, progressively siphoning off more and more money, time, and energy.

### Your Defining Passion

Like a stone thrown into a pond, your life leaves ripples. Your influence can be a great blessing or a curse. In Exodus 20:5 we are forbidden to bow down to or worship other gods because the Lord our God is a \_\_\_\_\_ God, punishing our \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins to the third and fourth generations of those who hate him. God doesn’t tolerate rivals, like addictions, in our life. An obituary described a man’s

defining passions for hunting, fishing, and spending time in the outdoors. What is your defining passion?

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If your passion isn’t loving and serving God and others, you’re leading others astray.

Alcoholism, child abuse, and using God’s name in vain are examples of addictions often passed from one generation to the next. Our addictions always affect others.

### The Bible on Addiction

In Titus 2:3 older women are encouraged to live reverently, not to slander, and not to be addicted to much \_\_\_\_\_. Paul wrote that everything is allowed for him, but he refused to be \_\_\_\_\_ by anything (1 Corinthians 6:12). How does that apply to addiction? \_\_\_\_\_

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The body isn’t meant for sexual sin [or any other addiction] but for the \_\_\_\_\_ and the Lord for the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 6:13). A person is a \_\_\_\_\_ to whatever has mastered him (2 Peter 2:19).

Read Romans 6:16-21 and answer the following: We are \_\_\_\_\_ to the one whom we obey. Slavery to sin leads to \_\_\_\_\_. Slavery to \_\_\_\_\_ leads to righteousness. How do we know escape from destructive habits is possible (verses 17-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Bad habits entangle us because we are

\_\_\_\_\_ in our natural selves (v. 19). This same verse gives a good description of addiction: offering the parts of our body in slavery to \_\_\_\_\_ and to ever-increasing \_\_\_\_\_.

Many biblical passages condemn alcohol abuse. Ephesians 5:18 commands not be drunk with \_\_\_\_\_. The one who is led astray by wine or beer is not \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 20:1). The principle applies to any substance that controls our thinking or behavior. Medications prescribed by a doctor would seem to be an exception, although we must be careful. Many prescriptions can become addictive. Without this exception, even anesthesia wouldn't be permitted.

**The Root Problem**

We all have spiritual needs whose itch no addiction can scratch. We pursue significance, satisfaction and security. God gave us those desires and they're right and good. Our sinful nature prods us to satisfy them outside of a relationship with God.

We're like a man looking for canned tuna in the dairy case. Our search invariably leads us to substitutes for God that never satisfy. They become our gods, not worthy of a capitol G. We depend on them the same way God designed us to depend on him. How do we get out of this mess?

**Face Facts**

The potential list of God-substitutes is huge. Life-controlling addictions include: the internet, computer games, masturbation, pornography, chemicals, tobacco, alcohol, heroin, shopping, TV, prescription drugs, speed, crack cocaine, gambling, Demerol, debting behavior, fishing, sports, relationships, sex, making money, food, and many more. Addiction snuggles up as a "friend" and traveling companion. Very quickly it commandeers the driver's seat. At first you choose to include it in your life. Then it makes decisions without even

consulting you. What do you do compulsively to feel good or dull the pain of life? What do you live for? What do you find hard to quit once you start? What entangles and controls you? What in life couldn't you do without?

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**Face Pain**

Suffering is part of the fabric of life. God's Son suffered in your place for your benefit. His pain on the cross was so intense that he felt \_\_\_\_\_ by God (Mark 15:34). If he hadn't faced crucifixion, you'd face the unending pain of God's \_\_\_\_\_ (John 3:36). How does your pain compare with Jesus' suffering?

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Like a plane faces the wind to takeoff, we must face the pain. We can do it through Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ (Philippians 4:13).

**Face Responsibility**

Our culture excels in passing baseballs, footballs, and blame. The road to wholeness begins by acknowledging that we dug our own rut. We've lived to please our \_\_\_\_\_ nature and from it we have reaped \_\_\_\_\_ (Galatians 6:7-8). We, and no one else exchanged dependence on God for dependence on some "friend." We've rejected the wise, loving direction of the Lord of the universe for what? Our "friend" has stolen our money, monopolized our time, ruined our reputation and perhaps our health. We are left holding the pieces of an unsatisfied, insecure, and meaningless existence. It's time we own up to what we've done. If we \_\_\_\_\_ our sins God will forgive and cleanse us (1 John 1:9).

**Grasp Grace**

The wonder of God’s grace is that he takes broken rebels and makes them into something beautiful. How do we know? The Bible tells us so! At just the right time when we were \_\_\_\_\_, Christ died for the \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 5:6). That standard is so low everybody qualifies! He didn’t come to be a doctor for the righteous but for \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 2:17). He doesn’t remember all our excesses and condemn us for each one. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ for those who trust in Christ (Romans 8:1). He encourages us to approach the throne of grace with \_\_\_\_\_ where we’ll find mercy and grace in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16). He knows our “friends” and can deliver us from their chokehold!

**Give Thanks**

Bury “woe is me” thinking. That’s not reality. On April 7, 2000, I couldn’t start a lawnmower after about 50 exhausting pulls on the cord. What did I have to be thankful for? We had another mower I could use to finish cutting the grass on our bank and fuel to operate it. I had two legs to walk behind it, two feet that had never slipped under the mower deck when the blade was turning, two eyes to help guide it, two hands to steer it, etc. I think you get my drift. When you start counting your blessings, very soon you’ll be in triple digits! Your “friend” has numbed your pain, but he has also blinded you to your blessings. Give \_\_\_\_\_ in all circumstances for this is God’s \_\_\_\_\_ for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

**Give In**

Our desires to escape pain and control life entangled us in webs of addiction. We yielded control of our lives to our “friend.” Our friend became the string and we the yo-yo. When he pushed or pulled, we jumped. We hate the feeling of being unable to change our compulsive behavior. We need a new string, a new best “Friend.” He too

wants control. He’s no less demanding than our old friend, but his ways bring significance, satisfaction and security beyond anything we’ve ever known. His invitation is to come unto him and take his \_\_\_\_\_ upon us and learn from him. He promises \_\_\_\_\_ for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30).

**Give Out**

Our life is like a beautiful violin. A life of addiction has us sounding like a six-year-old’s first practice session! Jesus restrings us and tunes us to his own perfect pitch. He sets us free from the bondage of our compulsions to work together with him to set others free. God \_\_\_\_\_ us in our troubles so we can \_\_\_\_\_ others in theirs (2 Corinthians 1:4). That will be the most fulfilling work we ever do!



**What’s God’s message to you in this lesson?**

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**What underlying attitudes/thought patterns do you need to change?**

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Write your action plan to make those changes:**

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## Scripture Memory

1 Corinthians 6:12 – “Everything is permissible for me” — but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me” — but I will not be mastered by anything.



## Answer Key

### Scripture Memory

- God’s Word makes us pure and keeps us from sin.
- Jesus used memorized Scripture to fight Satan’s temptations
- No. He had the Scripture memorized
- Teaching, rebuking, correcting and training
- Teaching and warning others wisely
- Encouragement of the Scripture gives us hope
- answer
- hearing
- Word
- lamp
- light
- honey
- Word
- It helps give an apt reply and timely advice
- Whatever is good, true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy
- It gives us God’s Word to think about which is all these things
- No. It’s an internal code that guides how we live
- We speak wisely; We speak justly; Our feet don’t slip
  1. I can do it through Christ.
- Yes. If I pray according to His will, he hears and answers. I can ask to be able to memorize.

### Holy Spirit

- Creation, birth
- Wisdom, Bezalel
- Othniel, Gideon, Samson
- Daniel
- God gives power to people to accomplish His will.
- purity
- Pentecost
- The power of the Most High
- C - His birth  
D – His baptism  
B – His temptation  
A – His public ministry
- If Jesus depended on the Spirit, I certainly need to do the same.
- Order of matching answers – 3, 2, 8, 2, 4, 6, 8, 7, 9, 1, 8, 5
- He gives me spiritual life and prosperity. His Spirit gives me power to live for Jesus. The Spirit helps me be pure and holy. He gives

- me the energy to do God's work. He is God's mark of ownership on my life.
- life
- the Spirit of Christ
- being led by the Spirit
- the Spirit testifies with my Spirit that I am a child of God.
- apart
- guides
- witness
- interceding according to God's will
- spiritual gift
- Bible
- love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fruitfulness, gentleness, self-control.

**Walking in the Spirit**

- The Holy Spirit controlled Mr. Moody
- Personal response
- Personal response
- Personal response
- keep in step
- a desire for God's Word
- having the light of life
- power for witnessing
- The righteous requirements of the law are met in us; We won't gratify sinful desires. We'll do good works.
- love
- truth; Jesus
- Word; Spirit
- remain; fruit
- righteousness
- purify
- faith
- to be filled with the Spirit
- He hears and grants all requests that are according to His will
- Being filled with the Spirit is God's will
- No. I must trust God to keep His promise to fill me with His Spirit.

**Flesh and Spirit**

- The sinful mind is hostile to God. It doesn't and can't submit to His law.
- Those who live by the Spirit live; those who live according to the sinful nature will die.
- sin, death
- life, peace
- led
- It was crucified with Christ
- His old life is behind him and Christ is now living through him.
- Sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery (indulgence in harmful or immoral pleasures), idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord (quarreling), jealousy, fits of rage,

- selfish ambition, dissensions (disagreements that bring strife), factions (small, united group within a larger one), envy, drunkenness, orgies (wild, drunken parties).
- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
- Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed which is idolatry, anger, rage, malice (desire to harm others), slander (a false statement made to hurt another person's reputation), filthy language, lying.
- Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with each other, forgiveness, love.
- None
- a. Don't drink alcoholic beverages
- b. Stay away from sources of temptation
- c. Get rid of credit cards
- d. Don't begin gambling
- e. Go to bed earlier and set your alarm
- f. Don't introduce written "trash" into your mind.
- g. Watch only programs you would view with Jesus sitting beside you.
- h. Engage in entertainment Jesus would approve.
- Destruction. Drugs can lead to death, depression and anxiety. You could lose friends or alienate others. Could breakup a marriage. Ultimate punishment is eternal separation from God.
- It provides a healthier life with more happiness, joy, friends, better relationships, peace of mind, an experience of God's love, assurance of salvation, and the fulfillment of helping others know and grow in Christ.

- (S) Self-controlled (F) Self-indulgent (S) Reverent
- (F) Disrespectful (F) Lazy (S) Dependable
- (F) Undependable (F) Worried (S) Patient (F) Impatient (S) Truthful (F) Deceitful (S) Obedient
- (F) Rebellious (S) Sincere (F) Hypocritical (F) Fearful
- (S) Forgiving (F) Unforgiving (S) Wise (F) Impulsive
- (S) Discerning (F) Judgmental (F) Apathetic
- (F) Underachieving (S) Orderly (F) Unreliable (F) Proud (S) Humble (S) Responsible (S) Loyal (F) Unfaithful
- (F) Callous (S) Sensitive (F) Partial (F) Indifferent
- (S) Compassionate (S) Gentle (S) Meek (S) Contented
- (F) Covetous (F) Harsh (F) Angry (S) Grateful (S) Alert (S) Hospitable (S) Generous (F) Stingy (F) Insensitive
- (F) Unthankful (S) Joyful (F) Self-centered (S) Enduring
- Personal response

**The World**

- god
- minds
- rulers
- love
- hate
- truth
- natural
- unnatural
- worldliness
- conform
- enemy
- cravings
- eyes
- boasting
- has, does
- 1. sinned, glory
- 2. truth
- 3. give account
- 4. Father
- 5. useful
- 6. hearts, minds
- 7. money
- 8. full
- 9. nothing
- 10. Son
- 11. servant
- 12. heart
- 13. obey
- 14. sufferings
- 15. kingdom
- 16. Son
- 17. disciples
- 18. lost
- 19. poor
- 20. fruit
- 21. works
- 22. confess
- 25. power
- 26. Jesus
- 27. deny
- 28. forgive
- 29. hate
  - Personal response

**Satan, the Enemy**

- Personal response
- liar, murderer
- Most High
- Satan
- devil
- monster
- serpent
- Beelzebub
- Belial
- star
- dawn

- angel
- evil one
- tempter
- god of this age
- ruler
- prince
- accuser
- lies
- tempts
- snatches
- stops
- torments
- sifts
- masquerades
- accuses
- stray
- disease
- enters
- murders
- miracles
- signs
- destroy
- work
- out
- death
- Abyss
- nations
- lake
- Personal response
- Personal response
- Personal response
- fruit
- destroy
- Resist, firm
- angels
- full armor
- belt
- breastplate
- gospel
- shield
- helmet
- sword

**Pride**

- deceives
- hardened
- quarrels
- opposes
- grace
- hates
- Self-glorifying is the opposite of glorifying God.
- humility
- proud
- humble
- mighty hand
- humble
- feet

- poor
- poverty
- humbled
- grace
- wisdom
- quarrels
- detests
- unpunished
- honor
- Personal response
- Both are focused on themselves.
- One can compare oneself with others and feel superior, but not talk about it.
- Competition is the feeding ground of pride.
- Give credit to God for what you can do and simply say, "Thank you!"

**Enslaving Habits**

- slaves
- truth
- jealous
- children
- Personal response
- wine
- mastered
- I'm not to be controlled by anything other than God
- Lord
- body
- slave
- slaves
- death
- obedience
- The Roman Christians used to be slaves to sin
- weak
- impurity
- wickedness
- wine
- wise
- Personal response
- forsaken
- wrath
- It's not even close
- strength
- sinful
- destruction
- confess
- powerless
- ungodly
- sinners
- condemnation
- confidence
- thanks
- will
- yoke
- rest
- comforts

- comfort